

**“TE AHI KEI ROTO I TAKU PUKU – THE FIRE IN MY BELLY”**  
**AN EXPLORATION OF CAREER STORIES AND ASPIRATIONS OF YOUNG MĀORI**  
**WOMEN FROM TE TAITOKERAU, NORTHLAND**

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**A thesis submitted to**

**Auckland University of Technology**

**In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of**

**Master of Business (MBus.)**

**2022**

**Faculty of Business, Economics and Law**

**Karakia**

***He Timatanga: Whakataka te Hau***

***Whakataka te hau ki te uru***

*Cease the winds from the west*

***Whakataka te hau ki te tonga***

*Cease the winds from the south*

***Kia mākinakina ki uta***

*Let the breeze blow over the land*

***Kia mātaratara ki tai***

*Let the red tipped dawn come*

***E hī ake ana te ataakura***

*With a sharpened air,*

***He tio, he huka, he hauhunga***

*A touch of frost, a promise of a glorious day*

***Tihei wā Mauri Ora!***

*Behold we live!*

(Rangitāne Education, 2019)

## Ngā Mihi - Acknowledgements

Tīhei Mauri Ora!

Tukuna te reo mihi ki te Ātua i hanga te ao nei,

Rerea te mihi mōteatea ki te iwi wairua, i tānikohia e rātou te kahu tapu

E te tī, e te tā, e tamara mā

Ko tēnei tā mātou tuhinga whakapae mo ngā Mana Wāhine o Te Taitokerau.

To the Wāhine Māori that shared their career aspirations and stories and the Mana Wāhine that continue to inspire us all, I am forever grateful and humbled by your willingness to share your stories in your commitment for our whānau, hapū and iwi. In doing so, collectively we uphold the kaupapa of our mothers and grandmother's legacies. To all those that gave their aroha and manaaki for this research, thank you.

To my supervisors Dr. Nimbus Staniland and Dr. Irene Ryan of AUT University thank you both for your mentoring and leadership you provided throughout this journey. Your commitment to share our women's stories and experiences has been inspirational and it was humbling to have your support and strength.

To my outstanding whānau and especially my parents and heroes Wallace and Averill Poa, thank you for your enduring belief and tautoko in my endeavours to pave a way forward for our beautiful mokopuna. Thank you also to my mentor Una Ryan for your wisdom and experience.

To my Mama, Ida Te Ao Pirihi Tauri (nee Kaka) the epitome of Mana Wāhine, proud, intelligent and beautiful, you will always be my inspiration and this research is my way of upholding and honouring your legacy and aroha.

Finally, thank you to my husband Ralph Te Rautangata Ruka, the pou of our whānau, strong, steadfast and always enduring.

**Nō reira, tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna tātou katoa.**

## **Abstract**

During these unprecedented times of pandemics, technological advancements and global pressures a specific study and focus on young Māori women's career aspirations in Te Taitokerau, Northland is critical. Te Taitokerau statistically has some of the poorest health, employment and housing outcomes for Māori. Young Māori women in this region will be crucial to the future. As such, their success will be a fundamental cornerstone for the well-being of whānau, hapū and iwi (Pihama, 2001) going forward.

Subsequently, this thesis aims to provide space for the voices of young Māori women from Te Taitokerau, Northland to be heard and listened to. Specifically, it explores the career aspirations of young Māori women from Te Taitokerau and seeks to form a response to three main research questions noted below:

1. What are the career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau?
2. To what extent in the present do they draw strength and mana from older, successful Mana Wāhine?
3. How do we improve the likelihood of these young Māori women succeeding in meaningful careers?

This research is grounded in a Mana Wāhine perspective and a Kaupapa Māori methodology. Through interviews and focus groups participants shared the depth of their commitment to whānau, hapū and iwi and how their careers are core to constructing a life that is 'kaupapa driven'. Participants also described their ongoing struggle of working "Between two worlds" and the tensions they straddle between Te Ao Māori cultural values and Te Ao Pākehā systems.

The influence of older Mana Wāhine as mothers, grandmothers, activists, feminists and career oriented women to whom have paved the way is important. As such these collective of Mana Wāhine narratives make visible the inequities and challenges these young women are addressing day to day in their own careers within an organisational and societal context. However, the burden of responsibility weighs heavy on these young Māori women as they carry a legacy that goes beyond their years. As a society we need to lighten the load and keep the fire alive that burns within so that what they do now matters.

## Kupu Hou – Glossary

<b>Kupu Hou</b> (New Words)	<b>Whakamāramatanga</b> (Definition)
Aotearoa	Land of the long white cloud, New Zealand
Aroha	loving, affection, sympathy, charity, compassion, love, empathy
Awhi	embracing, embrace, adoption, adopting
Hapū	sub-tribe
Iwi	tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory
Kaiāwhina	helper, assistant, contributor, counsel, advocate
Kaikaranga	caller - the woman (or women) who has the role of making the ceremonial call to visitors onto a marae, or equivalent venue, at the start of a gathering, event or <i>pōwhiri</i>
Kaikiri	to be hostile, antagonistic, belligerent, racist, contrary, quarrelsome, opposed
Kaikohe	rural town in Northland
Karakia	to recite ritual chants, say grace, pray, recite a prayer, chant
Kaumātua	adult, elder, elderly man, elderly woman, old man - a person of status within the <i>whānau</i>
Kaupapa Māori	Māori ideology - a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values of Māori society
Kōrero	speech, narrative, story, news, account, discussion, conversation, discourse, statement, information
Kotahitanga	The power of being collective and connected to whānau, hapū and iwi is important
Kotiro	girl, daughter
Kuia	elderly woman, grandmother, female elder
Kura Kaupapa	school operating under Māori custom and using Māori as the medium of instruction
Mamae	pain, hurt, injury, wound
Mana	prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma - <i>mana</i> is a supernatural force in a person, place or object
Mana motuhake	<i>mana</i> through self-determination and control over one's own destiny
Mana Wāhine	mana of Māori women as protectors, nurturers and the influence of mothers, grandmothers, and generations of women before them
Mana Whenua	power associated with possession and occupation of tribal land
Manaaki	show respect, generosity, and care for others

