

Kia tū pakari ngā māhuri

Amplifying the voices of rangatahi Māori in the
criminal justice system and their educational
experiences

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Tuhinga whakarāpopoto / Abstract

This qualitative, kaupapa Māori research project describes the school experiences of five rangatahi Māori, aged between 18 and 24 years, with experience in the criminal justice system. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, data were gathered via semi-structured individual video conference interviews. The interviews aimed to explore if there was a connection between the school experiences of the rangatahi Māori and their offending. The narrative interview data were transcribed, coded, and categorised into significant themes related to the research questions using the thematic analysis method.

Understanding the school experiences of the rangatahi Māori who were interviewed can be recognised in terms of key factors such as Māori identity, success / accomplishments, connectedness / disconnection, and school disengagement. Some of the findings from this study show that most of the participants academically struggled and had negative schooling experiences, became disengaged from school, had high levels of truancy, and did not fully complete their schooling. The findings of this study contribute to existing academic literature about Māori youth offending and education because the voices of rangatahi Māori have been privileged. This research will also guide whānau, policymakers, schools, and community leaders to better support rangatahi Māori in both the education and the criminal justice systems.

Attestation of Authorship

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

William Flavell

28 November 2022

Tikanga Matatika / Ethical Approval

1. Ethics application 21/382 was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK) on 16 November 2021.
2. The amendments to the recruitment and data collection protocols were approved for ethics application 21/382 by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK) on 10 March 2022.

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Ngā manaakitanga,

Will Flavell

Kuputaka / Glossary

Māori language term	Meaning in the context of this thesis
Ahuriri	Napier
Aotearoa	New Zealand
Haka	Māori cultural dance
Hapū	Subtribe
Hui	Meeting
Iwi	Tribe
Kaihautū Māori	Māori leader / manager
Kaitātaki Tāne	Male leader
Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi	Face-to-face
Kapa Haka	Māori action songs and the groups who perform them.
Karakia	Prayer / incantation
Kaumātua	Elders
Kaupapa Māori	Māori approach
Koha	Gift
Kōrero	Speaking
Kura Kaupapa Māori	Schools using the Māori language as the medium of instruction.
Māhuri	Sapling
Mana	Status / dignity
Manaakitanga	Caring for others
Māori	Indigenous New Zealander
Māoritanga	Māori way of life
Marae	Complex of a Māori meeting house
Matariki	Pleiades star cluster and Māori new year
Mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge
Mihi	To acknowledge / to greet
Muru	Take ritual compensation
Noa	Freedom from restrictions
Pākehā	New Zealanders primarily of European descent
Pōwhiri	Welcome ceremony
Rāhui	Temporary ritual prohibition
Rangatahi	Young people (between 15 and 24 years old)
Rangatahi Māori	Young Māori (between 15 and 24 years old)
Tāmaki Makaurau	Auckland
Tāne Māori	Māori male/s
Tangihanga	Funeral
Taonga	Treasure
Taonga Tuku Iho	Treasures passed down from ancestors

Tapu	Sacred prohibition
Tautoko	To support
Te ao Māori	The Māori world
Te Kōhanga Reo	The Language Nest (Māori language preschool)
Te Kotahitanga	A research and professional development programme
Te reo Māori	The Māori language
Te reo Māori me ōna tikanga	The Māori language and its values
Te Puni Kōkiri	The Ministry of Māori Development
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi
Tikanga Māori	Māori practices and values
Titiro	To observe
Tūpuna	Ancestors
Utu	Reciprocity
Waiata	To sing / song
Wānanga	Learning sessions
Whakapapa	Genealogy
Whakarongo	Listening
Whakataukī	Proverb
Whanaungatanga	Relationships
Whakawhanaungatanga	Establishing relationships
Whānau	Extended family connections
Whanaunga	Relative
Whenua	Land

Pepeha

Ko Ngātōkīmatawahaoria me Tainui ngā waka.

Ko Manaia me Rangitoto ngā maunga.

Ko Whangārei Terenga Paraoa me Waipa ngā puna wai.

Ko Ngā Puhi me Ngāti Maniapoto ngā iwi.

Ko Ngāti Kahu o Torongare me Ngāti Pare ngā hapū.

Ko Pohe me Rereahu ngā rangatira.

Ko Ngararatunua me Te Ahoroa ngā marae.

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Chapter 1

Kupu Whakataki / Introduction

Ka mahuta a Matariki i te pae, ka mahuta ō tātou tūmanako ki te tau –
When Matariki rises above the horizon, our aspirations rise to the year ahead –

Introduction

Being a rangatahi Māori (young Māori) living in Aotearoa New Zealand can be challenging. Our nation is becoming increasingly unequal, which negatively impacts on their lives. Across all social indicators, including education, health, and employment, Māori have adverse outcomes (Clark et al., 2018). We know that rangatahi Māori are innately capable of achieving and recognise that the education system plays a crucial role in nurturing their potential (Bishop et al., 2012). The current education and the criminal justice systems continue to disadvantage rangatahi Māori (Houkamau et al., 2017). Targeted action through prudent policies is required to lift outcomes for rangatahi Māori, who are currently underserved by the system, so our society can collectively flourish.

The whakataukī at the beginning of this chapter refers to Matariki, the cluster of stars that appears around the month of June and which signals the beginning of the Māori new year, (Hardy & Whaanga, 2019). Traditionally, the arrival of Matariki was an occasion to mourn those who have passed, celebrate the present, and prepare for the upcoming year. Therefore, it is an appropriate time to set goals and identify our hopes, dreams, and aspirations for the year ahead. As a nation, we must collectively identify, nurture, and continue developing the aspirations that rangatahi Māori hold close to their hearts. Rangatahi Māori must have opportunities to flourish, be themselves, and connect authentically to their Māoritanga. As Matariki rises above the horizon, it is imperative that rangatahi Māori are supported so they too may shine.

Previous studies show that rangatahi Māori continue to be disproportionately overrepresented in the criminal justice system (Kapa-Kingi, 2018; Tauri & Webb, 2012;). A recent study highlights the experiences of rangatahi Māori with schooling and crime (Cliffe-Tautari, 2021). Māori are also overrepresented in adult prisons, where 53.4 percent of the total prison population is Māori (Department of Corrections, 2022). These negative statistics mirror what is occurring in the compulsory education system, where studies have shown that Māori students continue to underachieve academically (Houghton, 2015; Turner et al, 2015; Lawrence, 2011).

This thesis aims to help us understand the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori who have experience in the criminal justice system and ascertain if they identify a connection between their schooling experiences and offending. Five rangatahi tāne Māori with experience in the criminal justice system were asked if there was a connection between their schooling experiences and crime. Because of the nature of this thesis, kaupapa Māori research methodology and methods used to guide the current study. Due to the lack of research on the association between the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori and offending, this research will make a valuable contribution to criminology and education. This introductory chapter highlights the need for a research project that allows rangatahi Māori to share their stories about their schooling and experiences in the criminal justice system. This chapter also draws attention to the study's purpose, justification, and it also outlines the research questions.

Youth justice in Aotearoa New Zealand

The schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori who have experience in the criminal justice system is the focus of this research. Therefore, it is vital to understand the broader history of the youth justice system in Aotearoa New Zealand and its relationship with rangatahi Māori.

It has long been argued about the appropriate manner of dealing with children and young people who commit crimes. Our shared history demonstrates that there have been numerous approaches to dealing with youth and crime. In the early nineteenth century, European settlers brought English criminal law to Aotearoa New Zealand (Maxwell, 2017). Children and adolescents were frequently tried in the same courts as adults and sentenced to similar punishments, such as imprisonment and physical beatings. Māori, on the other hand, would resolve similar issues within the whānau.

Several significant legal milestones have affected youth justice in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Neglected and Criminal Children Act 1867 gave councils the power to administer the care and guardianship of neglected children under the age of 15 (Watt, 2003). Industrial and reform schools were established, and such children were placed in these schools. There was a clear distinction made between neglected and delinquent children. The industrial schools were kept separate from reform schools, which were designed for delinquent children. In 1882, the Industrial School Act was passed, which repealed the Neglected and Criminal Children Act. This gave the administrators of industrial schools custody of neglected or delinquent children. This act also gave more control to the education department concerning where children were placed and for how long (Watt, 2003).

The 1925 Child Welfare Act was a pivotal piece of legislation in our history because it redefined the focus on vulnerable children (Watt, 2003). In the previous year, the League of Nations endorsed the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, an international document promoting children's rights. This created pressure for other countries to adopt the recommendations of this document, particularly with the need to improve child welfare. Aotearoa New Zealand eventually followed suit and created the 1925 Child Welfare Act. This act intended to create better provisions for children with maintenance and support under

the government's protection (Morris, 2004). Child welfare officers were employed, and children's courts were established for young people under 16.

The Children and Young Persons Act was passed in 1974, replacing the 1925 Child Welfare Act. This newer act supported a welfare and justice-based approach to offending by children and young people. However, the Children and Young Persons Act 1974 was only in place for a short time and was eventually replaced by the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989. In 2017, the government changed the name of this act to the Oranga Tamariki Act (No. 31). The Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 was considered innovative at the time because it introduced family group conferences to make decisions about young people who did not need a court hearing (Morris, 2004). There were also systems enacted to deal with youth offending early on before the need to arrest was carried out as a final resort.

A disproportionate number of Māori appear in the New Zealand court system. The Hunn report (1961) highlighted, among other issues, the involvement of Māori in the criminal justice system. The report's solutions were controversial because Jack Hunn recommended that the evolution of Māori was certain, and that integrating Māori was the solution. A paper by Moana Jackson stressed the need to address the high number of rangatahi Māori appearing in the court system (Jackson, 1987). Jackson noted that the social issues that impacted rangatahi Māori at the time included issues with unemployment, education, and institutional racism. Key recommendations in 2001 suggested that the government work with Māori communities to develop a range of programmes that would address the root cause of offending among young people, particularly rangatahi Māori (Owen, 2001). Many young Māori offenders come from disadvantaged and poorer backgrounds, which are identified as key factors in early offending (Jones, 2016). There is also clear evidence that rangatahi Māori are more likely to be apprehended than young Pākehā (Owen, 2021).

The youth justice system in Aotearoa New Zealand currently deals with children and young people that have offended or are suspected of offending. The children are between 10 and 13 years of age, and the young people are between 14 and 17 years old. They are both and are treated different from adults in the criminal justice system (Ministry of Justice, 2022). Most young people who are 18 years old and older are treated like adults by the police and therefore go through the adult criminal justice system. However, there are cases where some children and young people may still appear in the adult courts if the offending is serious. The youth justice system aims to deal with young people in a manner that acknowledges their specific needs and ensures accountability (Ministry of Justice, 2022).

In Aotearoa New Zealand, rangatahi Māori are currently disproportionately overrepresented in the criminal justice system. The most recent statistics show that 63 percent of youth offenders were Māori. This compares with 26 percent Pākehā, seven percent Pasifika, and one percent Asian (Ministry of Justice, 2022). In most cases involving young people, offending is dealt with outside the court system. However, the more serious cases go to court. The majority of the young people in court were male. The more serious offences by young people generally include theft, assault, robbery, and burglary (Ministry of Justice, 2022).

Overview of Māori education

In this section, I give a brief historical overview of Māori education. Prior to the arrival of the first Europeans to Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori had a robust education system. Learning was an important feature of the traditional Māori world and was highly valued (Rameka, 2021). There were wānanga (learning sessions) that were focused on a sophisticated knowledge base, often embedded in oral traditions. Understanding such knowledge was viewed as a taonga (treasures) inherited from their tūpuna (ancestors). Knowledge did not belong to individuals but rather to the broader community.

The history of compulsory education in Aotearoa New Zealand had been shaped by several factors, including social and political interactions between Māori and early missionaries, settlers, and successive colonial governments (Walker, 2016). The intention of early education initiatives was motivated by a desire to colonise and assimilate Māori and establish an education system based on European concepts, ideas, and values.

Mission schools were founded in Aotearoa New Zealand by church missionaries in the early nineteenth century (Jones & Jenkins, 2008). The first mission school opened in 1816 in the Bay of Islands, which had a rote-learning curriculum to teach the alphabet and Māori grammar, with religious instruction created by the early missionaries. Māori children were being taught to read and write in the Māori language. Learning such reading skills enabled Māori children to access the Bible. It also reinforced the missionaries' overarching goal of Christianising Māori.

The Treaty of Waitangi is a constitutional document signed in 1840 by the British Crown and more than 540 Māori chiefs with the intention of creating a partnership between Māori and the British Crown (Orange, 1987). At the same time, the Treaty granted the Crown the right to govern Aotearoa New Zealand and represent the interests of all New Zealanders. After the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the Education Ordinance Act of 1847 made English the primary language of instruction in all schools, including for Māori, who had te reo Māori as their first language.

The Native Schools Act of 1867 established several schools to provide education for Māori, which were under the control of the Department of Native Affairs that managed Native Schools (Cram, 2001). Instruction in these schools was in the English language in order to assimilate Māori children into Pākehā society. At the time, there was support from Māori families for their children to learn the English language. The curriculum of the Native

Schools covered basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, but Māori students were pushed to learn skills that drove them towards manual and domestic-style jobs (Cram, 2001).

Some of the early mission schools evolved into Māori church boarding schools (McAllister, 2016). These schools provided most of the post-primary educational opportunities for Māori until the 1940s. Some of these schools include St Stephen's School in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, Te Aute College in Ahuriri Napier, and Hukarere Māori Girls' School also in Ahuriri Napier (McAllister, 2016). After the Second World War, there were increased numbers of Māori moving to the larger towns and cities for job and educational opportunities (Anaru, 2018). So, urbanisation led more Māori to attend their local secondary schools.

With many Māori moving to the major cities, it came at a cost, with Māori becoming estranged from their language and culture (Anaru, 2018). There was great concern that the Māori language would disappear because of negative societal attitudes towards the language, and English was increasingly becoming the primary language for many Māori families. There was political pressure from some groups to use education as a vehicle to support better educational outcomes for Māori and the revitalisation of te reo Māori. Therefore, newer kaupapa Māori educational institutions were borne due to pressure from Māori communities.

The establishment of kaupapa Māori educational initiatives, such as Te Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori have been instrumental in supporting educational opportunities using kaupapa Māori values. These Māori language immersion institutions have played a major role in the ongoing revival of te reo Māori. However, more than 90 percent of Māori students are in English-medium education, including the rangatahi Māori in this study.

Rangatahi Māori experiences of schooling and crime

There have been few studies that exclusively interview rangatahi Māori about their experiences of schooling and crime. As previously mentioned, Tania Cliffe-Tautari (2021)

investigated cultural identity as a resilience factor in reducing rangatahi Māori offending. She interviewed a range of people, including rangatahi Māori, legal practitioners, politicians, and whānau. Daniel Poa and Sarah Wright Monod (2017) investigated the narratives of Māori youth about their criminal offending and engagement with the Youth Guarantee programme, which provides a range of educational and practical courses for young people. This thesis is unique because it exclusively interviews rangatahi Māori tāne with the intention of better understanding the relationship between rangatahi Māori, their criminal justice experience and their schooling.

Background

In this thesis, I examine the school and criminal experiences of five rangatahi male Māori. The aim is to understand the schooling experiences of the rangatahi Māori and if they saw a connection between their school experiences and offending. I unpack their experiences in the classroom, school environment, and relationships with friends and teachers and describe their involvement in the criminal justice system.

The name of the thesis is ‘Kia tū pakari ngā māhuri’ which derives from the whakataukī, Te piko o te māhuri, tērā te tupu o te rākau, which can be translated as the way that a young sapling is fostered, determines how the tree will grow. Essentially, the young saplings, in this case, are a metaphor for rangatahi Māori and symbolise the significance of a strong foundation needed to support their future success.

This thesis has a specific focus on rangatahi tāne Māori. The Māori population is more youthful than the non-Māori population and continues to grow. In 2021, the estimated population of Māori was 875,300 (Statistics New Zealand, 2021). This is 17.1 percent of the total national population. The current population of rangatahi Māori (aged between 15 and 24 years) living in Aotearoa New Zealand is 153,150. Of this, 78,300 are male (Statistics New Zealand, 2022).

Māori have been politically, economically, and socially demoralised, leading to persistent inequities and poorer health, education, and justice outcomes (Hobbs et al., 2019; Inwood et al., 2015; Mayeda et al., 2022). Such outcomes negatively affect the livelihood and well-being of rangatahi Māori, who often feel the force of such discrimination. Therefore, there is a strong need for consistent, up-to-date research to address the issues that rangatahi Māori face. This thesis will support better outcomes in the compulsory education sector and the criminal justice field for rangatahi Māori.

Personal story

When I was six years old, a close member of my whānau was sent to prison. He served under a year in prison. At the time, I did not know what had happened to him. One day, I visited him with other whānau members in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland and initially noticed the signage of the place we went to. The signage revealed the word prison. Even at six years old, I knew the meaning of the word, but the short time visiting him at the prison was a blur, and I cannot recall the specific details of the visit. During his time in prison, he sent me a birthday card and a bone-carving necklace that a fellow inmate had created. I still have the card, but I misplaced the bone carving many years ago. The message in the card from my close whānau member said I was to continue to work hard at school and make something of myself in the future. I know he wanted better for my siblings and me, and he saw that this could be achieved through education. My whanaunga (relative) does not talk about his time in prison or at school. He left school at the age of 13 and worked at the local freezing works. During those days, you could walk into most workplaces and be employed without a qualification.

Those words on that birthday card were essential to me. He wanted me to succeed in a school environment so I would not follow in his footsteps. There have also been other members of my whānau who have served time in prison. After learning of the illegal actions of my whanaunga, I desperately wanted to achieve well at school. I knew education was a

ticket out of intergenerational poverty, even at a young age. Success in formal education was not the norm in my whānau. My mother decided to attend university in her mid-30s after having had four children. She knew the positive opportunities and outcomes that can come from gaining a bachelor's degree. She was the first person in our wider whānau to achieve a university qualification and continues to enjoy success as an educator.

Education is a great social equaliser, and easier access to quality education can level the playing field for many, particularly for Māori. My mother is an example of someone who pushed and naturalised formal education in our whānau and she demonstrated how it can be used as a vehicle to prevent the transmission of poverty between generations. As a result of my mother's dedication to her studies and work, my younger sister and I have both experienced success in our secondary school and tertiary education.

After leaving secondary school, I initially enrolled in the Law School at the University of Waikato. In the middle of the first year, I picked up a copy of the *New Zealand Herald* newspaper. The newspaper's front page read that over half of Māori boys left school without qualifications, not even the basic NCEA Level One qualification. During that year in the city where I lived at the time, Whangārei, about 80 percent of Māori boys left school without the most basic school qualification.

From the *New Zealand Herald* story, I recognised that I was in the minority regarding rangatahi Māori success in the compulsory schooling system. The next day, I went to the administration centre at the university to change my undergraduate degree from law to teaching. My initial intention or goal was never to become a secondary school teacher. However, I knew that I had the passion and skills to contribute to supporting the uplifting of our rangatahi Māori, particularly Māori boys.

I enjoyed 10 years as a secondary school teacher in various schools. I taught te reo Māori, Japanese, and social studies. There were several incidents that I was uncomfortable

with regarding the treatment of Māori students and aspects of tikanga Māori in the school environment. It took me a while to develop strategies to overcome the challenges that rangatahi Māori face in a mainstream school environment. For example, I created a cluster group of West Auckland secondary school te reo Māori teachers that regularly met each term to collaborate, share resources, and support each other. Money and resources can often be a barrier for Māori students. So, another initiative within the Māori Studies department was to ensure that all local and national school excursions were free of charge for students. We made regular trips to Māori festivals in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland and senior class trips to Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. I was fortunate to have had Professor Russell Bishop as a lecturer in a postgraduate paper. He had created *Te Kotahitanga*.¹ I also worked hard with senior management staff supporting the last school I taught at with *He Kākano*, a professional development programme for teachers that focused on improving culturally responsive leadership and teaching practices for Māori learners

I left secondary school teaching at the end of 2019 to take up a managerial position at Te Hononga Akoranga COMET Auckland as their Kaihautū Māori. My current role as the Kaihautū Māori has given me a wider platform and a stronger, independent voice to challenge and scrutinise educational thinking and practice to do right by Māori learners, with a clear focus on rangatahi Māori here in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. I am also an elected member of the Henderson-Massey Local Board in West Auckland, which covers an area with a high Māori population. These positions allow me to make a broader and more meaningful difference to whānau living in our city.

My previous research focused on curriculum development, particularly second language learning of both te reo Māori and other additional languages in Kura Kaupapa

¹ Te Kotahitanga was a programme that sought to improve the educational achievement of Māori students in English-medium secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Māori and English-medium schools (Flavell, 2012, 2019). During the initial Covid-19 outbreak in 2020, I watched national documentaries concerning youth justice and met and spoke with rangatahi Māori that had experiences in the criminal justice system. From there, I wanted to upskill and contribute to research supporting better outcomes for rangatahi Māori in the compulsory education system. I also wanted to support research that reduced the number of rangatahi Māori entering the criminal justice system.

The rationale for this study

The rationale for this research project was established through my personal story and experiences as an educator and community advocate in West Auckland, recognising previous and current issues that our rangatahi Māori continue to face in the criminal justice and education systems. As an educator who works with rangatahi Māori, I want to ascertain if there are any connections between the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori and the act of committing crime.

During my time as a secondary school teacher, there were never any formal conversations or professional development workshops around the criminal justice system or the school-to-prison pipeline. This is a missed opportunity for our schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. There need to be large-scale conversations on this topic, as it is widely documented that Māori are overrepresented at every stage in the criminal justice system (Tauri & Webb, 2012). Therefore, this thesis aims to contribute knowledge to this field.

Thesis outline

This chapter has introduced the topic and provided a rationale for this study. In chapter two, the literature review will describe the existing research linking the education and criminal justice systems in Aotearoa New Zealand and focus on how these systems affect Māori. The gaps in the literature and the main research questions that will frame this research study will also be outlined.

Chapter 3 is the methodology and methods chapter. It will describe the approach and process by which the data for this research project were collected, underpinned by a kaupapa Māori methodological approach. The ethical issues related to this project will also be addressed.

Chapter 4 will introduce the research project participants and present the findings of the individual interviews with rangatahi Māori. Chapter 5 will discuss the results of this research project in light of academic research and literature and how they address the research questions. This chapter concludes with the study's limitations and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2

Arotake Tuhinga / Literature Review

I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho.

A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions.

Introduction

The whakataukī at the beginning of this chapter refers to the need for inspired thinking, flexibility, and tenacity. To resolve an issue, you need to combine all of these. This research is important because the high number of rangatahi Māori in the criminal justice system is of concern. So, this thesis seeks to understand if the rangatahi Māori saw a connection between their schooling experiences and offending.

Section one will explore identity and the historical and contemporary issues that rangatahi Māori have experienced in the schooling sector in Aotearoa New Zealand. The second and third sections will investigate the overrepresentation of Māori and other indigenous communities in the criminal justice system. The final section delves into the relationship between the schooling experiences of young people and offending. The chapter concludes by highlighting the gap in the literature that this master's research study will address.

Identity

Identity is linked to a person's sense of belonging, and well-being and self-assurance. Our religion, gender, generation, geographic and ethnic identities affect how we see ourselves and are perceived by others (Usborne & Taylor, 2010). Jean Phinney (1996) argues that race or ethnicity is a crucial foundation for a person's sense of self. Although there are well-known markers for Māori identity like whakapapa and te reo Māori, social and environmental changes contribute to an ongoing evolution and adaption of what it means to be Māori (Te Huia, 2017).

Māori students achieve better at school when their cultural identity is affirmed. When features of te ao Māori are reflected and enhanced in a school environment, Māori students tend to have more positive learning experiences, which leads to better educational attainment (Tito, 2008). Angus MacFarlane and colleagues (2007) argue for a school environment that is culturally safe for Māori students by acknowledging their learning needs and cultural values, using restorative practices, and establishing reciprocal relationships. Moreover, access to a culturally sustaining curriculum, te reo Māori, and the provision of food are significant initiatives in schools that assist Māori students in learning better (Highfield & Webber, 2021).

Other features linked with Māori cultural identity that improve educational outcomes for Māori students include kapa haka. For example, Paul Whitinui (2008) argues that kapa haka is a culturally responsive activity for Māori students that embraces Māori culture and language, and which should be made fully available and embraced in schools. Logan Hamley and colleagues (2022) further add that schools are a place for rangatahi Māori to practise whanaungatanga through kapa haka events. Te reo Māori is an integral aspect of Māori identity (Te Huia, 2015). Māori students also appreciated their teachers utilising te reo Māori phrases in the classroom and incorporating Māori knowledge into the curriculum. These were significant features that supported educational achievement for Māori students.

Disparities in the education of rangatahi Māori

Educational achievement is currently one of the fundamental issues for Māori. The academic underachievement of Māori students has long been identified as a significant challenge and a critical concern for the education sector and broader society (Bishop, 2012; Houghton, 2015). There are a number of disparities in educational outcomes that Māori students have historically faced and continue to face in the compulsory education sector. This section will explore some of the reasons for the disparities in the education of rangatahi Māori.

Māori students have historically underachieved in the education system, particularly in English-medium schools, compared to Pākehā and Asian students (Berryman et al., 2017). In 2021, 60.8 percent of Māori students gained NCEA Level One compared to 73.1 percent of Asian students and 75.8 percent of Pākehā students. For NCEA Level Two, 71.9 percent of Māori students gained this qualification compared to 80 percent of Asian students and 83.2 percent of Pākehā students (Education Counts, 2022). These NCEA statistics show a noticeable achievement gap related to ethnicity that has not shifted over the past decade.

Low teacher expectations

There is a number of reasons why Māori students are not achieving at similar levels to other students. For example, teachers' low expectations are directly linked to the underachievement of Māori students (Averill et al., 2014; Berryman et al., 2017; McKenzie, 2005). Research demonstrates a relationship between the expectations of teachers and student achievement (Rubie-Davies & Peterson, 2016; Turner et al., 2015). This has undoubtedly been the case for Māori students. Teachers' low expectations of Māori students and negative stereotypes of Māori as a collective social group have created significant barriers for Māori in the education system (Bishop, 2012; Blank et al., 2016). Low teacher expectations of Māori often result from deficit thinking, whereby teachers blame the student, their family, or their socio-economic background for their underachievement rather than considering school or teacher-related factors. Some researchers have labelled low expectations, deficit theorising, and unconscious bias as racist (Bishop et al., 2009).

Deficit theorising

Deficit theorising was identified in Russell Bishop's (2009) Te Kotahitanga project as a significant obstruction in the educational achievement of Māori students. The research data from Te Kotahitanga (Bishop et al., 2009) frequently referenced deficit theorising as it was clear that teachers had low expectations for their Māori students. Te Kotahitanga started in

2001 and was a research and professional development programme that supported schools and teachers to improve learning outcomes for Māori students (Bishop, Berryman, & Wearmouth, 2014). This research and development project was funded by the Ministry of Education and sought to identify the causes of Māori underachievement. The researchers discovered that achievement improved when teachers had mutually respectful relationships with Māori students.

Some of the more effective teachers of Māori students in Te Kotahitanga rejected deficit theorising. Examples included teachers caring for their students, engaging in effective interactions and building strong relationships with them (Bishop et al., 2009). Despite the success of Te Kotahitanga, Roger Openshaw (2007) presented a negative view of the project and highlighted several flaws, such as the additional stress put on teachers which resulted in the alienation of some teachers. However, it is still regarded as a successful project as it made a difference in supporting Māori student achievement in secondary schools (Bishop, Ladwig, & Berryman, 2014).

Racism

Addressing racism in Aotearoa New Zealand needs to be an important focus of the compulsory schooling system. The Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (2021) has recently focussed on unteaching racism. The Teaching Council acknowledge racial bias in the education system, especially towards Māori students. Recent studies outlined by Anton Blank, Carla Houkamau and Hautahi Kingi (2016) argue that deficit thinking and unconscious bias, which are arguably linked to racism, exist in the current education system in Aotearoa New Zealand, and so their research recognises that unconscious bias influences how teachers relate to Māori students, particularly in terms of negative stereotypes.

There is other research demonstrating that Māori learners experience racism in schools. The Office of the Children's Commissioner (2018) interviewed young people face-

to-face and engaged with them online through questionnaires. Many Māori students interviewed told the researchers that they experienced racism at school and were mistreated due to their culture. The topic of racism is also alluded to in the PhD research by Ann Milne (2013), who wrote about the whiteness of the Eurocentric education system in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her research uncovered the reinforcement of stereotypes and negative attitudes towards Māori students. Some of the insights from these research pieces are important and reflect the interviews of rangatahi Māori undertaken for this research project.