Marae	meeting house/s, includes a complex of buildings around the marae
Māreikura	nobly born female, respected female
Mātauranga	knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill - sometimes used in the plural
Mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge - the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices.
Mihi	to greet, pay tribute, acknowledge, thank
Mirimiri	massage
Mokopuna	grandchildren, grandchild – descendant
Ngā mihi	Acknowledgements
Ngā Tamatoa	(The Warriors) was a Māori activist group that operated throughout the 1970s to promote Māori rights, fight racial discrimination, and confront injustices perpetrated by the New Zealand Government, particularly violations of the Treaty of Waitangi.
Ngāpuhi	Ngāpuhi territory stretches from the Hokianga Harbour to the Bay of Islands, and to Whangārei in the south (Heritage, 2005).
Ngāti Porou	Ngāti Porou is the most easterly region in the North Island and runs north along the coast from Te Toka-a-Taiau at Gisborne, to Pōtikirua, inland from Hicks Bay (Heritage, 2005).
Pakaru	damage, damaged parts, torn parts
Pākehā	New Zealander of European descent, foreigner, non-Māori
Puku	stomach, abdomen, centre, belly, tummy
Ringa wera	a figurative term for people who work in the kitchen and their hot hands from the fires and ovens.
Tamariki	children, young
Tāne	male, men
Taonga	Treasure
Tauīwi	foreigner, European, non-Māori, colonist
Tautoko	to support, prop up, verify, advocate, accept (an invitation), agree
Te Ao Tauīwi	The other tribe's world
Te Kohanga Reo	Māori language preschool
Te Reo Māori	the Māori language
Te Taitokerau	Tail of the fish of Maui, (location) Northland, North Auckland
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi

Tika	to be correct, true, upright, right,
Tikanga	customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context
Tino Rangatiratanga	autonomy to govern as tangata whenua or self-determination
Titiro	to look at, inspect, examine, observe, survey, view
Tohunga	to be expert, proficient, adept, skilled person, chosen expert
Tūpuna / Tupuna	ancestors, grandparents
Urupa	cemetery or burial site
Wāhine	plural - female, women, feminine
Wāhine tua	super woman, hero
Wairua	spirit, soul - spirit of a person which exists beyond death, essence
Whakaaro	thought, opinion, plan, understanding, idea, intention,
Whakamā	ashamed, shy, bashful, embarrassed
Whakapapa	genealogy, lineage, ancestral connections as descendants from Rangi and Papatūānuku
Whakarongo	to listen, hear, obey
Whakataukī	proverb, significant saying, formulaic saying, aphorism - particularly those urging a type of behaviour.
Whānau	family, extended family, family group.
Whenua Māori	Māori land

(Moorfield, J. (2011). *Te Aka: Māori-English, English-Māori dictionary and index*. Longman/Pearson Education. Retrieved from *Te Aka Online Māori Dictionary*: <https://Māoridictionary.co.nz/>)

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### **Attestation of Authorship**

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

### **Ethics Approval**

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) approval was given for the ethics application 20/406 received on 12 February 2021.

## Chapter One: Introduction

*“Me aro ki te hā o Hineahuone” – “Pay heed to the mana of women”*

The whakataukī speaks to the whakapapa of Māori women as descendants of Hineahuone and is a recognition of the mana of women as they reclaim a cultural space that is broad and represents the diverse realities and experiences of the status of Māori women (Pihama, 2020). Hon. Nanaia Mahuta speaks here to the greatness of Māori women:

*“Māori women are celebrated for many things, as mothers and grandmothers, entrepreneurs, business leaders, teachers, nurturers and healers. We are community leaders, advocates and the backbone that upholds the aspirations of our whānau and communities.”*

*Hon. Nanaia Mahuta, Minister of Māori Development, Local Government and Foreign Affairs (Ministry for Women Affairs, 2017, p. 5).*

This research entitled “Te Ahi kei roto i taku Puku” empowers and enables the voices of young Māori women that live and work in Te Taitokerau, Northland. As community leaders they actively pursue careers with a burning desire to drive a kaupapa that upholds aspirations for their whānau, hapū and iwi. Sustained and supported by their own whānau they work tirelessly to address inequities utilising Kaupapa Māori principles and practices as they pursue their careers. As a researcher, witnessing their actions I was inspired to delve more into their stories, particularly given the contextual background from which their leadership emerges. It is to a brief overview of the Te Taitokerau, Northland context, the setting for this study, that this thesis begins to paint a picture of their enduring commitment to keep their dreams and aspirations burning.

### 1.1 Te Taitokerau, Northland Context

Since the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840, relationships between Pākehā and Māori have been marked by conflict, war and loss of land. This experience is encapsulated in this statement by our Ngāpuhi kaumatua:

*“Prior to Te Tiriti – we (Ngāpuhi) were thriving. The future of our hapū, the potential, it was there for us. We were a powerful people; an industrious people; an international people” (Te Kāwariki & Network Waitangi, 2012).*

In present times, statistics within health, housing and education describe Māori as groups that are the most disadvantaged. Stories of whānau that struggle to make ends meet whilst tribal leaders work hard to address ineffective economic strategies and opportunities

knowing that “Māori are still employed in low paid and low productivity industries that are more vulnerable to economic downturns and other shocks” (Te Taitokerau Iwi Chief Executives' Consortium, 2015, p. 19). Whilst the Northland region is promoted as “boasting a stunning natural environment rich in culture and history” (Council, 2013), Māori still live in what they describe as a “poverty in paradise”, unable to build on their tribal land suffering from the lowest incomes and highest unemployment rates comparatively across the country (Tatauranga, 2018).

Today, Te Taitokerau known as the tail of the fish of Maui, Northland is in a period of considerable change (Martin Jenkins, 2015). The forces involved are global, national and regional. Some are potentially strengthening, others are destabilising. However, all these forces for change can be considered opportunities for building resilience. The Northland region has a high proportion of people identifying as Māori: 65,000 or 36% of our population, compared to 16.5% at the national level (New Zealand Government, 2018). In addition, the iwi and hapū of Te Taitokerau are significant and visible cultural forces in our region and the core of our regional identity and leadership (Tai Tokerau Northland Economic Action Plan Advisory Group, 2019, p. 7). In this context, it is problematic that Māori as mana whenua are the most disadvantaged group in Te Taitokerau by most indicators. In fact, they are more likely to be victims of crime, less likely to be employed and have the poorest health outcomes than any other group (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Health, Justice 2021). As Māori struggle, the Northland region struggles.

Furthermore, these disparities and issues are now exacerbated by COVID-19, which will dampen significant industries such as tourism and hospitality, that boost the economy for years to come (Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, 2021). In addition, climate change, in the form of storms, floods, drought and aging infrastructure will also impact Māori, who are significantly less resourced and whose taonga (land, urupa, marae) occupy many of our most vulnerable land areas (King, et al., 2013). With all these factors in mind, the current government has recognised that structural change and significant resourcing are needed for Māori to lead themselves to a better future. Accordingly, funds to support several Māori-led COVID responses have recently been announced and substantial funds invested into major environmental and infrastructure projects of approximately \$800 million to boost the regional economy (Kanoa Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit, 2021); (New Zealand Government, 2018). Millions of these dollars have also been allocated to support iwi and hapū to manage their own resources and optimise whenua Māori so the potential for economic autonomy and advancement is upon us.

Finally, long-stalled treaty settlement negotiations since 2014 are well underway. The funding for large infrastructure projects and significant fund transfers are the likely result if previous settlements of Te Hiku o Te Ika Iwi in the far north are a precedent to these negotiations and subsequent legislation (NZ Parliament, 2015). As a result, mana whenua in Te Tai Tokerau will soon be in a position to choose the partners they work with, the priorities they work on and the resources they deploy. If Māori as tangata whenua advance so too will the region.

## **1.2 Purpose of Research: Young Māori Women's Career aspirations in Te Taitokerau**

It is this evolving contextual setting that provides the inspiration and backdrop for this research. Specifically, the critical nature of this research is to better understand the role, influence and the mana of young Māori women who choose to live and forge a successful career in Te Taitokerau (Reid, 2011; Henry & Wolfgramm, 2018). Often described as a part of a homogenous group within Māori populations for statistical purposes only, the research considers through a Mana Wāhine lens these young Māori women and how they live in diverse Māori cultural worlds (Tatauranga, 2018).

As such, their specific skill sets, capabilities and potential as a highly skilled workforce is being overlooked. Their participation in a local workforce that can deliver on significant strategic projects will have a long-term positive impact on the region and needs to be considered going forward. Making their voices and stories visible will provide a powerful insight into how key decision-makers within organisations can adapt and accommodate their systems to increase the likelihood of young Māori women succeeding both personally and professionally. Ultimately, to enhance the ability of these women to play their part in leading initiatives must be seen as a necessity for the region to succeed and prosper.

Thus, this research will consider the career aspirations of six young Māori women and the extent of influence that older women who have been deemed as successful mana wāhine impact their career decisions. I apply theory and literature relating to meaningful careers (Barnett, 2012; Bailey & Madden, 2016) and the role of mentors and role models to identify how we can sustain and resource their efforts whilst simultaneously identifying any challenges that impede their individual and collective progress. To honour their voices and their position as young Māori women throughout, the research is constructed within a Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wāhine perspective to align with Māori values and affirm a culturally appropriate methodology for the purpose of the research.



In its essence, Kaupapa Māori is the foundation that “gives meaning to the life of Māori and a conceptualisation of Māori knowledge” (Smith L.T, 2000). Kaupapa Māori methodology as a theory has emerged as a discourse that shares the reality of Māori experiences to challenge the political context of unequal power relations and structural barriers across a number of sectors. As a theoretical framework it validates and legitimises the principles and practices of being Māori and has been utilised to form many models to measure indicators of Māori health and wellbeing, create Māori centric curriculums and better understanding of mātauranga Māori (Mane, 2009; The Royal Commission, 1988; Smith, 1997).

Inherently, Kaupapa Māori methodology in its application raises a consciousness of the political context of unequal power relations and structural barriers that impact Māori which directly influences an assertion of tino rangatiratanga, whakapapa and whānau to name a few of many principles (Smith, 1997). It is useful then to also recognise that Māori women as mana wāhine hold a special place that only they can hold within Kaupapa Māori research. Intrinsically the basis of Mana Wāhine or the specific authority of Māori women cannot exist without Kaupapa Māori and vice versa. A kaupapa Māori methodology acknowledges the values of tikanga Māori and culture. These include “a respect for people (aroha ki te tangata), being a face that is known in the community (kanohi kitea), looking and listening before speaking (titiro, whakarongo, kōrero) and being humble (ngākau mahaki), being careful in our conduct (kia tūpato) and ensuring we uphold the mana of all people (kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata)” (Pipi, et al., 2004, p. 143 as cited by Smith, 2005).

Pihama (2001, p. 296) argues that the “reclamation of Māori women’s knowledge is critical to Mana Wāhine.” Therefore a Mana Wāhine perspective will hold a high regard for the position of young Māori women’s knowledge as part of a collective determined by whakapapa. Māori women have always held key, central positions in Māori society. To accept that Māori women have been excluded or ‘othered’ from the impacts of colonisation defined in terms of our difference to colonisers, by Māori men, Pākehā men and Pākehā women (Pihama, 2020, p. 360) is paramount. In it’s commitment the research must be to firstly acknowledge these complexities and strip them away to support the liberation of Māori women. As a consequence this study aims to align with these goals, so it maintains an integrity of an approach that is a match for the full expression of the participants’ autonomy.

### **1.3 Research Aims and Approach:**

The research seeks to understand what drives their career decisions and aspirations. The central aim of this research is to bring to the fore the voices and experiences of young Māori women of Te Taitokerau. Mana Wāhine, their career aspirations are a critical part of the

solutions and action plans for resilient independent Māori communities. For young Māori women in Te Taitokerau the transformational nature of the careers they choose and how they choose them will only serve to strengthen their collective contribution to a Kaupapa Māori context.

The research is a qualitative study. Semi-structured interviews with six young Māori women allowed the flexibility to explore their individual career aspirations in Te Taitokerau followed by two focus group meetings to listen and consider any reflections of the collective. The research utilises a Kaupapa Māori methodology, which acknowledges Mana Wāhine and the authority of Wāhine Māori, connecting past ancient Māori values to the present. This research will seek to identify what are other influencers of their careers decisions, both negative and positive.

The contribution of this study is two-fold:

First, it widens our knowledge on this under researched group of Wāhine Māori. It offers a unique insight into what influences the careers decisions and future aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau. This has the potential to inspire other young Māori women in Aotearoa. Second, methodologically, it adds to a growing literature and acknowledgment of the importance of indigenous ways of knowing to understand, in this instance, the role, relationship and meaning of Mana Wāhine for a particular cohort of young, aspiring Māori women.