There is a strong appetite for educational change for Māori. For example, Māori researchers have established that there is a desire to create opportunities for Māori students and their whānau, to have a more equitable curriculum that encompasses a robust Māori worldview (Webber & Macfarlane, 2020). Schools are not effectively using Māori language or culture, mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge), or celebrating Māori academic success (Webber & Macfarlane, 2020). These sentiments are echoed further by Māori students who want to see more Māori knowledge and content in their lessons (Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2018). However, research by Megan Lourie and Elizabeth Rata (2012) claims that a curriculum formed on the values and beliefs specific to a culture contributes to educational underachievement for Māori students. Elizabeth Rata (2004), a non-Māori academic, furthers her stance on this issue by stating that kaupapa Māori in education creates division and is scientifically flawed because there is a lack of evidence that it improves educational outcomes for Māori learners. However, some researchers disagree with the views held by Rata on kaupapa Māori (Stewart & Devine, 2019). Instead, they support a stronger focus on mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) in the general curriculum (Webber & Macfarlane, 2020; Paraki, 2009). However, it is clearly evident through projects like Te Kotahitanga that kaupapa Māori in education does support better educational outcomes for Māori students.

Incorporating mātauranga Māori in mainstream education institutions is seen as a way of lifting the quality of education for Māori learners (Walker, 2005). The idea of normalising indigenous knowledge in Eurocentric curricula is seen as necessary in other indigenous communities and can act as a transformative agent of change for native people to decolonise themselves, their communities, and their institutions (Vallée, 2018). The Ministry of Education recently outlined changes in NCEA with mana ōrite mō te mātauranga (equal status for mātauranga Māori), which will ensure te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori are interwoven into the achievement standards of NCEA subjects and are consistent with honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Ministry of Education, 2022). The Ministry of Education's overarching aim is to gain parity for mātauranga Māori and equal status to other bodies of knowledge. Therefore, adding mātauranga Māori in NCEA can be identified as an attempt to address issues of a Eurocentric curriculum and to address some of the concerns related to Māori students and their schooling experiences.

Student attendance and engagement are other critical factors that affect educational outcomes for Māori students. An inquiry investigated attendance levels at all schools from the parliament's Education and Workforce Select Committee. The select committee mulled over 150 submissions (New Zealand Parliament, 2022). The final report of this inquiry recommended further funding and support for Māori-based attendance organisations and the need to strengthen relationships with iwi organisations. In my opinion the recommendations from the report specifically for Māori students do not go far enough as the report was missing detail about engagement issues in schools for Māori students.

Students who are more engaged at school and see the importance of education are less likely to be truant (Gentle-Genitty, 2009). Māori students' attendance has been consistently low in the last ten years. For example, 44.4 percent of Māori students from years 1 to 13 regularly attended school in 2021. This statistic was similar to that of Pasifika students, with

44.8 percent of students regularly attending school. For Pākehā students, it was 67.3 percent regularly attended school, and for Asian students, it was 72.4 percent. Students attending regularly are defined as having attended school more than 90 percent of all school time (Education Counts, 2021). A study based in Christchurch concerning the disengagement and engagement of young people in secondary schools identified several key areas that need to be addressed to promote student engagement. These included relationships with teachers, friendships and belonging, a diverse curriculum and pedagogical strategies, more comprehensive school support, the addressing of learning difficulties, and acknowledgement of the challenges at home (Bruce, 2018). For example, Delia Baskerville's (2019) research concerning truancy from student perspectives recommended building teacher-student rapport and links with whānau, fostering inclusiveness in a school environment, and focussing on inclusivity in teacher education programmes and professional development opportunities. The need to address student attendance and engagement using culturally responsive strategies is important and may enhance opportunities for young people, particularly Māori, to engage in education fully. Another school issue that disproportionately affects Māori students is school exclusions (Towl & Hemphill, 2016).

School exclusions hit Māori students, particularly Māori boys, the hardest (Education Counts, 2021a). There is also a clear link between the socioeconomic levels of schools and the removal rates of students. For example, students from low-decile schools are five times more likely to be excluded than those from high-decile schools. Māori boys from lower decile schools are also affected more than others because schools continue to suspend Māori students at a higher rate (8.5 per 1,000) than any other ethnic group (Education Counts, 2021a). Māori are also more than twice as likely to be suspended than Pākehā students (3.2 per 1,000). Expelled students are at higher risk of criminal and anti-social behaviour (Lamont

et al., 2013). Therefore, the high number of expulsions and suspensions may jeopardise the prospects of Māori students.

Academic streaming

Academic streaming also contributes to inequitable outcomes in education, especially for Māori students. Numerous studies argue that educational streaming harms students, as academic streaming is still commonplace in many schools, particularly secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand (Tokona Te Raki, 2021). Academic streaming contributes to inequitable outcomes, especially for Māori students. This is validated by Hana Turner, Christine Rubie-Davies and Melinda Webber (2015) who argue that streaming impacts on teachers' expectations and students' achievement because teachers have high expectations of students in top streams and low expectations of students in lower band classes. Māori students are heavily over-represented in the lower band classes and therefore continue to experience the harmful impact of streaming. A recent research project tracked more than 70,000 rangatahi Māori involved in education and found that streaming is an inequitable practice and a systematic barrier to the educational success of Māori students (Tokona Te Raki, 2021). Tokona Te Raki's research shows that Māori students in lower streamed classes have fewer opportunities when they leave school. For example, students in lower streamed classes are taught less content, and therefore reach fewer achievement standards. In addition, the number of career options for those with low achievement standards are significantly limited to low paid and low skilled employment opportunities.

Our education system in Aotearoa New Zealand has historically underserved Māori students, and some of the education disparities described in this section continue to confront them. Achieving equity for Māori students should be a priority for the education system. Systems must change and themes such as relationships, racism, and bias closely examined.

The experiences of Māori in the criminal justice system

This section of the literature review gives an overview of Māori in the criminal justice system. As the research project aims to look at the link between rangatahi Māori in the criminal justice system and their schooling experiences, it is crucial to understand the historical and current issues regarding the experiences of Māori in the criminal justice system.

Before the colonisation of Aotearoa, whakawhanaungatanga (establishing relationships) firmly underpinned how Māori society operated. So, there was a strong emphasis on relationship-building with others and the surrounding environment (Maclaurin, 2015). Imprisonment was also not a feature of Māori society (Stephens, 2017). Māori law had a legal system of tikanga customary laws aligned with traditional concepts such as mana (status), tapu (sacred prohibition), noa (freedom from restrictions), rāhui (temporary ritual prohibition), utu (reciprocity), and muru (take ritual compensation). Tikanga customary laws recognised the collective's rights and well-being, such as whānau (family), hapū (sub-tribe), and iwi (tribe). Natalie Coates (2015) also acknowledges that tikanga Māori has always been a framework for regulating the behaviour of Māori.

Common law was developed in England and was brought to Aotearoa New Zealand, like the other former settlements of the British Empire. The English common law was enacted in Aotearoa New Zealand, which contained rules outlining the various powers of government (Rishworth, 2016). For example, when the Native Land Court was created in 1865, land acquisition was a significant milestone for early Pākehā settlers because of its ideological and economic importance. The court system disregarded Māori customs relating to land ownership and succession in favour of a shortened set of rules. This made it easier for Pākehā to purchase land where customary title had been transferred to individual title. However, since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, successive Pākehā-dominated

governments stripped Māori of their land, culture, customs, and language. These features are identified as taonga to Māori. In addition to the power imbalance, Māori have been directly affected by racial discrimination (Mutu, 2019).

The past treatment of Māori and continued racial discrimination have been linked to the overrepresentation of Māori in the criminal justice system. Although Māori comprise 17.1 percent of the New Zealand population, they are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, making up more than 50 percent of New Zealand's prison population (Department of Corrections, 2021). It is notably worse for Māori women, who comprise 63 percent of the female prison population (Stanley & Mihaere, 2018). In 2018, the general prison population was at its highest level, with over 10,000 people, and over half of those were Māori (Department of Corrections, 2018). Elizabeth Stanley and Riki Mihaere (2018) state that within five years of Māori finishing serving their prison sentences, 80 percent are reconvicted, so there are high recidivism rates for Māori (see also Crouth et al., 2021). Since 2018, there has been a decrease in the total prison population and the rate of imprisonment for Māori (Ministry of Justice, 2021). Therefore, it would appear that there needs to be more research on why there has been a downward trend over the last five years.

Several complex reasons are attributed to the high rate of Māori imprisonment, including education, employment issues, and a discriminatory criminal justice system. In the late 1980s, a research paper by the renowned lawyer Moana Jackson (1987) highlighted significant concern about the disproportionately high number of young Māori in prison, which he related to high unemployment for young Māori and low academic education success. Jackson further argued that the justice system does not stand in isolation but reflects a myriad of different factors, including social, educational, and employment. Moreover, the criminal justice system is racist and discriminatory towards Māori, and Māori are more likely to be arrested and convicted than non-Māori for the same offences (Nakhid & Shorter, 2014).

These claims are supported by the results of a 21-year longitudinal study by David Fergusson, John Horwood and Nicola Swain-Campbell (2003) that gathered the data of 1265 children born in 1977 and followed them until they reached the age of 21. The findings showed ethnic prejudices and bias associated with criminal convictions. Conviction rates for Māori were 1.6–1.8 times higher than for non-Māori even after other factors were controlled. This research highlighted the bias which showed that Māori offenders have higher conviction rates than those non-Māori with similar criminal histories.

Prior research has connected the high number of Māori in prisons with colonisation and structural racism (Dowden, 2019; Nakhid & Shorter, 2014). Else Dowden describes the prison structure in Aotearoa New Zealand, as an ‘oppressive state enterprise that serves to marginalise Indigenous peoples both as a symptom and as a mechanism of colonisation’ (Dowden, 2019, p. 88). Institutional racism in the criminal justice system is explored further by Eleanor Brittain and Keith Tuffin (2017), who discovered by interviewing former Māori inmates that there is disparagement of Māori identity by staff in criminal justice institutions such as Correction Officers and that through prevailing power relations, a disregard of Māori rights. Undoubtedly these narratives and features do not favour rangatahi Māori, and a systems change approach is needed to correct such inequities.

Rangatahi Māori in the criminal justice system

Similar to the inequality that rangatahi Māori experience in the education system, they are also heavily overrepresented in the criminal justice system. This section of the literature review gives an overview of the experiences of rangatahi Māori in the criminal justice system. This is important as the participants of this research project have lived experience in the criminal justice system.

Like their older counterparts, rangatahi Māori are disproportionately represented in the youth justice system in Aotearoa New Zealand. Although the number of children and

young people in court has fallen across all known ethnicities, rangatahi Māori still make up the majority of young people in court (Ministry of Justice, 2022). Recent statistics for 2021/2022 show that rangatahi Māori up to 17 years old continue to make up the majority of children and young people in youth court at 63 percent compared with European Pākehā at 26 percent and Pacific Peoples at 7 percent (Ministry of Justice, 2022).

Some researchers argue that there is a link between rangatahi Māori in the criminal justice system and a disconnection with their Māori culture and heritage (Brittain & Tuffin, 2017; Johnson, 2015). The combination of the loss of social, cultural, and economic power has significantly contributed to the overrepresentation of Māori in the criminal justice system, including rangatahi Māori. Unconscious bias and institutional racism are also among the reasons why so many young Māori end up being overrepresented in arrests (Morrison, 2009). Recent research by Tania Cliffe-Tautari (2021) highlights that cultural identity can be a resilience factor for rangatahi Māori who have offended, and that the issue should not focus on fixing rangatahi but rather targeting the systematic issues that continue to affect them, such as racism, discrimination, and poor teacher / pupil relationships.

There are a large and growing number of Māori residing in Australia. The case for Māori living in Australia is that young Māori and Pasifika are also overrepresented in the Australian criminal justice system (Shepherd & Ilalio, 2015). Their research further describes some similar issues mentioned earlier in the literature review, including a low level of education and lower employment opportunities. So, Māori also encounter discrimination based on their ethnic identity and are forced to navigate mainstream values in Australia.

The youth justice experiences of Māori and Samoan youth in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, and the United States of America were recently studied by Suaalii-Sauni, et al. (2018). The authors found effective strategies to address the overrepresentation of Māori and Samoan youth in the justice system, including incorporating indigenous knowledge into

youth justice policies. Such approaches may address the overrepresentation of Māori and Samoan youth and promote more equitable youth justice policies and practices for minority communities.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the creation of rangatahi courts was seen as a viable and holistic solution to the issue of cultural disconnect for rangatahi Māori. These courts were created to support rangatahi Māori coming through the youth justice system that were not strongly connected to their Māori identity. These culturally responsive youth courts were established in 2008. Rangatahi courts are held on marae (complex of a Māori meeting house), follow tikanga Māori, and incorporate the Māori language into the proceedings. The original purpose of such courts was to assist rangatahi Māori and their wider whānau to engage in the youth justice process (Dickson, 2011). For example, 15 rangatahi courts are usually held at marae around Aotearoa New Zealand, utilising the support of kaumātua (elders) (Ministry of Justice, 2021). Like rangatahi courts, there are also Pasifika youth courts that follow Pasifika protocols.

There were initial concerns when rangatahi courts were first trialled at Te Poho o Rawiri marae in Gisborne, where graffiti and other destruction happened (Dickson, 2011). However, it is an expectation from the rangatahi courts that whānau will be present at the court hearings and will tautoko (support) their rangatahi Māori. Judge Heemi Taumaunu, the first Māori Chief District Court Judge, who helped set up the first rangatahi court in Tūranganui-a-Kiwa Gisborne, challenged in a seminar that further development is needed to transition rangatahi Māori to a successful career pathway (Taumaunu, 2014). Nonetheless, it can be argued that the rangatahi court system continues to act as a transformative feature for rangatahi Māori because of its holistic approach. It encompasses the recognition of a Māori worldview through its processes as long as manaakitanga (caring for others) and whakanaungatanga (relationships) strongly underpin these undertakings.

The relationship between the schooling experiences of young people and offending

The relationship between school experiences and offending is central to the research questions of this thesis. Therefore, this section of the literature review will examine the relationship between the schooling experiences of young people and offending.

School experiences do not directly cause young people to commit crimes. Still, the increasing effect of negative school experiences may result in young people being disenfranchised from the education system, exacerbating pre-existing risk factors that could lead a young person to commit crimes (Sutherland, 2011). Lance Lochner and Enrico Moretti (2004) found that keeping young people in school significantly reduces criminal activity and that regular school attendance substantially reduces the probability of incarceration and arrest. Additional studies show that early disengagement from the education system constitutes a significant risk factor for youth offending and severe problem behaviours in early adulthood (Knight & Thornberry, 2012; Synder & Smith, 2015). A study by Sung Bae (2020) found that high school students who leave school for personal reasons (for example, family and economic reasons) reported fewer instances of youth offending than those who had left due to reasons attributed to the school (for example, school maladjustment, poor grades, and a dislike for teachers, peers, and school in general). Therefore, it is critical to keep young people in school for longer to have a positive impact on their future outcomes.

There is a relationship between school exclusions and youth offending. However, there is still little evidence showing causation. Prior research has highlighted a connection between school success and crime (Rocque & Paternoster, 2011) and school exclusion and crime (Sanders et al., 2018). Susan McCarter and colleagues (2020) referred to the school-to-prison pipeline, which is when young and disadvantaged people become incarcerated because of policies and educational inequality. They found links between incarceration and a number of features associated with school disengagement, including academic achievement,

attendance, and behaviour at school. Therefore, school disengagement is a risk factor for involvement in the school-to-prison pipeline (Christle et al., 2005).

Underachievement and crime

Students who struggle academically at school are more likely to commit crime than those who achieve well (see, Burdick-Will, 2013; Gyansah et al., 2015; Lochner, 2004). Research shows that youth offenders have poorer literacy and numeracy skills compared with non-offending youth (Leone et al., 2003). Poor academic achievement is a well-known risk factor for future involvement in the criminal justice system (Lee & Villagrana, 2015). The educational underachievement of students is also linked to dropping out of school early, which can lead to poorer future employment opportunities (Lee et al., 2012). In a study conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand, Ida Skytte Jakobsen, David Fergusson, and John Horwood (2012) found that those who leave school with qualifications had lower crime rates later in life. Improving the students' educational achievements may mitigate future risks of young people committing a crime. Still, there needs to be further research in this field, particularly around how school achievement can be advanced, particularly among those young people that the education system fails early on.

People with intellectual disabilities are also disproportionately involved in crime as perpetrators and victims (McKay & Brumback, 1980). For example, young people with neurodevelopmental conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, learning disabilities, and other impairments are more prevalent in custodial institutions (Hughes et al., 2012). Some researchers have found it challenging to identify the relationship between disability and delinquency and there is a need to better understand disability status when studying youth offending (Oshima et al., 2010; Shandra & Hogan, 2012).

School as a protective factor

School can act as a protective factor for young people at risk of offending (Christle et al., 2005). Although there are numerous possible risk factors, such as poverty or having home problems, there are learning, cultural, club, and sporting opportunities in a school environment where young people can flourish. These activities can act as protective factors (Ruvalcaba et al., 2017). Lia Ahonen and colleagues (2020) argue that school problems for young people and having friends that are a negative influence can increase the likelihood of offending in early adulthood. Prevention efforts should focus on increasing caring and supportive relationships in schools by boosting prosocial peer networks. These can help prevent adverse outcomes for vulnerable young people and strengthen the argument that connectedness to school, supportive peers and community is essential to their health and well-being (Foster et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2020; Marsh et al., 2019).

Racism is one of the major causes of the school-to-prison pipeline (Goetz, 2019). Many of the studies concerning the school-to-prison pipeline are American based, where school disciplinary policies mainly affect minority and indigenous young people disproportionately placing these young people in the criminal justice system. Similar to that of rangatahi Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, Latino young people in the United States are more likely to be suspended, expelled or arrested (Goetz, 2019). The school-to-prison pipeline is also an issue for indigenous peoples in settler-based nations such as Canada (Gebhard, 2013). There is an overrepresentation of indigenous Canadians in the criminal justice system. Therefore, the school-to-prison pipeline causes a disproportionate number of young people who are of colour or indigenous to leave school and enter the criminal justice system.

Several academics have come up with solutions on the best strategies needed to do away with the school-to-prison pipeline (Gebhard, 2013; Goetz, 2019; Nance, 2016). Jason

Nance (2016) recommended solutions to do away with the pipeline, including eliminating harsh disciplinary measures, removing zero-tolerance policies, and enhancing the learning environment by improving the classroom instruction and management skills of the teaching staff. This is further supported by Amanda Gebhard (2013), who describes the whiteness of the education system in Canada and the lack of diversity of teachers in Canadian schools. Blended education is a solution offered by Sofia Goetz (2019), where students can learn in person via classes and independent online learning. This gives students more personal space, and they do not have to contend with adverse school-based incidents. These solutions could be relevant in an Aotearoa New Zealand context. For example, exclusions from school for young people disrupts their education, but also excludes them from other protective factors such as sports, extracurricular activities, and engaging with their peers (McIntosh, 2020). The strengthening of these protective factors may be key for rangatahi Māori.

Understanding the international literature is crucial, because such research can be used to understand how community leaders, politicians, and policymakers can support efforts to reduce the high number of rangatahi Māori entering the criminal justice system. Statistics highlight that in Aotearoa New Zealand, there is an overrepresentation of Māori in the criminal justice system. The education system in Aotearoa New Zealand demonstrates a number of culturally harmful practices that continue to operate, such as the low expectations of teachers towards rangatahi Māori, academic streaming of students and school environments that are not culturally responsive to their learning needs. The educational underachievement of rangatahi Māori is one of the factors that may lead to imprisonment. Numerous studies have concluded that early childhood problems predict future anti-social behaviour and delinquency (Farrington, 1994; Staff et al., 2015). In particular, are young people who engage in anti-social behaviour before the age of 13 years at risk of offending as adults? (Bosick et al., 2015). Several authors have also recognised that crime can be reduced

by intervening early in life to tackle key risk factors (Farrington & Welsh, 2014). For instance, some of the critical risk factors for offending by young people identified by David Farrington (2015) include individual (low school attainment), family (low parental involvement, child abuse, broken families, and rejecting attitudes), peer (delinquent friends), school (high delinquency rate at school), socio-economic (low income and poor housing), and community (high crime neighbourhood) factors. Bonnie Gance-Cleveland, Mary Mays and Ann Steffen (2008) argue that ecological influences such as individual, family, and school factors can significantly influence young people who participate in substance abuse.

However, this is challenged by Paul O'Mahony (2009), who questions whether the risk factors prevention paradigm and the causes of youth crime are helpful analyses. In particular, O'Mahony argues that the risk factors prevention paradigm strongly influences policy and practice but often uses simplified assumptions to benefit policymakers, and therefore tends to ignore other facets of youth justice such as personal agency, social and cultural factors, and human rights. Although it is helpful to understand the potential risk factors that may lead to later offending, some young people experience multiple risk factors but never commit or cause any crimes.

Conclusion

A review of the literature indicates that many rangatahi Māori continue to face challenges in the criminal justice and education systems. Research shows that identity is an integral feature for Māori, and they achieve better at school when their culture and language is affirmed. The research also shows disparities in the education of rangatahi Māori, including low expectations by teachers, deficit theorising, racism, and streaming. The literature highlights the negative experiences of Māori in the criminal justice system, including the overrepresentation of Māori in prisons and institutional racism.

The current literature indicates that school experiences do not directly cause young people to offend, although studies highlight that those young people who are disengaged in school and those who achieve poorly academically are more likely to offend in the future than those who are engaged and achieving academically. Therefore, school and extracurricular activities can act as protective factors for rangatahi.

The current study

From this literature review it can be seen that, although there have been a number of studies concerning the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori (Bishop, 2012; Houghton, 2015), more research is needed that focuses on the connection between the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori and the criminal justice system. Therefore, this research project is a concerted attempt to explore the relationship between schooling experiences and offending through the voices of rangatahi Māori. The rangatahi Māori in this research provide pertinent insights into their previous schooling and criminal justice experiences. Understanding their experiences may contribute to reducing the number of rangatahi Māori entering the criminal justice system.

The next chapter provides an overview of the structure of the research project and explains the methods and methodology. The following research questions will also be addressed:

1. How do rangatahi Māori perceive their schooling experiences?
2. What connections do rangatahi Māori perceive between their schooling experiences and criminal offending?

Chapter 3

Pēwheatanga / Methods and Methodology

Tē Tōia, tē haumatia –

Nothing can be achieved without a plan, workforce, and a way of doing things –

Introduction

The whakataukī at the beginning of this chapter describes the importance of planning to achieve specific outcomes by mutually finding a way to achieve them. Planning is an essential component of thesis writing. It is a way to organise thoughts and prioritise how information is presented. Creating a roadmap to decide the necessary actions to achieve this research project's goals was lengthy. As kaupapa Māori knowledge and ways of doing are interwoven throughout this research, it was correct to use a methodological structure that was Māori in its design and analysis.

This research project aims to understand the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori who have lived experience in the criminal justice system. As such the views of rangatahi Māori are privileged. A kaupapa Māori framework (Pihama, 2010) was chosen to steer the development of the research project, including the research methods, interactions with research participants, analysis of the data, and the presentation of the final findings.

The kaupapa Māori framework includes culturally appropriate practices when working with Māori and kaupapa Māori principles. The Māori language, culture, and knowledge underpin kaupapa Māori and are, therefore, relevant to this thesis. This project addresses the following main research questions:

1. How do rangatahi Māori perceive their schooling experiences?
2. What connections do rangatahi Māori perceive between their schooling experiences and criminal offending?

In this chapter I outline the methodology and methods of my research project. I start with a general overview of kaupapa Māori theory and its intended use in this research project. Kaupapa Māori practices and principles are defined and described in accordance with this study. The next section of this chapter explains the methods used to support the kaupapa Māori practices and principles. The ethical matters that were considered and the ways in which potential research participants were approached are also reviewed. Following that, the collection of data, and details of the thematic data analysis method are discussed. There will be a brief section regarding research reflexivity, which is about acknowledging researcher bias.

A qualitative research approach is more consistent with kaupapa Māori because it enables participants to contribute freely and easily. The semi-structured interview method may empower research participants to contribute at their own pace (Barnes, 2000).

Kaupapa Māori methodology

Kaupapa Māori research intends to address injustice, discrimination, and social change (Mead, 1996). To meet the goal of this research, this qualitative project drew on kaupapa Māori theory as the underlying research paradigm (Pihama, 2010). Kaupapa Māori methodology endeavours to identify and support Māori views, solutions, and ways of knowing and doing. It also seeks to understand and represent Māori as Māori.

Kaupapa Māori theory is based on a number of research practices and principles. Seven kaupapa Māori practices were identified by Professor Linda Smith (1999) when researching with Māori communities. Professor Graham Smith first initiated six kaupapa Māori principles (1990), focussing on education intervention. From there, other Māori academics such as Leonie Pihama (2010), Fiona Cram (2001a), and Russell Bishop (1996) have added and developed additional principles of kaupapa Māori theory. Kaupapa Māori is connected to Māori philosophy and principles and validates Māori language and culture. Kaupapa Māori is

about being critical and upholding the value of Māori ways of doing. A key focus of kaupapa Māori is the criticality of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga (Māori language and customs). This is endorsed by Linda Smith (1997), who argues that the survival of te reo Māori and culture is imperative and critical to any conversation regarding kaupapa Māori. The kaupapa Māori practices and principles will be summarised later in this chapter.

There is a number of research projects focussing on criminal justice that have employed a kaupapa Māori methodology (Bold-Wilson, 2018; Brittain & Tuffin, 2017; Mihaere, 2015). All these studies highlight challenges in the justice system regarding Māori communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, employing kaupapa Māori methodology in criminological research is not new, but it helps strengthen the overarching aim of this thesis to reduce inequalities for Māori.

Kaupapa Māori practices for this research project

This section will focus on kaupapa Māori practices that support Māori conducting research. Seven kaupapa Māori practices were developed by Linda Smith (1999, p. 120) that can guide the researcher in this research project: aroha ki te tangata (love for people), kanohi kitea (a face that is seen), titiro, whakarongo, kōrero (look, listen, and speak), manaaki ki te tangata (show respect to people), kia tupato (be cautious), kua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample on the dignity of people), and kua e māhaki (do not flaunt your knowledge). Each practice will be outlined in more detail in this chapter. These specific practices conform with values placed on how we behave, particularly towards others, and, in a Māori context, to determine if a person is of a good character (Smith, 1999).

The first kaupapa Māori practice I describe is aroha ki te tangata. This is about respecting people, showing kindness and goodwill towards others and giving them the freedom to determine their own space in the research process. An example was meeting the rangatahi on their own terms, at a place, and at a suitable time. The participants choose the

days and times for the interviews. I made myself available at the times that the participants selected. Being welcoming and understanding during the interviews with the participants was important, particularly when dealing with sensitive topics.

The second kaupapa Māori practice is he kanohi kitea. This is a well-known leadership phrase in te ao Māori. This term expresses the significance of meeting people face-to-face and being seen in the community, particularly at important events such as tangihanga (funerals) and other meaningful hui (meetings). This principle is about effectively engaging research participants and their respective communities in a research context. As the leader in this research project, I had a public presence throughout the study. I attended and spoke at various conferences, events, and national hui focussing on Māori education and criminal justice issues. Although COVID-19 prevented meeting in person, online interviews enabled me to be face-to-face with rangatahi Māori, which aligns with this principle.

The third kaupapa Māori practice is titiro, whakarongo, kōrero. These are all crucial skills in the research process. Titiro (observing) refers to using all our senses to recognise, analyse, and recall our surroundings. This is an effective tool, vital in the interview process, with attention to detail and critical thinking. I was attentive throughout the interviews and made sure that if the participant showed signs of discomfort, I was patient and showed compassion. Whakarongo (listening) allows the researcher to make sense of and understand what another person is saying. Whakarongo, in terms of relationship building, helps build trust, reduces misunderstandings, and encourages empathy. I sought to be an active listener in the interviews; to talk less and listen more. I also made sure to ask only ethical questions and was okay with silent moments during the interviews. The purpose of kōrero (speaking) is communication. It is a way to express thoughts, ideas, and opinions. In addition, this principle is about understanding people's schedules, priorities, and ambitions. In the interviews, all the participants shared their stories; for many, it was their first time doing so.

Some participants also texted further information that they forgot to reveal during the interviews. This showed that they trusted me. Therefore, the research questions were appropriate and relevant to the research aims and the participants, allowing all the senses mentioned earlier to be used fittingly.