#### **1.4 Research questions:**

The key research questions that frame this study are:

1. What are the career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau?
2. To what extent in the present do they draw strength and mana from older, successful mana wāhine?
3. How do we improve the likelihood of these young Māori women succeeding in meaningful careers?

#### **1.5 Overview of the thesis**

This thesis comprises of six chapters:

Chapter one has introduced the context of the research and the key motivation and impetus for this thesis topic. It then specified the research aims, methodology and guiding research questions.

Chapter two presents a select review of a broad range of literatures. It provides a theoretical context of careers and an exploration of indigenous and women's experiences in their careers. Cultural values and how they influence career decisions and behaviour applied to the experiences provide insights into the boundaries and challenges that Māori women confront in their commitment to career success defined by Kaupapa Māori principles and practices.

Chapter three details and justifies the design and methodology used in the research. Throughout this chapter, a Kaupapa Māori methodology and a Mana Wāhine paradigm to guide the tikanga or process is used to identify themes. Simultaneously the impact of emotions and experiences throughout the analysis was noted by the researcher to maintain the 'tika' of the process and respect the integrity of what was shared.

Chapter four reports and discusses the key themes that emerged from analysis of the data. It begins with findings from the individual semi-structured interviews, then the findings from the two focus groups. Following this the overall themes are summarised in regard to the research topic and questions.

Chapter five is an-depth discussion and investigation of the findings reported in the previous chapter. In consideration of the broad range of literature and the key themes identified through a Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wāhine perspective it is an attempt to form answers to the three main questions of the research.

Finally, chapter six is the concluding whakaaro and thoughts in acknowledgment of the research and the mana of the narratives that have been shared by the young Māori women. It discusses the implications of the research, acknowledges the limitations of the study and then concludes with a final thought to consider.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

*“Kia hoki Whakamuri ki te anga whakamua”*

*I look back firmly into the past with a vision into the future*

The literature review chapter begins with a whakataukī to recognise a tikanga or practice that maintains the ‘tika’ of the process (Henry & Pene, 2001). The first proverb serves as a mihi of acknowledgement to researchers that have paved a way for Kaupapa Māori endeavours. They have set a platform to enable us to look to a future that is inclusive. It is this from which the aim of this research stems: to understand and give voice to the career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau.

The first section of this chapter provides a brief review of literature in relation to Kaupapa Māori theory and a Mana Wāhine perspective to provide a backdrop for the contemporary career focussed literature that follows. The chapter then reviews some of the literature on the broader definitions of career, then considers the career issues and experiences of women, women of colour, Indigenous women and Māori women. The global, technological, and environmental context requires a more diverse and culturally rich workforce that acknowledges the skills and abilities of women in organisations. Nonetheless, research shows there are common challenges that prevent women from progressing or advancing in careers. For women of colour, indigenous, and Māori women this is further perpetuated by racism and a history of colonial oppression. Those collective of women’s experiences will be included in the chapter and a number of studies discussed to assist in opportunities that may arise to support Māori women to be aspirational and successful in their careers.

### 2.1 Introduction - Kaupapa Māori World View

The purpose of this research is to examine the career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau. This will involve the exploration of how being a young Māori woman has influenced the career paths participants’ have chosen. Integral to this is understanding how their choices have been woven together in responding to both the individual and collective definitions of what being Māori means within a Kaupapa Māori world view. The traditional male-centric view of career proposes that ‘individuals’ choose a linear work-centric pathway for status, pay or prestige that is a match for their skills, education and training and abilities (Ginzberg et al., 1951; Super, 1953, 1957). This seemingly logical and popularised approach is limiting as it cannot and should not be applied to the lived experience and context of a Kaupapa Māori world view. Furthermore, it is not sensitive to the nuances of race, gender and age. To do so requires that adherents pay particular attention to over-

generalisations (McBride, 2015), place and time and, the omission of marginalised voices in theory construction.

In contrast, a Kaupapa Māori theoretical framework provides an opportunity to centre those marginalised, such as young Māori women, within their whānau, hapū and iwi structures. Then, as researchers we can learn through their experiences how they engage in a 'Pākehā world' driven by a whānau that has its own tikanga that helps to form evolving identities. These identities are anchored within a collective of whānau and hapū structures (whānaungatanga) founded on a collective consciousness of historical and cultural concepts (Henry & Pene, 2001). Unfortunately, although there is a growing body of research that brings to the fore a Kaupapa Māori world view that asserts the liberation and identity of Māori in Aotearoa (Henry & Pringle, 1996; Smith, 1997; Smith, 1992) there is little research that has looked at the career experiences of young Māori women in Aotearoa, let alone in a specific locale such as Te Taitokerau, Northland. It seems that much of the Kaupapa Māori research with its 'resistance' focus, 'for Māori by Māori', has been mainly aimed at improving health and educational outcomes for Māori (Walker & Eketone, 2006; Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002).

A Kaupapa Māori worldview empowers the young Māori women in this study to make visible their stories that they have shared with open hearts and minds. As such, it enables others who accept the challenge that this type of research offers to advocate for these young women, not just as research participants, to claim their rightful place in research literature but also as mana wāhine of Aotearoa (Smith, 1997). As a consequence, such positioning affirms and validates their spiritual and cultural beliefs as Māori first that enables the researcher to construct their experiences within an ontologically appropriate academic framework.

### **2.1.1 *Mana Wāhine Research***

As a feminist inspired principle and extension of Kaupapa Māori theory (Simmonds, 2011), Mana Wāhine research honours the role of Māori women and challenges colonial ideologies that make it difficult for Māori women to fully express their many realities (Pihama et al, 2002; Pihama, 2020). It highlights the mana and strength of Māori feminists and feminism and the significance of the contribution they have made and continue to make in our country. Historically, through protest and treaty negotiations such as the Mana Wāhine inquiry claims in Te Taitokerau, Māori women continue to drive explicit political stances (Smith, 1992; Simmonds, 2011). Across the country those that have gained the prestige of the title of

Mana Wāhine such as Dame Whina Cooper, Dame Titiwhai Harawira, Ripeka Evans, Hilda Harawira, Annette Sykes and Professor Linda Tuhiwai-Smith, are synonymous with this type of activism and drive for radical change.