The fourth kaupapa Māori practice is manaaki ki te tangata. This principle is essentially about looking after others. Manaaki ki te tangata is important for this research project as I investigated ways to share and be generous with my time, resources, and relationships. With the potential vulnerability of the research participants, this is one of the most critical kaupapa Māori principles to apply to this project to ensure the participants' comfort, particularly during interviews. The participants received a koha (gift) to acknowledge their time. I also gave my contact details to each participant in case they needed further support or advice. One of the participants recently started a small lawn mowing business, and I support his business by regularly using the service. Researching with Māori involves developing relationships that go beyond data collection, so that the project is not a one-off event.

The fifth kaupapa Māori practice is kia tūpato. This concerns the need for researchers to be careful in their research practices. This requires researchers to be deliberate and cautious about conducting interviews and be culturally safe and reflexive in practice. This also means carefully handling the data and how these are stored and protected. It is essential to communicate closely with experts such as academic lecturers and supervisors to ensure best practice is applied throughout the research process and to minimise potential mistakes. Before the interviews, I discussed with my supervisors how to deal with the possibility of the concerning content that endangered the lives of others. It was decided that I would speak to the supervisors about this.

The sixth kaupapa Māori practice is *kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata*. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this practice refers to honouring the mana (dignity) of the person. Every person has an innate human dignity that no one can take away. In a te ao Māori context, people are naturally dignified and valued, so it is essential not to disregard others. It is necessary to uphold the mana of the participants and their experiences. Because of the online interview nature of this research project, it was imperative to focus on trust and use appropriate communication methods when working with the rangatahi Māori. Transcripts of the interviews were sent back within a week to the participants to ensure that what they said was captured accurately, and that they were comfortable for me to use their words in this thesis.

The final kaupapa Māori practice is *kaua e māhaki*. This principle relates to not flaunting knowledge and finding ways to share knowledge and understanding without boastfulness. A key focus of humbleness is to value others and their views. This was achieved through active listening. I told the participants that I was grateful to them for giving up their time to participate in this project. It was also essential to show empathy during the interviews, particularly during times of vulnerability that the participants mentioned. Therefore, an important part of the interview process was to show humility with respect so that rangatahi Māori were enabled to share their lived experiences freely.

All these kaupapa Māori grounded research practices were essential to guide me as I worked with Māori participants to understand the relationship between their experience in the criminal justice system and their schooling experiences. Kaupapa Māori research aims to empower indigenous people through a Māori worldview to create transformative change and make a difference in their lives. The following section will describe some of the principles of kaupapa Māori that this project aims to support.

Kaupapa Māori principles for this research project

Some kaupapa Māori principles were selected to support the undertaking of this research project. These principles differ from the kaupapa Māori practices as they offer broader understandings of Māori beliefs and knowledge beyond research. The kaupapa Māori findings of the interview data are interwoven in Chapter 5.

The first kaupapa Māori principle is tino rangatiratanga, which concentrates on autonomy, control, and self-determination (Pihama et al., 2002). Tino rangatiratanga is firmly rooted in te ao Māori (Te One & Clifford, 2021). Tino rangatiratanga is also associated with the challenges of colonial control that led to loss of Māori power. Tino rangatiratanga is the restoration of self-determination and is affirmed in article two of the Treaty of Waitangi (Broughton & McBreen, 2015). The rangatahi Māori were given the opportunity to share their stories and express their views and opinions. Many of them shared their aspirations for themselves and their whanau. They also had control of the data by approving the interview transcripts. Therefore, this principle allowed Māori to assert control over what is important to them.

The second kaupapa Māori principle is taonga tuku iho (Cram, 2001a). This principle refers to the treasures passed down to us from our ancestors. Taonga (treasures) are considered living beings and part of people's whakapapa (genealogy) and history. They are not considered owned; instead, people are guardians of taonga, that are passed on to the next generations (Ellis, 2016). All rangatahi Māori spoke about their enjoyment of learning te reo Māori and participating in kapa haka at school, which are deemed taonga. The research project also highlighted the importance of te reo Māori and tikanga because karakia were conducted before each interview. The participants had the opportunity to use te reo Māori in the interviews. Many of them frequently used Māori phrases and words throughout the interviews. Therefore, this principle consolidates the importance of te reo Māori, tikanga

Māori, and matauranga Māori as valuable taonga that follow the tradition of being passed on to future generations.

The third kaupapa Māori principle is *Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kāinga*. This describes the need to alleviate problems in the community. Through kaupapa Māori research, it is important to understand the root causes of the issues and find ways to reduce inequalities that Māori communities continue to face. This principle describes improving the problems and difficulties that Māori communities face using a collective kaupapa Māori approach (McRae & Taiwhati, 2011). It is an essential principle because the aim is to use kaupapa Māori to intervene to benefit and improve services for Māori whānau and communities, which is the intention of this research project. Because rangatahi Māori are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, this thesis aims to understand the schooling experiences of the participants that have previous involvement in the criminal justice system and to investigate if there is a connection.

The fourth kaupapa Māori principle is whānau. This essentially describes the significance of relationships and is central to kaupapa Māori. Mason Durie (1994) describes whānau as the place during traditional Māori times where early teaching and socialisation occurred. He also explains that whānau was more than the extended family social unit, but an environment where specified duties and obligations were maintained. Regardless of the socio-economic difficulties that Māori communities face, there is always the need to put whānau at the centre of issues. All participants in this study mentioned some of the close relationships they had with their peers and teachers at school. They also spoke about their parents, siblings, and children. Developing and strengthening relationships is vital in kaupapa Māori research, particularly in caring for the people involved in the study, such as the participants. Whakawhanaungatanga (establishing relationships) is an essential element of whānau and is fundamental to te ao Māori. The participants were given my contact details if

they wanted to have a further kōrero (conversation) about other issues such as further education, training and employment opportunities.

The final kaupapa Māori principle is kaupapa. This principle discusses the united vision for Māori communities and truly speaks to the collective vision supporting people's aspirations (G. Smith, 1997). The participants spoke about their future aspirations and also gave guidance on how to support other rangatahi in the compulsory schooling system. These five kaupapa Māori principles are fundamental to this research project, because they addressed some of the issues involved in validating the legitimacy of Māori and for Māori to take control over their cultural well-being (G. Smith, 1997).

Qualitative research in criminology

Quantitative research methods have dominated criminological research in the past. This is because of the demand for facts and statistics (Meuser & Lötschper, 2002). However, qualitative research in the field of criminology produces observations and descriptions of behaviour, thus providing a deeper understanding of participants' experiences of crime, offenders, and the justice systems and processes (Tewksbury, 2009). A qualitative approach for this thesis aligned with the research questions and the type of data needed to answer them.

Qualitative research and research methods

This qualitative research project examined the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori with previous involvement in the criminal justice system. Qualitative research can be defined as a study of phenomena by compiling different narratives that uses a flexible research strategy (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). Furthermore, qualitative research aims to gain a deeper understanding of real-world issues and problems through participants' personal experiences and views (Austin & Sutton, 2014). Research with Māori aligns with kaupapa Māori research because it empowers participants (Barnes, 2000) by collecting data that they produce such as stories, artwork, and talk.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken in this research project. The use of semi-structured individual interviews was preferred over focus group interviews because the recruited individual participants had a longer speaking time and offered more detailed feedback. Individual interviews were appropriate due to the topics that were discussed because participant confidentiality was maintained. Semi-structured interviews are commonly used in qualitative research. In this method participants are asked a series of predetermined but open-ended questions, that allows for broader discussions. One of the advantages of semi-structured interviews is that shared communication is encouraged. For example, those being interviewed can freely express their views and opinions with the opportunity to ask questions of the researchers during the interview process.

Semi-structured interviews are also a suitable method to use when working with children and young people. They allow the researcher to explore further issues and ideas they may not have thought about previously and they provide opportunities for other questions to be asked (O'Reilly & Dogra, 2017). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews can allow the pre-prepared questions of the researcher to change to suit the participant's needs (Flewitt, 2014). The researcher has previous experience interviewing secondary school students using the semi-structured interview method (Flavell, 2019).

Procedures

The initial plan was to recruit participants through a charitable trust based in Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland, which provides support and accommodation for former prisoners. Approval was granted by the Auckland University of Technology's (AUT's) ethics committee (AUTEK) in November 2021 to proceed with the study, including recruitment via the trust (see Appendix C). I met with the management of the charitable trust early in the research process. However, due to a range of factors, including the ongoing impact of the

COVID-19 pandemic in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, by February 2022 no participants had been recruited through the trust. It was, therefore, decided to seek approval from AUTEK to recruit participants via an online advertisement posted on social media instead. This approach was approved in March 2022 (see Appendix D).

Once the amended ethics application was approved, I uploaded an advertisement poster online to recruit participants (see Appendix D). The advertisement poster had information about the research project, including the research purpose, and the criteria for participants. It also contained my contact details. Potential participants directly contacted me if they were interested in participating or learning more about the study. The advertisement was posted, and shared on Facebook by me, and numerous others interested in supporting this research project.

Five rangatahi Māori that met the participant criteria privately messaged the researcher through social media, expressing an interest in participating in the research project (see Appendix D). Each participant was sent a participant information sheet (PIS) outlining the purpose of the current research project and the type of questions that would be asked (see Appendices A & C). Each participant had a few days to read the PIS to understand the main research objectives. Because the interviews were conducted via video conference, oral consent was obtained from each participant and recorded before the start of the online interview (see Appendix B).

The semi-structured individual interviews were conducted on Zoom. The audio was recorded on two mobile devices. This ensured that the researcher could listen and respond without writing notes or comments during the interviews. Each participant was interviewed once, and sessions ranged from 22 to 75 minutes. The interviews were transcribed verbatim with the support of Otter.ai, an online transcription application.

Each participant was asked if he would be comfortable starting with a traditional karakia to ensure the smooth running of each interview. Karakia are often part of tikanga Māori. I recited karakia for four of the five interviews. After the karakia, there was an opportunity to get to know each other through whakawhanaungatanga. I introduced myself to each participant to form and strengthen a connection. Most of the participants freely spoke about their whakapapa, background, and details that were important to them. As a result of the initial whakawhanaungatanga sessions, the interviews between the researcher and participants flowed well. After conducting the first interview, I reviewed it with my supervisors to get their feedback. The interview was 22 minutes long, which I felt was too short. They suggested asking the remaining four potential participants additional questions to get them to converse for longer.

After the completion of the thesis, a presentation of the findings will be arranged for each participant. A digital copy of this thesis will be submitted permanently online with the Tuwhera Open Access Theses and Dissertations at the Auckland University of Technology.

Ethical issues

Ethical research should be trustworthy, thorough, transparent, and protect the participants' interests. This is also an essential component of kaupapa Māori. All research involving human participants must require ethical approval (Gelling, 2016). Ethical approval to advertise this research project on social media in search of suitable participants was obtained from AUTEK. Informed consent was an integral part of this research. The participant information sheet (see Appedix C) informed the participants of the different aspects of the research including the participants' potential role, the aims of the research, and how the data would be used. This information was also clarified before the start of each online interview.

Participants' names have been kept confidential, and pseudonyms were used. The rangatahi Māori were given the option to choose their pseudonym. Any specific name

mentioned by the rangatahi Māori, including the names of previous teachers, was replaced with a pseudonym. The names of schools and precise locations have not been identified in this thesis. All research materials, such as notes and audio recordings, have been stored in a locked home office, and the researcher has exclusive access to this material.

Regarding the potential harm that some of the questions may cause the participants, it was made clear to them that they could have a friend or a family member alongside them during the online interview. The rangatahi Māori also had the option of not answering questions or withdrawing from the interview. The transcriptions were returned to the rangatahi Māori a week after the interview to confirm that the transcription was correct and could be used for the thesis. All participants accepted the transcripts.

Participant criteria

In order to investigate the experiences of rangatahi Māori, it was appropriate to collect the personal experiences of members of this community. Te Puni Kōkiri (Ministry of Māori Development) define rangatahi as aged from 15 to 24 years old (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2022). However, I focused on the upper age range of this bracket due to having more accessible access to this age group. During the initial period of this research project, there were numerous attempts to contact youth justice residences to speak with managers concerning accessing rangatahi under the age of 18. However, due to the difficulties with COVID-19, engaging with those facilities' managers proved difficult. Therefore, it was decided to interview rangatahi Māori between 18 and 24 years of age. The older age group selected has the benefit of additional time, maturity, and life experience to better reflect on their teenage years and schooling experiences. The other criteria were that the participants must be Māori, male (including transgender males) and have a criminal record.

Participants

Table 1. Rangatahi Māori in this research project

Pseudonym	Ethnicity	Current Age	NCEA Attainment	Crimes	Time spent in prison
Xavier	Māori Sāmoan	21	Level 2 NCEA	Assault Drug possession	No
Heremaia	Māori Niuean	20	Level 1 NCEA	Misuse of vehicle Theft	No
Mikaere	Māori	24	No NCEA	Stolen car, Theft Drug possession	Yes
Lenny	Māori Pākehā	24	No NCEA	Drug possession Theft	Yes
Trent	Māori	24	No NCEA	Theft Damage to property	Yes

Data analysis

For this criminological research project, a thematic analysis was undertaken. Thematic analysis is a standard method of analysing qualitative data. I utilised the six-step process developed originally by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis includes familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming the themes, and writing up the findings.

The first step was familiarisation, so it was essential to understand the data thoroughly. This involved transcribing the data with the support of an online transcription program, printing out the text of the interviews, reading it carefully, and going through the data to gain familiarity.

The second step was coding which involves highlighting sentences and phrases from the data using coloured felt pens and connecting those with short codes to describe the content. Each colour had a specific code attached to it. At this stage of analysis, phrases or words that seemed relevant were matched with a corresponding code. For example, te ao

Māori was highlighted using a bright yellow felt pen. As I went through the text, the data was collated and put into a group related to the code. This is important as the codes allow for synthesising the main points of the data and identifying any common meanings that feature throughout the data.

The third step was generating the themes. A theme can be a frequent idea or a topic that captures something important concerning the data in relation to the purpose of the research (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Several of the codes that were identified were put into a single theme. For example, kapa haka, whakapapa, and te reo Māori were incorporated into the Māori identity theme. Some codes did not feature too often in the data and were subsequently dropped. The overall aim of this step was to create valuable themes that would show me something useful about the data.

The fourth step was about reviewing the themes. To be useful, the themes must be suitable and truthful representations of the data. Therefore, I repeatedly compared the themes with the data to ensure that nothing was missing and that the themes were an authentic reflection of the data.

The fifth step was to have a final list of the themes and names and to define them. It was vital to define each of the themes and ensure that using them would help me better understand the data presented by the participants.

The last step was to write up the findings, in a way that achieved the requirements of a typical master's thesis, including the introduction, methodology, results, and conclusion.

Research reflexivity

Reflexivity in qualitative research is about acknowledging your role in the study. This requires the researcher to understand that their previous experiences, assumptions, and beliefs will influence the research process. Roni Berger (2015) argues that researchers who can clearly describe and show their contextual interconnecting relationships (such as ethnicity, cultural

background, age, and socio-economic background) demonstrate credibility in the findings. Reflexivity ensures that researchers involved in qualitative research ensure thoroughness and quality in their work (Dodgson, 2019).

Although I do not have prior experience in the criminal justice system, I am Māori and male. I have whānau, friends, and former students with previous criminal justice experiences and understand the negative connotations. Therefore, as there may be potential bias, it was essential to think reflexively during the research process. It was necessary to reflect on the emotional aspects of the process and what happened throughout the day, particularly during the semi-structured interviews. A way of dealing with this was to keep a writing diary during the research (Ortlipp, 2008). There were many challenging moments in the interviews, particularly when the participants mentioned sensitive moments such as rejection, homelessness, and disconnection. The benefits of having a diary were to provide both a reference point for when thoughts changed during the research process and a private place in which to reflect on the interviews and research.

Conclusion

The data for this research project were collected by interviewing five rangatahi Māori with experience in the criminal justice system. Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted online. The semi-structured approach promoted an open kōrero with the rangatahi Māori guided by some questions. Although kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face-to-face) would have been preferable, online interviews were the only appropriate way to speak with participants during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A kaupapa Māori research approach was a meaningful way not only to guide the research working alongside rangatahi Māori, but also appropriate to the aims of this project. Chapter 4 will highlight the findings of the rangatahi Māori and draw attention to the significant themes that stemmed from their interviews.

Chapter 4

Ngā Whakataunga / Research Findings

Ka pū te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi.
As the old net withers, another is cast.

Introduction

The whakataukī at the beginning of this chapter denotes the younger generation taking up the roles and responsibilities left by their elders (Kukutai & Webber, 2017). Young people, with the support of their elders, have the potential to collaboratively weave a future fit for the next generation. This implies the need for younger generations to have the opportunity to speak up and play a part in important issues. This research project focusses on schooling and youth crime, and it has been critical to privilege the voices of young people.

In this chapter I first provide a background summary for each rangatahi Māori participant. The major themes from the thematic analysis will be outlined and discussed in this chapter, and include Māori identity, success / accomplishments, connectedness / disconnection, school disengagement, and connection to crime. These themes align with the two main research questions of this research project:

1. How do rangatahi Māori perceive their schooling experiences?
2. What connections do rangatahi Māori perceive between their schooling experiences and criminal offending?

Direct quotes by the rangatahi Māori are woven throughout this chapter to elevate their voices and link them to the main themes identified in the interviews.

The participants: Bringing through the multiple identities of the rangatahi Māori

In this section of the chapter, I will introduce the five rangatahi Māori interviewed for this research project. The participants' real names and other identifying features, such as the

names of their teachers, have been substituted with pseudonyms. As the rangatahi Māori were central to this study, they are at the forefront of this chapter.

Xavier

Xavier is 21 years old. He identifies as both Māori and Samoan. Xavier completed all his schooling in the upper North Island. He loved kapa haka and music and enjoyed physical education at school. Xavier held the position of Kaitātaki Tāne (male leader) for his secondary school kapa haka group. He enjoyed participating in the ASB Polyfest (an Auckland Secondary Schools Māori and Pasifika annual cultural festival). Xavier was also responsible for teaching waiata and haka to the junior students at the school. He did not enjoy maths and English classes. During high school, Xavier began to get in trouble with the police and was involved in fights with other students inside and outside school. He gained level one and two NCEA but dropped out of school at the beginning of year 13 when he became homeless. Xavier committed an aggravated robbery at 17 years of age and, subsequently, was put on a 24/7 curfew. He is currently in full-time employment and has a two-year-old daughter.

Heremaia

Heremaia is 20 years old. He identifies as Māori and Niuean. Heremaia gained NCEA level one. While he was at school, he wanted to join the army. After leaving secondary school, he attended alternative education courses and earned some credits toward NCEA level two but did not complete this qualification. Heremaia talked about struggling with the content and teaching styles in some classes but enjoyed maths, physical education, and other practical subjects. Heremaia first started drinking alcohol when he was 10 years old; stealing from shops began at the same age. Heremaia's trouble with the law started as a teenager. In 2021, as an unlicensed driver he stole a vehicle and was chased by police. In 2022, he appeared in

court due to burglary charges. He is currently doing casual labour jobs, such as lawn mowing and weeding. He has two infant children.

Mikaere

Mikaere is 24 years old and is currently in full-time employment. While at secondary school, Mikaere enjoyed te reo Māori, kapa haka and sports. He struggled with his other subjects. Mikaere first got into trouble when he was 16 years old. He took his parents' car and was an unlicensed driver. He dropped out of school in year 11 and briefly attended an alternative course. Mikaere achieved some credits towards NCEA level one but did not complete the qualification. Mikaere would have liked to have learnt basic life skills, particularly budgeting, which was not taught at school. Mikaere wants to see more Māori owning and operating businesses rather than just being an employee of a company.

At 18 years of age, Mikaere committed several burglaries, leading to three months imprisonment. Mikaere did not enjoy his prison experience but had support from his whānau, who contributed to the weekly allowance that enabled him to buy food and other essential goods during his stay. He noted that other prisoners did not have the same support structures. As an 18-year-old, Mikaere felt he was too young to enter an adult men's prison and recommended that there should be a correction facility that caters for younger adults.

Lenny

Lenny is 24 years old. During primary school and intermediate, he did not identify as Māori. Through participating in kapa haka at secondary school, Lenny learnt more about his Māori identity and became more comfortable with it. He is a talented artist who enjoys creating different styles of art. Lenny openly spoke about the learning issues that he had in the classroom and, as a result, struggled at secondary school. He was involved in many fights inside and outside of school, resulting in numerous interactions with the police. Lenny was

also involved in drug offences. As a result of these offences, he served less than a year in prison. Lenny witnessed several violent incidents in prison that disturbed him.

Lenny is currently casually employed, completing odd labour jobs. He also has two young children. Lenny adores his children but acknowledges that he has not been a good father to them.

Trent

Trent is 24 years old. He attended secondary school but left at the beginning of year 11 to attend an alternative education centre. At school, Trent was a talented musician and a keen rugby player. He also participated in kapa haka. Trent competed in local music competitions with his musical friends and involved himself in regional kapa haka competitions. He initially got in trouble with the police in year 10 when he stole a car with a friend and drove it around the city. At 20 years of age, he vandalised some shops by smashing windows and, resulting from that crime, spent a few months in an adult prison. Trent does not wish to return to prison. He is currently employed part-time as a labourer and has one infant child.

Summary

The five rangatahi Māori are central to this research project. They described their schooling experiences, which will be further explored in the next section of this chapter, where the central themes of Māori identity, success / accomplishments, connectedness / disconnection, school disengagement, and connection to crime are described.

Māori identity

This section will explore the theme of Māori identity, a pattern derived from the interviews of the schooling experiences of the rangatahi Māori. Some of the sub-themes that the rangatahi Māori talked about in terms of their Māori identity included kapa haka, and te reo Māori.

This theme of Māori identity and the sub-themes connect to the first research question concerning how rangatahi Māori perceive their schooling experiences.

Kapa haka

All five participants mentioned their passion and enjoyment of kapa haka in the school environment. Some had participated in regional secondary school kapa haka competitions. Others participated in kapa haka for the first time while they were secondary school students. Rangatahi Māori felt more closely connected to their Māori identity because they participated in kapa haka. For example, Heremaia reflected how taking part in kapa haka strengthened his personal connection to te ao Māori: ‘Kapa haka helped me a lot. It helped me understand in depth more about being Māori and learn more about our ways that I wasn’t getting at home.’ For Lenny, kapa haka was an introduction to his Māori heritage as he started learning more about te ao Māori in his initial years at secondary school. For example, he explained that ‘Doing kapa haka made me feel good. We were all doing it. We all just felt good, and I picked up a few things too, you know, just some sayings and phrases.’ For these rangatahi Māori, participation in kapa haka reinforced a positive identity as Māori and supported taonga tuku iho, the principle of cultural aspiration (Pihama et al., 2002).

In contrast, some of the rangatahi Māori had negative experiences with kapa haka and Māori culture. For example, Trent recalled an incident at a school pōwhiri (welcome ceremony), where he felt anger that some students were ridiculing the event:

I remember hearing some racist comments from the Pākehā boys at the pōwhiri we used to do at the start of the year to welcome the new students. Some of them were even laughing in the middle of it. When I think back, I would have had a go at them.

There were also disparaging comments made by Xavier’s teacher about his Māori culture: ‘If you do something wrong, straightaway, it’s Xavier from kapa haka or Xavier from Māori

class that did this.’ For these rangatahi Māori, experiences of racism and negative stereotyping at school diminished their positive associations with being Māori.

Te reo Māori

Four of the rangatahi Māori took te reo Māori as an elective subject at school and spoke about the value and impact that learning te reo Māori had had on their identity as Māori. For Mikaere, learning te reo Māori helped him understand a mihi and his whakapapa:

Learning Māori was cool because I got to learn more about my whakapapa and stuff such as how to say where you’re from, and how to do a mihi properly. That definitely helped with home life living with a Māori family.

Heremaia also benefited from learning te reo Māori: ‘I enjoyed learning new words and phrases in Māori class, and that helped me a lot, especially with kapa haka.’ There was also a sense of accomplishment for these rangatahi Māori learning more about their Māori identity.

Connectedness / disconnection

The importance and desirability of relationships were clear from the rangatahi interviews, and this section will highlight the connectedness and disconnection they experienced while at school. Some rangatahi Māori spoke about positive relationships with their peers and teachers. In contrast, they also discussed adverse interactions with their peers and teachers. There were also comments concerning loneliness. Therefore, the sub-themes further described in this section include relationships with peers and teachers, success and accomplishments.

Relationships with peers

Many of the rangatahi Māori had quality and strong friendships while they were at school. Some participants enjoyed the whānau and whakawhanaungatanga connectedness that kapa haka provided. They particularly valued the experiences where they were able to bond with

other students. For example, Xavier spoke of how kapa haka strengthened his relationships with his peers: ‘It was the bonding with the team. You know, it’s about having people around you, and being able to lift other people up and have them lift you up when you’re feeling down.’ Trent also enjoyed the relationships he established: ‘We were definitely like a whānau. We ate together. We sang together. We haka together, especially before our big competitions.’ The rangatahi Māori valued whakawhanaungatanga and the importance of culturally meaningful connections and Mikaere enjoyed spending time with his friends at school, including playing sports with them. He had very close relationships with his Māori friends. As he told me:

Well, of course, you like going to school to hang out with your friends, like going to school to socialise with different people. I loved being an idiot with my friends, teasing each other, and getting away from home life. Home life wasn’t bad. Us Māori, we click easily. We get each other’s humour. My friends were never a bad influence.

Heremaia grew up in a rural township and noted his positive relationships with his friends at school:

I had some good friends at school. I grew up with them because we all went to the same schools, primary school, intermediate and then high school. We lived in a small town, so our parents pretty much knew each other, and we used to always hang out at each other’s houses after school and at the weekends.

This was also echoed by Trent, who revealed some great experiences with his friends at school, particularly around sports and music: ‘Rugby and music was my thing at school. I really enjoyed hanging out with my bros at training and jamming the guitar.’

For the rangatahi Māori, friendships with their peers were of great importance to their well-being and development at school. In contrast to positive peer relationships, the rangatahi Māori also shared negative experiences. For example, Trent got entangled with unsuitable friends, which got him in trouble: ‘From year 10, I just got involved in the wrong crowd. I got bored.’ Xavier also detailed experiences with his peers that often led them into trouble:

I hung out with the boys who clowned around, and they didn't want to do schoolwork ... We would get stoned with the boys at school and the classes you don't want to go, we would go to the park and just get stoned and just go sit in class blazed as.

There seemed to be a relationship between not enjoying schoolwork and engaging in problematic behaviour, which, in turn, could negatively impact on their schooling outcomes. Lenny's experience differed from the other rangatahi Māori. He was tall and big and recognised that he might have been intimidating during his high school years. Although he referred to friends at school he explained: 'We'd meet after school or before, and just mucked around at the back of the classroom.' He also felt disconnected and socially isolated. For example, 'A lot of times, to be honest, I just stuck to myself. Some people really didn't like me ... I wasn't allowed to go around their houses after school. I wasn't welcomed by their parents.' Lenny highlighted kapa haka experiences, which made him feel good because he was part of something positive with others. It appears that outside of kapa haka, positive connections, acceptance, and a sense of whakawhanaungatanga were missing.

Relationships with teachers

Rangatahi Māori all referred to positive experiences with one or more of their secondary school teachers. They particularly valued teachers who treated them with care, humour and respect. For example, Xavier's former English teacher was also his sports team manager: 'She was like that lady that just never really got angry at me, or really disappointed, you know? I could handle that ... I didn't beat myself up so much.' For Lenny, it was his kapa haka teacher who used humour to keep him on track: 'I think she wanted to whack me a few times ... When she gave me a growling, we would still laugh. But I knew that I was in trouble ... I tried my best to not offend her or anything.' These quotes highlight that the participants respected and appreciated teachers attuned to their emotional needs.

The relationships of the rangatahi Māori with teachers also positively influenced their effort and attainment at school: 'I felt like the teachers that made an effort to connect with a student ... they were the teachers that I gave my energy and my heart ... those were the teachers that I really tried for' (Xavier). Similarly, Mikaere's teacher supported his learning in class and recognised his potential:

I used to have this teacher who used to help train me in P.E class and he would take us to tournaments in the weekends. I was comfortable with that teacher ... It's more comforting knowing that that teacher knows your weaknesses and strengths, instead of not knowing you at all.

Despite not attaining educational qualifications or completing secondary school, these findings pinpoint instances of engagement and success for the participants.

On the contrary, there were instances where the rangatahi Māori had negative interactions with their teachers. For example, Heremaia had a bad moment with his teacher on the first day of starting secondary school: 'On my first day in English class, my teacher kicked me out. He said I wasn't allowed in the class because I was too naughty and disruptive. I reckon I should have been given some chances' Lenny did not have a positive relationship with his principal: 'I didn't like the principal though, ended up in there too often.' From these quotes, it is clear that their negative interactions with teachers had a detrimental effect on Heremaia and Lenny.