Notably, these well known female Māori leaders whakapapa to Te Taitokerau hapū and iwi. Moreover, all the participants in this research have whakapapa linkages and familial ties to these women indicating how collectively; Māori women assert a Māori women's place, prominence and influence as mana wāhine through generational ties (Pihama, 2020). These are the connections as Māori women both professionally in their careers and personally as whānau that advance a solidarity that is driven by a history of struggle for self-determination.

Effectively, these connections enable a type of unity and expression of Māori feminism and activism as mana wāhine so that across generations the complexities and diversity of being Māori and female (Simmonds, 2011). Within these cultural connections relationships and identities between all Māori women are shaped and evolve. In providing a time and space to acknowledge Māori women's lived experiences and realities the generational ties are re-affirmed, so that they continue to form and build a shared understanding of Mana Wāhine through ties that inextricably bind them together (Hutchings, 2002; Mikaere, 1999, 2003; Pihama, 2001; Smith, 1992, 1996 as cited by Simmonds, 2011).

This first section of the literature review has provided a brief review of some literature on Kaupapa Māori theory and a Mana Wāhine perspective. It provides a backdrop of research from a specific locale, Te Taitokerau, Aotearoa, the setting for this research study. In the next section we take a broad view of the career literature much of which has its origins in different cultural contexts of countries like the USA and Australia.

## **2.2 Definition of Career**

Career can be defined in many ways, but a simple dictionary definition suggests that career is defined as “the series of jobs that a person has in a particular area of work, usually involving more responsibility as time passes” (Collins, 2006, p. 210). This definition shows how organizational career theory has evolved from positing a stable, traditional linear model of career to one that talks of non-traditional careers, a response to unstable employment relationships and changes in the demographic profile of workplaces (Ryan, 2012). Hence, contemporary career theorists define “a career as an unfolding sequence of any person's work experience over time” (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989, p. 8).

Another strand of research, objective career theory, defines career through measures of success, such as status, roles and salary, in other words, societal measures of what a career is publicly defined as successful (Michael, Svetlana, & Wilderom, 2005). Conversely, a subjective career perspective highlights how the individual (Ryan, 2012) judgements, aspirations and interpretations of the person defines career success such as job and career satisfaction (Burke, 2001; Judge et al., 1999). Importantly, as Sullivan and Baruch (2009) note, while there has been a broadening of the concept and recognition of its multiple meanings, studies in traditional and non-traditional models of career appear as still anchored to work-centric assumptions of the past.

Indeed, as briefly highlighted above, it seems careers can be defined in a myriad of ways. However, many of these definitions lack the depth and understanding of how the concept can be applied within the worldviews of others including Kaupapa Māori. In the next section we consider the impact of context on career such as organizational and societal norms and the changing landscape which impacts the type of career pathways individuals will follow.

### ***2.2.1 Career Context***

Career context acknowledges that careers are influenced by who we are, where we live and what we believe in (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). There are many drivers within a contextual framework that are inherent in organisations and institutions. These can directly impact career experiences from an internal and external perspective. The notion that an organisation has deeply embedded values or rules that are “specific institutional and cultural socialisation mechanisms” (Weber & Glynn, 2006 as cited by Kase, et al., 2018, p. 424) provide insight into how diverse cultures define careers across different countries because of these mechanisms.

External drivers such as social norms and expectations based on economic measures of success are examples that are more prevalent in western cultures with a pressure to conform to these standards (Tomkins, 2021). But what of the minority cultures that are not accounted for within these specific societies or institutions or for those individuals that are internally driven by a higher purpose (Lips-Wiersma, 2002). It seems there is limited account for careers that cannot be easily measured by economic or societal measures. Few challenge the institutional norms that continue to validate career outcomes that are discriminatory and exclude minorities and many women (Ryan, 2012). Despite all of the technological advances, organisational change, climate change crises and pandemics there is still not enough critical examination of career contextuality and how deeply it is embedded

in individual's cultural response to the pressure of these types of environments. Mayrhofer (2020, p. 330) claims that careers research has "lost its contextual way" and research that can take account of the wider implications of differing worldviews in a particular locale, such as Kaupapa Māori and specifically Mana Wāhine will assist a better understanding of the systemic power relations in Aotearoa today.

Therefore, the need to consider a career context that relates to a more holistic approach that looks beyond professional identities is also useful. Savickas et. al., (2009) argues that life trajectories in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are more fluid and unpredictable. No longer can assumptions of the more traditional underpinnings of career based on stability and stages as modelled in the 'professions' (e.g accountancy, law, academia) be considered 'fit for purpose' in a rapidly changing environment. Consequently, careers need to not only be developed by the way we design our lives but also cognisant of the directions or life trajections that will construct careers into the future. Furthermore, subjective career theory supports the intertwining of work and life experiences over time as careers unfold into aspirational based goals (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989). In turn it encourages researchers to contextualise careers by "rethinking routines and turning points" looking at the interrelation between the two (Hodkinson, 2009, p. 9). As researchers we need to be aware of the gap between the literature that posits an ideal way of making career decisions and how this ideal can be far removed from the actual experiences of individuals.

### ***2.2.2 Cultural Context of Careers***

In this section we consider the cultural context of careers as culture can be perceived in a number of ways. If career decisions are influenced by a person's position within social structures, such as class, gender and ethnicity, and the type of industry then these types of studies confirm that career decisions could also be influenced by culture (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997). Alvesson (2012, p. 142) describes culture as a 'black hole' in that the more researchers delve into the subject the less we know about it. However, as an activity, careers and the work individuals undertake are cultural constructions that enable them to live their values and beliefs in a real and meaningful way. Culturally and functionally, work enables individuals to contribute to societies and provide a living for their families (Carter & Cook, 1992 as cited by Fouad & Winston, 2005). Culture as it determines customs, social norms and beliefs is inextricably linked with how groups and organisations live, work and behave and consequently plays an integral role in how people make decisions about their careers. (Hartung et al., 1998; Ibrahim et al., 1994 as cited by Brown, 2002).