Success / accomplishments

Success and accomplishment are essential features of school life. There were various activities at school where the rangatahi Māori felt a sense of both enjoyment and accomplishment. For example, Xavier was able to find success in kapa haka in a way he perceived was similar to other students who succeeded academically:

You know how a normal person goes into class, and they study hard, and they get good grades, and they feel good? We weren't really like that; we like to go to kapa haka and put our energy into kapa haka.

Some of the boys also found success in other creative and performance-based classes like music. For example: 'The reason why I liked music was because it was practical ... we knew we would be able to do [the] practical [work] and have some fun ...' (Xavier). Another of the rangatahi Māori, Trent, had similar experiences: 'I did like music – that was my favourite class. I played bass for a band. We did pretty well and played at some music festivals.' Lenny's creative outlet was through art, and he felt a sense of accomplishment showcasing his artistic skills: 'I enjoyed doing designs. I always had a pen and paper or something, you know, creating lots of stuff. It was something that I could do in my own time. I was pretty proud of it.' Heremaia also echoed enjoyment in class and was the only participant in this research project who enjoyed Maths:

I liked Maths because I knew Maths was going to help me a lot ... I enjoyed being in that class because she would help me if I got stuck on something and she helped me move Maths class and I got put up in a higher Maths class ... I also liked sports and P.E classes too.

The participants showed that they succeeded at school in areas they enjoyed.

All the rangatahi Māori enjoyed participating and achieved success in sports for their school or community clubs. Four rangatahi Māori played rugby for the school or local rugby clubs. Xavier played rugby, tennis, and badminton and was passionate about physical activity. As a young teenager, he was a talented athlete and wanted to pursue a professional sporting career:

Sport was number one for me. Playing sport at lunchtime. So, rugby, tennis, touch, badminton. Just the competitiveness. I played sport to get better and learn new skills in a team environment. Tennis was a fast way to get fit for rugby.

Sport allowed the participants to experience fun, be active, and teach valuable social skills in a team environment, which they all valued.

School disengagement

Many rangatahi Māori stated that they did not actively participate or engage in some of their school activities and classes. At times, they felt disconnected from school. This section will focus on their experiences with boredom and truancy and learning challenges.

Boredom and truancy

There were instances where the rangatahi Māori were not actively engaged in school life. For example, Trent felt restless in many of his classes but was actively involved in extra-curricular activities: 'I didn't learn much in most of my classes. It was boring. Not really relevant and just was not interested.' Xavier held comparable views and felt bored in some of his classes, mainly because he did not like being stationary: 'I didn't really like sitting down and doing bookwork or filling out worksheets or do e-learning stuff.' The participants showed that their learning needs were not met, they became bored, and therefore they were not actively engaged in the classroom.

Truancy was an ongoing issue with some of the rangatahi Māori. As previously mentioned, Xavier would regularly be truant from school with his friends at a local park, smoking marijuana. This was also the case for Mikaere, who went to the local sports ground during school and was truant: 'Me and Sammy would smoke marijuana all the time. We would go to the courts during the day, muck around, have a smoke and play some more.' Truancy was a chronic issue for some rangatahi Māori, which could link to their learning challenges.

Learning challenges

Most rangatahi Māori spoke of their challenges and difficulties with learning. Some of the learning challenges stemmed from boredom and disengagement at school. For example, Lenny highlighted a learning difficulty that he attributed to his disengagement with some classes: ‘I couldn’t read very well. I didn’t know until I left school that I was dyslexic. I felt pretty dumb at school. I think I was ignored and not really taught properly by some teachers,’ Similarly, Mikaere struggled to understand what was expected of him in the classroom and from his teachers: ‘They should teach you in a way that you can understand. That was the problem. I would prefer a teacher or a teacher aide to explain it in a way that I could understand,’ Trent further echoed this: ‘I didn’t get some of the work at times, especially Maths. My mum got a tutor to help me one time. But yeah, left that school and went to the alternative school.’

Xavier also had difficulty with some of his learning experiences in his te reo Māori class, particularly concerning his preferred learning style: ‘A lot of work was e-learning. It wasn’t like practical like music. There was no practical; that’s why I like kapa haka because you don’t really have to sit down and do a lot of bookwork.’ Therefore, some of the learning difficulties experienced by rangatahi Māori, particularly around understanding the content of what was being taught in the classroom, proved too challenging.

Connection to crime

One criterion for inclusion in this research project was having committed a crime and previously been in trouble with the police. All of the rangatahi Māori in this research project talked about their offending, and three had served time in prison. The crimes included assault, drug possession and use, theft, evading police, and driving without a valid driver’s licence. In relation to the second research question, all participants were asked if there was a connection between their schooling experience and committing crimes. Although all five participants

stated that they did not perceive a relationship between their school experiences and offending, participants' subsequent comments did, in fact, draw a link between the two. Xavier initially rejected a relationship between his schooling experiences and committing a crime. However, Xavier later explained that young people may get involved in illegal activities if they do not achieve at school. He saw offending as an alternative route to avoiding failure in life:

I wouldn't necessarily say that [connection between schooling experiences and committing crime], but if you don't do well at school, you definitely feel like you need to get good at something else, like stealing or something or selling drugs. Because you know, you're like, if you've failed at school, you're going to fail in life.

Lenny noted that his criminal offending began while he was a student at primary school and escalated in high school. Like Xavier, Lenny had feelings of enjoyment and success from committing crime:

By the time I was 8 or 9, the police knew me quite well, as I would be taking stuff. And then, by the time I got to high school, it was just second nature. I like to just steal stuff... it was so easy. I just enjoyed it ... But yeah, I was drinking, and you know, taking a bit of, you know, some drugs.

Similarly, Trent did not initially make a connection between his schooling experiences and crime. However, later in the interview, he disclosed that he interacted with the wrong crowd:

My teenage years were a bit up and down. I just didn't care about school anymore. I hated it. I got with the wrong crowd, and things didn't go well after that. I couldn't control my anger and didn't know how. That's my biggest regret in life was going to jail. I don't ever wanna go back there. I want to be there for my son.

In the same way, Heremaia stated that there was no connection between his schooling experiences and criminal offending. However, he spoke about stealing alcohol from his parents when he was 11 years old, which he believed caused problems for him: 'It made me not think straight at school ... I would get it from friends and family.'

Finally, Mikaere started committing crimes after he left secondary school when he was in year 11. He also initially stated that there was no connection between his schooling experiences and offending:

I took my parents' car when I was 17 years old. The police pulled me up and I had no licence. I ended up lying to them, telling them that I had a restricted licence when I had no licence at all. That's the first time, I went to the police station for about two hours until my Nan picked me up.

Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the results of the data collected from five rangatahi Māori with experience in the criminal justice system. The semi-structured online interviews gave several perspectives on the educational experiences of the rangatahi Māori.

All the participants showed evidence of early risk-taking behaviour such as truancy, stealing, drinking, alcohol, and drugs. The learning difficulties of the rangatahi Māori were exacerbated by their disengagement from school and disconnection with teachers. Although positive moments were sprinkled through their schooling, such as kapa haka, te reo Māori, and positive student-teacher relationships, these protective factors were, ultimately, insufficient to keep the rangatahi Māori on track.

In Chapter 5 I will discuss the results of the data collected in light of current academic literature, describe noted limitations, and provide future research recommendations.

Chapter 5

Whakawhitinga Kōrero / Discussion and Conclusion

Whāia ngā kōrero, kia mārama.
Pursue the conversations in order to understand.

Introduction

The whakataukī used at the beginning of this chapter refers to the power of listening. Only through effective listening can you genuinely understand others. This research project aimed to listen to the five rangatahi Māori and elevate their views on their school and criminal justice experiences. This research will contribute to an improved understanding of the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori who have committed crimes.

This thesis sought to understand and answer the following research questions:

1. How do rangatahi Māori perceive their schooling experiences?
2. What connections do rangatahi Māori perceive between their schooling experiences and criminal offending?

Chapter four of this thesis summarised the results of the five semi-structured individual interviews of the rangatahi Māori. Significant themes that emerged from the interviews included Māori identity, success / accomplishments, connectedness / disconnection, school disengagement, and connection to crime.

The findings of this study indicate that most of the participants struggled academically, had negative schooling experiences, limited experiences of success at school, early disengagement from school, including high levels of truancy. Most were drinking alcohol and smoking drugs from a young age, none of the participated fully completed their schooling, and all are currently in unskilled, low-paid employment.

In this final chapter, I will discuss the themes that emerged from the research findings. These themes will help answer the research questions. There will be an explanation of how

the findings of this research project align with and contribute to the existing literature. Suggestions will be made for future research and development, including additional recommendations.

The kaupapa Māori principles mentioned in Chapter 3 will be linked to the themes discussed in this final chapter.

Māori identity

Māori identity was a central theme in the findings. All participants referred to favourable experiences at school regarding kapa haka and learning te reo Māori, which supported a positive Māori identity. This theme aligns with the kaupapa Māori principle of taonga tuku iho because features of Māori identity, such as kapa haka and te reo Māori which were discussed by the rangatahi Māori are valuable taonga passed down from our ancestors and therefore consolidates their importance.

Kapa haka

All participants mentioned kapa haka. Kapa haka is offered in many schools in Aotearoa New Zealand and is used to support Māori knowledge and te reo Māori (Highfield & Webber, 2021). Kapa haka provides authentic and appropriate culturally responsive learning opportunities for Māori students (Whitinui, 2010). Kapa haka is often referred to as taonga tuku iho; treasures and traditions our ancestors handed down. So, kapa haka allows Māori to affirm their identity, to celebrate their lineage and is an expression of te ao Māori through language and music (Pihama et al., 2014). Many of the rangatahi Māori in this study made positive connections with their participation in kapa haka at school regarding their relationships with their peers, a sense of accomplishment, acceptance, and leadership roles.

Kapa haka provided opportunities for whakawhanaungatanga among the rangatahi Māori. Whakawhanaungatanga is about making culturally meaningful and responsive connections with others (Levack et al., 2016) and is a crucial component of kaupapa Māori.

Culturally appropriate communication and relationship-building is essential for Māori students because whakawhanaungatanga improves engagement, mutual respect, and understanding between people (Hamley et al., 2022). Kapa haka has been identified as an example of an educational imperative that can propel Māori student success by supporting their identity and increasing their confidence (Whitinui, 2010). There is a clear need to integrate the skills and values learnt in kapa haka across the school environment and the curriculum because these were not evident in the rest of the schooling experiences of the rangatahi.

Te reo Māori

Strengthening Māori language, customs, and culture in school environments will better support Māori students. For some participants, learning te reo Māori at school increased their knowledge and awareness of whakapapa and identity (Mahuika, 2019). Understanding our whakapapa acknowledges our origins and highlights lineage and heritage (Patterson, 1998). Furthermore, it connects and strengthens our connections with our tūpuna, whānau, whenua (land), iwi, and marae. Therefore, it is beneficial for Māori students to know their whakapapa which, like kapa haka, can strengthen their identity as Māori. The learning of whakapapa is a vital component of any te reo Māori teaching programme, and teachers need appropriate resources to support Māori students' learning. Te ao Māori features, such as reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and history, underpin the concept of whakapapa and aid Māori students to better understand who they are and where they are from. Rangatahi Māori are more motivated and achieve in school environments with opportunities to access a culturally sustaining curriculum, kapa haka, and te reo Māori (Highfield & Webber, 2021).

Connectedness / disconnection

Connectedness is a protective factor that is important for many rangatahi Māori.

Relationships with people and the school environment can benefit young people, support

better health outcomes, and lower the risk of deviant behaviour (Daly et al., 2010). This section will focus on the connectedness and disconnection that the rangatahi Māori experienced. The theme of connectedness / disconnection aligns with the kaupapa Māori principle of *kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kāinga* because this principle is about focussing on ways to alleviate issues and problems that Māori communities face, of which connectedness is an important aspect. The concerns raised include the difficulties the participants in the study faced in the school system and the challenges they faced in the criminal justice system. Strengthening relationships is key to connectedness and links with the kaupapa Māori principle of *whānau*. The participants spoke about their relationships with their peers and teachers, which were an important part of their schooling experiences and will form a sub-theme: student–teacher relationships.

The peers of the rangatahi Māori had a central role in the schooling experiences of the participants. The participants spoke about positive and negative experiences with some of their teachers especially concerning teachers who made an effort to connect with them. The importance of relationships between teachers and Māori has been well documented. A study by Kay Hawk and colleagues (2002) found that Māori students were more motivated to learn when a positive relationship existed between them and their teachers.

Studies also show that positive interactions and experiences by teachers engaging with students can lead to better classroom relationships and enhance learning motivation (Meyer & Turner, 2006). Heremaia regularly received positive feedback from his maths teacher. Xavier also commented on his appreciation of the teachers who made an effort to connect with him. Teacher feedback influences both the wellbeing of students in school and social acceptance (Schwab et al., 2022). This is true for rangatahi Māori, where positive relationships and interactions are vital to the enhancement of educational outcomes (Bishop et al., 2009).

Nevertheless, some of the rangatahi Māori had negative experiences with a few of their teachers. Xavier commented that some of his teachers negatively stereotyped him because of his Māori ethnicity. Literature supports that the negative stereotyping of Māori learners exists and contributes to their lack of academic success (Turner et al., 2015). Negative stereotypes of Māori are already prevalent in their daily lives. This is supported by research into the continuing intolerance and discrimination that Māori experience (Houkamau et al., 2017). Education should be seen as a great equaliser, particularly for Māori. It is very important that professional development continue to be provided to teachers and that they receive training in order to overcome bias and stereotypes in the classroom.

This study, although only a small sample size, illustrates the need for schools to provide teachers with genuine chances to build dynamic relationships with their students outside the classroom. Such relationships can be built through several different arenas, such as kapa haka, sports, extracurricular activities, and community events. Teachers need to continue to develop their knowledge of how to respond to rangatahi Māori appropriately and in a culturally safe manner. This may mean that they have to unlearn some of their current practices. Thus, it is evident that positive and proactive relationships between teachers and rangatahi Māori are vital in enabling rangatahi Māori to flourish at school.

Relationships

Relationships between peers play a vital role in children's school lives, which was evident in this study. For example, the participants mentioned positive relationships with their peers regarding kapa haka experiences, friends in sports teams and musical bands. The interaction among peers in a classroom and school environment are an essential component of the learning process for student engagement and well-being. These relationships provide a source of friendship and can positively contribute to a healthy social and emotional development (Pepler & Bierman, 2018).