Therefore, cultural values derived from ethnic, or minority cultures can also influence career decisions, as they determine what those members of the culture view as important. These types of cultural norms and beliefs will challenge potential assumptions about ethnic minority cultures in contrast to dominant cultural values that implicitly reflect male, western European experiences and worldviews (Cook, 2002). Brown (2022) claims that “career development theorists have all but ignored the career development of ethnic and cultural minorities” (p. 42), however there are studies that contribute valuable insights in this area. For example, Benson, McIntosh, Salazar, and Vaziri (2017) study found that employees were influenced by the country’s cultural values and what employees viewed as important outcomes of career success. Utilising findings from interviews with 269 professional services employees in 15 countries demonstrated the influence of culture as “deep rooted assumptions” (p. 417) that members of the group defined as the meaning of success at work.

In Aotearoa, New Zealand, Reid (2017) explored the career stories of twenty-two Māori, highlighting the dynamic cultural contexts in which their career processes were enacted. Overall, this specific study challenged the universal construct of a ‘one size fits all’ career approach by theorising a more culturally specific view of career. Careers and “being Māori” were found to be part of an evolving cultural world view that is about a person’s working life within a holistic world view of life as a Māori (p. 189). Thus, career expressions integrated multiple constructions of their cultural identities. Reid (2017) surmises that being Māori is an expression and response to life experiences which influences how career is defined or experienced. Importantly, Reid (2011) developed a typology of career identities to provide insight of how cultural values inform career processes - Keepers, Cloaked and Seekers.

These identities are summarised below (p. 153):

*Keepers – A strong sense of cultural identity and career was intertwined with a sense of duty to lead and help Māori.*

*Cloaked – Culture and career were seen as separate entities and ‘participants’ chose when to reveal their cultural identity.*

*Seekers – Explorers of new possibilities moving in and out of Māori and non-Māori worlds.*

This study provided valuable insights into how ethnic cultural identities influenced career expressions and identities. A further study of 27 Māori academics shows how Māori in this context, make sense of the complexity of careers utilising cultural nuances to respond to

barriers and 'boundaries' that "limit opportunities for Māori in the academic context" (Staniland, Harris, & Pringle, 2019, p. 3527). Two cultural boundaries were identified: cultural responsibility and cultural conduct which describe the pressure to represent Māori and uphold tikanga within the institutions. It was these boundaries that shaped their career actions, decisions and behaviours (Staniland, Harris, & Pringle, 2019). Key decision makers, however, were found to have limited consciousness of the impact such representation can have for Māori academics and the subsequent limitations to advance into more senior roles.

Fouad & Winston, (2005) in a meta-analysis of research that investigates culture, vocational choice and cultural contexts of race and ethnicity found that career aspirations are similar across cultures. The real and perceived barriers differed depending on the structure of the 'occupational opportunity' (p. 230) and how those individuals chose to respond to them. The study also makes an important point that even though members of minority cultures may have equivalent aspirations, skills and abilities as others, they believe that they will not be accepted in certain types of workforce because opportunities are predetermined by the structure. Described in a study by Staniland, Harris & Pringle (2019, p. 589) as a "(mis) fit in the academy" where Māori academics respond with culturally relevant career strategies to navigate the structure that perpetuates an underrepresentation of indigenous peoples.

Mayrhofer (2020) claim that career studies are now at a crossroads and must recognise the myriad of cultural contexts that shape careers and as researchers we must also challenge contexts that are disempowering and no longer fit for purpose in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

### **2.3 Careers for Women**

Organizations, be they located in the public government or private business sector, play a central role in the ongoing "reproduction of inequality" (Scully et al., 2018, p. 1080). This is where critical scholars have sought to unravel the perpetuation of systematic disadvantages and how inequities are normalized through the institutionalization of organizational practices (see Acker, 1990; Amis, Munir, Lawrence et al., 2018; Scully et al, 2017). As shown above, much of the career focused research is centred in paid work organisations beset by gendered occupational hierarchies that construct the ideal organisational worker (Acker, 1990t) and create a disempowering context for those who are not a match for this 'ideal'.

Acker (1990, p. 139) states that "most of us (women) spend most of our days in work organizations dominated by men" and her research highlights the importance of the impact that happens for women when organisations are bias towards and benefit the male gender.

She exposes and explains how systemic inequalities continue to be perpetuated as men as 'ideal' workers have a favoured position and as a result will always benefit over and above the advancement of women in these organisations. The realities are that gendered hierarchical organizations (Acker, 1990) systematically exclude women in that women's roles in society are undervalued and consequently undermined as they take career paths that are naturally and inherently different, making it significantly difficult for women to advance in senior roles. Practically, the lack of visibility of women in key roles may deter other women from similar career paths and 'interventions' to encourage women into organisations seemingly ineffective (Laver, et al., 2018).

The truth of the matter for women who continue to push the boundaries in their careers is that they are underrepresented and underutilised in certain occupations as they tend to choose career paths that are more holistic around life and career choices in contrast to men (Pringle & McCulloch Dixon, 2003). Women's careers often unfold over time in response to a range of pressures whilst having to navigate organisational perspectives that are institutional and hegemonic (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005) suppressing diversity of skills and knowledge that women can bring to the career world. Furthermore, women are constructing careers that are cognisant of diverse contextual views and can adapt "the rhythm and timing of work to the rhythms of life outside of work" Ackers (1990, p. 155). In doing so, undo societal structures that exclude those women, women of colour, indigenous women who are determined to be true to their own beliefs, values and cultures. It is a time for reckoning and as women have proven qualities of coping with uncertainty, juggling different priorities in careers and life then the notion and measure of "human capital of the world" will only benefit from their attainment of their collective career aspirations (Hammond 1993 as cited by Woodd, 1999, p. 26).

## **2.4 Careers for Women of Colour and Indigenous Women**

More specifically for women of colour and indigenous women there is even more complexity that they need to contend with in their career aspirations. Studies articulating their career experiences describe the painful and often insurmountable impacts of racism and sexism with terms such as "double jeopardy" describing the simultaneous oppressions (Townsend, 2021, p. 558) of being judged against white women, and black and white men in society. As a result, stereotyped as a "corporate ghetto" (Drake-Clark, 2006, p. 5) in the USA they are constantly reminded of societal expectations that pervade a social class system and a history of slavery that continues to reward and benefit white (male) privilege in their country. The pervasive power of a dominant view keeps a dominant and aggressive culture in its

power (Drake-Clark, 2006). Within a career context, an example was a study of two highly visible African American female principals in a large urban district school found they had to confront these simultaneous layers of racism and sexism at every turn of their journey, having to justify the validity of their expertise to communities over and above the white male principals before them. (Gaetane, 2013) Campaigns and protests like “Black Lives Matters” a reminder to the world of the prejudice and racism faced by black men and women in the USA. Statistics showing that black women in work overall only earn \$0.63cents to every \$1 a white man makes and yet proportionally they work more in comparison to white women. Even though black women are working harder in comparison to their white counterparts they are still earning less (Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation Inc, 2021). In a study of 700 black female lawyers the impact of sexism and racism influenced their decisions and career paths (Simpson, 1996) and as a result women decided to make career moves into less prominent roles or leave the legal profession altogether, overcome by feelings of inferiority or inadequacy. As one of the respondents stated *“no one tells you they think you’re inferior, they just make you feel that way”* (Simpson, 1996, p. 186).

## **2.5 Careers of Indigenous Women**

Research that focuses on the careers of indigenous women confirm that the issues of racism and sexism are common to those experienced by women of colour. More broadly, histories of oppression and colonialization means racism against indigenous women is still deeply embedded in contemporary structures that continue to negatively impact their career pathways (White, 2010; Smith, 1992). Narratives of indigenous women sharing the struggles in “defending their identity of a group that is heavily criticised” (White, 2010, p. 90) and having to manage tensions of challenging power structures as change agents. Evidence shows in a study of 10 Australian Aboriginal doctors including four women (Garvey, 2000), participants expressed higher expectations internally to advocate for Aboriginal communities and externally, to work within their own communities, causing additional pressure as the tension between having professional roles and representing cultural values were conflicting (White, 2010, p. 76). Aboriginal women working in the mining industry showed how they were positioned at the bottom of a hierarchy as indigenous and female (Parmenter, 2011) whilst having to carry the extra burden of carrying family responsibilities and the need to prove themselves as employees. To prove themselves as good employees they would suppress any perceived weaknesses and bury emotional responses to feelings of being put down.

Similarly, in response to a white dominant culture Stewart and Warn (2016) argue that indigenous political leaders are producing styles of leadership that can address structures that negatively impact career pathways. In doing so they work across boundaries and use career strategies influencing choices about where they work and the careers they choose. As 'outsiders' of the system, indigenous leaders confront the injustices of the majority in making transformative change for indigenous communities. Emerging from the study was the extent to which they developed their indigenous culture (Stewart & Warn, p. 12) evolving "cultural identification into a 'two ways' world' or a hybrid identity so that they could operate in "western contexts as well as their own".

Mesui (2019) explores the experiences of Pacific Island women in senior management roles in New Zealand describing the 'brown glass ceiling' (p. 34). Specifically, she writes what it is to be a brown Pacific woman from interviews with six Pacific women. Participants had a minimum of five years' experience in senior roles and identified with diverse Pacific ethnicities. These women expressed the personal and professional cost of being assimilated and minimising their cultural identity to advance their career aspirations. The study shows that Pacific women struggle to fit the western ideology of what it is to be an ideal manager and are consequently stereotyped into racial and tokenistic roles (Mesui, 2019). A further study highlighting this discrimination for Indigenous women is the "pakaru pipeline" that describes the "chronic underrepresentation" of Māori and Pasifika staff in permanent academic positions in New Zealand universities (Naepi, et al., 2019, p. 142). Both these studies raise numerous questions given Māori and Pacific women are performing to a similar academic and professional standard as their non-indigenous peers in our country, why they are underrepresented in certain positions.

## **2.6 Careers of Māori Women**

Māori experience multiple forms of systemic discrimination. Schools and workplaces as the most common sites that discrimination occurs across culture, gender, age, and social status. (Cormack, Harris, & Stanley, 2013). A Māori indigenous view of career expression is firmly entrenched in culture. Māori culture therefore shapes Māori women identities within a Mana Wāhine paradigm as it acknowledges the broader dimensions of kaupapa Māori (Henry & Wolfgramm, 2018). Theories of Mana Wāhine leadership offer a pathway of how Māori women can make sense of their realities when coping with discrimination daily in the workforce. Through these processes of social construction and understandings (Henry & Wolfgramm, 2018) Māori women can adapt and form their own meaningful careers through

their lived experiences learning and weaving in a dynamic cultural heritage as an expression of being Māori (Reid, 2011).

Although the research is limited, studies that focus on how Māori women construct their careers in response to these challenges and how they weave together culture and careers between two worlds provide interesting perspectives. In a study of cultural and clinical practice of the realities of 12 Māori nurses in Aotearoa (Hunter & Cook, 2020) they express the emotional labour of being a Māori nurse. As practitioners they regularly encounter discriminatory practices that negatively impact healthcare outcomes for Māori and as such carry a deep sense of responsibility to advocate for culturally responsive care for all Māori (Hunter & Cook, 2020, p. 13). Additionally, nurses in their cultural obligations to be responsible for the health and well-being of Māori communities choose to work at home or in communities that mean they choose positions that are (e.g. District Nurses) potentially limiting in their career opportunities. Sometimes, in choosing to work for their communities they are having to choose a career path that may compromise advancement into more senior and progressive roles.

Using a Kaupapa Māori worldview, Wilson and Baker (2012, p. 1077) identify two key themes of how Māori mental health nurses worked in two worlds relevant to the determinants that influence Māori career decisions:

1. *Going Beyond – The aim of overcoming challenges and achieving positive outcomes comprising the concepts of being Māori (through genealogical whakapapa) and enduring constant challenge,*
2. *Practicing Differently – Comprising the concepts of being guardians of spiritual well-being and that spirituality is the fundamental cornerstone of being Māori.*

As such, the researchers argue that this approach liberates Māori mental health nurses. Being Māori first, then creates strategies and manifests different ways of working within discriminatory work environments to get positive results for Māori patients as whānau. Māori women in the forms and contexts of oppression they confront are not only making sense of these different realities (Forster & Palmer, 2016) but they also re-defining meaningful careers.