Mikaere spoke about close relationships with other rangatahi Māori at his school. His comments align with Anthea Knowles's (2019) research that identified that rangatahi Māori strongly value their peers and social relationships. When building relationships, rangatahi Māori value manaakitanga, laughter, and compassion. For that reason, safe spaces need to be created in schools for opportunities for rangatahi Māori to develop healthy connections among themselves.

Many rangatahi Māori spoke about their success and enjoyment in participating in school and club sport. There is a connection between sporting participation and positive youth developmental outcomes (Super et al., 2018). In particular, for vulnerable youth participating in organised sport, there was a positive relationship between sports participation and prosocial behaviour. This is validated by Irina Jugl, Doris Bender, and Friedrich Lösel (2021) who contend that sports programmes can prevent crime and reduce reoffending. Therefore, organised sport can provide regular practices and games that offer consistency in young people's lives. It is important that such opportunities be provided and promoted without significant barriers.

Connection to crime

All rangatahi Māori initially stated that there was no direct connection between their schooling experiences and crime. However, within the interviews, rangatahi Māori shared examples of experiences in their school life, such as boredom, associating with antisocial peers, and feeling a sense of accomplishment in illegal activities. Although bad school experiences do not make rangatahi Māori commit crimes, it is possible to claim that a series of negative school experiences for rangatahi Māori who are already vulnerable can be a risk factor for future offending (Sutherland, 2011).

The findings of this research showed that most of the students did not achieve well academically. According to Xavier, if rangatahi Māori do not succeed in a school

environment, then they may find success elsewhere, like in crime. Students who are struggling at school are more likely to commit crimes than students who are doing well (Lochner & Moretti, 2004). Staying in school reduces the chances of imprisonment or arrest because formal education can influence an individual's decision about crime and, therefore, young, educated people are more reluctant to take risks (Lochner & Moretti, 2004). For that reason, it is critical that young people are engaged and supported in the education system, which, in turn, may reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system.

There was also a remark by Trent about how hanging out with the wrong crowd had led him to offend while he was at secondary school. Evidence shows that unstructured socialising and association with friends who commit crimes can increase the chances of young people offending (Hoeben et al., 2016). This is endorsed by Josja Rokven and colleagues (2017), who suggested that friendships can influence the risk of offending, especially if living near to delinquent friends increases people's risk of offending. Therefore, friends' involvement in crime can influence others.

How do rangatahi Māori perceive their schooling experiences?

The first research question will be answered about how the rangatahi Māori in this study perceived their school experiences. The rangatahi Māori had positive and negative experiences at secondary school. They displayed favourable attitudes towards kapa haka and learning te reo Māori which helped strengthen their connection to their Māori identity. Many of the rangatahi Māori did enjoy some success at school in various activities such as academic studies, kapa haka, and sports, and they were able to attribute those experiences to having positive and caring relationships with their peers and teachers, as well as interactive and practical classroom learning experiences. They were actively involved in extracurricular activities such as sports and music, which aligned with their personal interests. However, despite these positive experiences, the rangatahi Māori still committed crime. It can be

argued that there was a lack of consistency in positive experiences in the lives of the rangatahi Māori in this study.

Some of the negative experiences of the rangatahi Māori included poor relationships and interactions with some of their teachers and peer pressure from some of their peers. Some rangatahi Māori acknowledged that truanting from school and smoking marijuana was problematic. There were also issues concerning classroom teaching and pedagogy that the rangatahi Māori did not find engaging or useful. The accumulation of these negative schooling experiences and individual, social and peer risk factors show that some rangatahi Māori continue to be disadvantaged in the current education system.

What connections do rangatahi Māori perceive between their schooling experiences and criminal offending?

The second research question is about how the rangatahi Māori perceived the connections between their schooling experiences and criminal offending. Each of the rangatahi Māori initially made no direct connection between their schooling experiences and criminal offending. However, there were occurrences where the rangatahi Māori shared some instances around the time that they offended. Many got into trouble with the police while attending primary and secondary school. The rangatahi Māori committed theft, took drugs, were involved in traffic offences, smashing property, physical assault, and abscondment.

The rangatahi Māori also commented that if their personal circumstances had been different at school, they may not have committed any further crimes. Some also mentioned that they may not have committed a crime if had they selected better-suited subjects, had good learning experiences, or had not succumbed to peer pressure from some of their friends.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

This qualitative study investigated how five male rangatahi Māori perceived their schooling experiences, and if there were connections between school and crime. A future project could

include a study with higher numbers of rangatahi Māori and those with experience in the rangatahi Māori court system. It would be interesting to compare differences between rangatahi Māori who went through the rangatahi court system to those who did not.

Rangatahi Māori who live outside of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland could also be recruited to see if there are differences between the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori living in larger, urban settings and those living in rural townships in Aotearoa New Zealand. All of the rangatahi in this study were male and attended English-medium schools. A future research project could include male and female rangatahi, and those who attended Māori-medium schools. It would be interesting to investigate the similarities and/or differences between Māori males and females. Because Māori identity was a major theme that emerged from the data, it would be fascinating to understand the experiences of rangatahi Māori who attended Māori-medium schools.

Recommendations

This research project suggests that specific issues should be addressed if rangatahi Māori are to have positive school experiences, as constructive experiences may deter rangatahi Māori from a future of committing crimes. The participants interviewed all attended English-medium schools. I suggest that rangatahi Māori need have legitimate and easily accessible opportunities to participate in te ao Māori in these schools. This will help strengthen their connection to their Māori identity.

Schools should offer professional development opportunities to teachers and so they can continue to support culturally relevant and responsive pedagogies. This will increase the cultural capacity, understanding and awareness of those educators who work with rangatahi Māori in schools. It is imperative that schools engage in conversations concerning the school-to-prison pipeline, as education can serve as a protective factor and help prevent youth crime. There is a need for educators to understand the power and influence schooling can have on

rangatahi Māori. To prepare pre-service teachers for the workforce, it should also be a priority for them to understand the influence that teachers can have over their students. Moreover, they should also be aware of the challenges faced by rangatahi Māori in the education and criminal justice systems.

The participants expressed a desire for more interactive-based activities in the classroom. Teaching approaches and strategies that are culturally effective and impactful for rangatahi Māori are needed. There is also a requirement that teachers prioritise building better relationships with rangatahi Māori. Teachers must build a caring rapport with their Māori learners in the classroom and be actively involved in their interests, such as attending sports games, cultural practices, and other extracurricular activities.

As with the opportunities afforded to the participants, te ao Māori opportunities should be offered to all rangatahi Māori in both the school environment and the curriculum. For example, it is also not enough for kapa haka to be an add-on; these values need to be embedded across the entire curriculum.

The high number of school exclusions and stand-downs of rangatahi Māori is concerning. Some rangatahi Māori spoke about leaving their secondary school early and moving to alternative education. So, there needs to be a focus on inclusive and progressive school policies and decisions that the Board of Trustees make to keep young people engaged in education. The literature shows that young people engaged in education are less likely to offend.

The results of my research show that rangatahi Māori need authentic opportunities to build whakawhanaungatanga with their peers. When schools support and encourage relationship building through classroom learning, class trips, recreational activities, sports, and te ao Māori events, this likely to have positive influences and increase student enjoyment and engagement with school.

Conclusion

In the past, our tūpuna sent their hopes and aspirations to the stars. As the Matariki constellation of stars gracefully traverses the sky each year, it gives us hope that we can create a world that honours the potential, creativity, and energy of our rangatahi Māori. Many hope they will have support structures in schools and their communities that enable them to lead healthy, prosperous, and successful lives. Therefore, we all have a role and a responsibility to improve the situation for rangatahi Māori.

This research has empowered five rangatahi Māori to reflect upon their journey through their secondary school years, by telling their personal story. Despite some positive experiences in school, these were sporadic and not enough to deter them away from offending.

It can be argued that schools must improve their school experiences for rangatahi Māori by enhancing te ao Māori experiences, enriching classroom learning experiences, creating opportunities for students to develop strong and healthy relationships with their teachers and peers, and supporting bold additions to refining the education system. By making these changes, rangatahi Māori may have more substantial opportunities so that they thrive and are directed away from offending.

In line with the name gifted for this thesis, our rangatahi Māori are the *māhuri*, the young saplings that need nurturing, support, and love because only such encouragement will determine how they prosper. We must have the courage to challenge established ideas and practices to support the growth of rangatahi Māori and allow them to make their distinctive marks on the world.

Appendices

Appendix A. Interview Questions

1. How old are you now?
2. How many schools did you attend?
3. How old were you when you left school?
4. What year level did you complete at school?
5. Did you complete any levels of NCEA or other qualifications while at school?
6. What ethnic group(s) do you identify with?
7. What are some of the things you liked about school?
8. What are some things you didn't enjoy about school?
9. What were your experiences at school like as a Māori student?
10. Could you tell me about your relationships at school with schoolmates, teachers, etc.?
11. If you could change anything about your time at school, what would you change?
12. Could you tell me about when you first started getting in trouble with the law and how it happened?
13. Do you see any connection between your schooling experiences and getting in trouble with the law?
14. Do you think you would still have gotten in trouble with the law if your school experiences had been different? What could have made a difference?

Appendix B. Oral Consent Form



For use when interviews are being conducted by videoconference.

Project title: *Kia tū pakari ngā māhuri: Amplifying the voices of rangatahi Māori in the criminal justice system and their educational experiences.*

Project Supervisors: *Dr Kirsten Hanna and Dr Hana Turner-Adams*

Researcher: *Will Flavell*

The participant joins the videoconference

Do you agree to my recording your consent to participate?

If they agree, then the record function will be activated, and they will be asked the following:

- Have you read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 6 March 2022 Yes No
- Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered. Yes No
- Do you understand that notes may be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-recorded on a mobile phone and transcribed.
- Do you understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (your choice) and that you may withdraw from the study at any time without being advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.
- Do you understand that if you no longer want to be in the research study, then you can choose to have the data (information) about me removed or allow the data (information) about me to continue to be used in the research. However, once the findings have been written up, removal of your data may not be possible
- Do you agree to take part in this research? Yes No
- Would you like to receive a short report of the research findings? Yes No
- Would you like to attend a public event to hear about the results of the research study Yes No

Appendix B. Oral Consent Form

Please confirm your name and contact details.

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....
.....
.....

I will now turn off the recording of the Consent and then will start a separate recording for the interview.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6 March 2022 21/382

Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

9 March 2022

Project Title

Kia tū pakari ngā māhuri:

They are amplifying the voices of rangatahi Māori in the criminal justice system and through their educational experiences.

An Invitation

Kia ora. My name is Will Flavell. I am a master's student at AUT. I am from Whangārei but live in West Auckland. My iwi are Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Whatua, and Ngāti Maniapoto. I would like to invite you to be part of this research project. This research will go towards a Master of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Would you be willing to be involved?

What is the purpose of this research?

This research aims to understand the educational experiences of rangatahi Māori between 18 and 24 years old who have previous experience in the criminal justice system. I want to interview rangatahi Māori to understand if there is any connection between schooling experiences and youth offending.

The results of this research could help schools think about how they can best support rangatahi Māori in future. The findings of this research will be used for public presentations and journal articles.

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

You are invited to participate in this research because you are male, Māori and between 18 and 24 years old. You also have direct experience in the criminal justice system. You saw a poster on Facebook about the research, so you contacted me.

You cannot participate in this research project if you are a former student of Will Flavell.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you want to take part in the study, you will need to sign a consent form (attached). You can email, text, or ring me to let me know you are interested in being involved in this research.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice), and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. If you decide to be part of the study, you can change your mind later and leave the study at any time. If you leave the study, then you can tell me to remove the information you gave me or tell me it's okay to use that information. However, if I have already finished writing up the findings of the study, it might not be possible to remove your information. It is recommended that you do

disclose any illegal activities. However, in the event that illegal practices/activities are revealed as part of the interview, the researcher may be required to report this to the appropriate authorities.

What will happen in this research?

The project involves an interview with me that will take between 30 and 60 minutes. We will have a kōrero about your schooling experiences and also about the relationship between schooling and youth offending. We will talk online on Zoom. I will record our zoom kōrero on my mobile phone, if that's okay with you, and type up the interview.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There could be times during the interview that you may feel uncomfortable to talk about certain issues. That's okay. You do not have to answer all the questions. If you need a break during the interview or want to stop, that's okay too.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus, email counselling@aut.ac.nz or call 921 9998.
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling at <https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health>

What are the benefits?

The benefits of this research could be a sense of empowerment for you and me and an increase in knowledge. This research may lead to better outcomes for rangatahi Māori in the education system.

This research will help me to gain a Master's qualification at AUT.

How will my privacy be protected?

You will not be identified in the research—I won't use your name or the name of any other person or place you mention in the study. Instead, I will give you another name to protect your privacy; I will do the same for any other person or place you mention.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

I will need 30 – 60 minutes of your time for the interview. I will type up the interview and send it to you to see if you are okay with what was said.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You have two weeks to decide whether you are keen to participate in this research.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes. I will send you a two-page summary of the findings of this research. Participants can also contact me for more information.

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 Kirsten Hanna, Kirsten.hanna@aut.ac.nz, 0800 288 864

Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Will Flavell

Email: Researchaut07@gmail.com

Number: 0212790100

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Kirsten Hanna

Email: Kirsten.hanna@aut.ac.nz

[Phone: 09-921-9999 x8308](tel:09-921-9999x8308)

Dr Hana Turner-Adams

Email: h.turner@auckland.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *16 November 2021*, AUTEK Reference number 21/382.

Appendix D. Research Flyer for Facebook

What was school like for you?

If you're Māori, between 18 and 24 years old, I'm keen to have a kōrero with you.

Understanding the schooling experiences of rangatahi Māori who have previous experience in the criminal justice system

I would like to interview rangatahi Māori between 18 and 24 years old who have experience in the criminal justice system about their schooling experiences

Location

- The interviews will take place online on Zoom.
- Each interview will be between 30 mins – 60 mins long.

Are you eligible?

- Māori
- Male
- Between 18 – 24 years old
- Experience in the criminal justice system



If you are interested in being a part of this study or have any questions, please get in touch:

Researcher: Will Flavell

Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

Email: researchaut07@gmail.com

Mobile number: 0212790100

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on November 2021 AUTEK
Reference number 21/312

Kohikohinga Pukapuka Rāhui / References

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