Further evidence of the importance of cultural impact on careers is illustrated in a study of how Māori female scientists identify themselves as “brown bodies in white coats” (McKinley, 2005, p. 13). As an identity the scientists illustrate the complexities they endure when categorised as a homogenous group in a sector dominated by a scientific worldview that

may conflict with a Māori worldview (McKinley, 2005). A more recent study demonstrated that Māori scientists work in multiple roles. Labelled Aronga takirua, or the dual foci of western and Māori ideologies (Haar, 2021) often means the multiple hats Māori scientists wear result in increased workload. Thus, being culturally driven becomes a sophisticated and dynamic source of professional and personal shifts.

The context of sport is one example of the liberation of Māori women in their expressions of careers choices and success. Māori women are making their mark in male-dominated sports such as the Women's Black Ferns Rugby Sevens team, performing a haka to emphasize not only their dominance on the world seven's circuit but their reclamation of the haka as tribal depictions of Māori women. As a symbol of liberation, it was a challenge for NZ Rugby and Aotearoa as young Māori women continue to assert their mana in front of the world (Palmer, 2016; Thorpe, Brice & Rolleston, 2020). Recently, Olympic Gold Medallist, Lisa Carrington of Te Aitanga-a-Mahaki and Ngati Porou descent was recognised as the most influential Māori sportsperson for the last 30 years. She attributed her success to the support of her whānau and the experiences of her ancestors overcoming adversity to strive for high achievements (Carrington, 2021). Mana Wāhine Dr. Farah Palmer, the first woman on the New Zealand Rugby Board amongst other Māori women demonstrate a common commitment regarding careers; their desire to give back to their sport, Māori, and in their success ultimately for Māori women. (Palmer & Masters, 2010).

For Māori, to have mana and prestige in their careers also means ensuring they contribute to the collective good which adheres to the principles of manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga. (Forster & Palmer, 2016, p. 328). These fundamental principles reiterated by Mana Wāhine activism symbolised in Hilda Harawira's statement that "Māori women are also promoting a symbol of liberation and identity" (Dunlop, 2021). Moreover, research suggests that their identities are inextricably linked with their career paths. Consequently, Māori women are still having to contend with representing cultural leadership and absorb the additional strain to balance organisational culture in an array of complex pressures placed upon them to be successful. (Palmer & Masters, 2010, p. 331). Hence within the wider context, Māori women are having to justify both their Māori identities as Mana Wāhine and simultaneously work within non-Māori systems to gain skills and experience that will further their careers and aspirations.

Smith (1992) argues that addressing Māori issues from a Māori women's perspective provides a systematic way of developing strategies that deal with the ongoing subtleties of racism and sexism. Furthermore, she reinforces the need for further research that makes

more visible Māori women, their specific career experiences and aspirations as another way to address the challenges they encounter and highlight their successes in spite of the system itself.

## **2.7 Meaningful Careers**

Meaningful careers are inextricably linked with a meaningful life and work-life balance (Guillen, 2020). As such, the association of work meaningfulness and work-life balance (Maragret 2007; Carelson et al., 2011; Rantenen et al., 2008) enables an employee's ability to build resourcefulness and a connection to a greater sense of contribution in work and in life. Outcomes such as prestige and advancements create meaningful work that is more than just a job to get paid, it evolves into a career with a deeper sense of purpose (Barnett, 2012). Meaningful careers described by career executives as being successful in careers without losing sight of the importance of family or losing yourself to "sustain momentum" (Groysberg & Abrahams, 2014, p. 2) of careers whilst responding to what life may throw your way.

Furthermore, as organisations and people meet the current challenges of pandemics and rapid global change and the impacts of climate degradation, the notion of work meaningfulness is critical in harnessing connectivity (Al-Aali & Ahmed, 2021). "Psychological connectivity" (Al-Aali & Ahmed, 2021, p. 1796) and our connections across Aotearoa, NZ will ensure that new ways of working and living forge a communal effort to respond to keeping safe, looking after each other and sustaining a quality of life and work for individuals and their families. Globally, we are confronted by a new reality of working remotely, staying safe and connected whilst maintaining productivity in jobs and pursuing careers that are constantly evolving.

The notion of meaningful work often has a "euphoric notion" (Bailey & Madden, 2016, p. 21) that experiences are positive but a recent study interviewing 135 employees from a wide range of occupations considered the relationship between meaningful or meaningless work which identified five "unexpected features of meaningful work" as a consequence paraphrased below:

- 1. Self-Transcendent*

*The importance of impact and relevance to others for example a rubbish collector who saw recycling as a contribution to the well-being of his grandchildren.*

- 2. Poignant*



*The experience of meaningful work can be poignant or painful and traumatic rather than positive.*

*3. Episodic*

*Memorable moments rather than a sustained experience of meaningfulness.*

*4. Reflective*

*Rarely experienced in the moment but considered on reflection framed by a wider sense of “life meaning”*

This study is evidence that meaningful careers can be determined by work and life experiences that are not always positive and planned. Careers can take unexpected turns and be shaped by “memorable moments” that can influence career decisions over a period of a lifetime. In a study of teachers’ perceptions of meaningful work (Brunzell et., al, 2018), teachers were sustained to educate students that had experienced trauma and abuse, because their commitment to making “positive social change gave their work meaning” (p. 116). As teachers though, struggling to make a difference in that the pedagogy of the institution undermined their ability to influence positive change. Collectively, these studies provide a broader understanding of meaningful work that is not necessarily about a role or position in an organisation, but more about the connection with a range of meaningful outcomes that people draw from work and life experiences.

## **2.8 Influence of Mentors and Role Models**

Mentors and role models are considered positive contributors to successful careers. Research defines mentoring as a developmental relationship where a mentor provides advice or opportunities that support an individual that in turns shape their career experiences (Feldman, 1988; Kram, 1985). Mentoring is dynamic and challenges career patterns. Eby (1997) makes an important point that as organisations change so do relationships requiring different types of mentoring. Studies where women work in male-dominated industries or where women are underrepresented in senior roles confirm that mentoring can have positive effects on women’s abilities to advance in organisations and help establish positive networks (Lockwood, 2006; Dashpur, 2018).

However, Francis (2016), in a field study of 456 professional women in construction, found that mentoring and other positive supports may not improve career advancement because of the ongoing barriers they encountered in the industry but it acted as a “valuable deterrent to women’s departure” (p. 254). Inadvertently this causes more stereotyping as women are seen as less competent or experienced as men, particularly in male-dominated roles and

industries such as the fields of science, engineering and construction. The perception that there are limited opportunities to advance due to the invisibility of other women raising the question if promotion warrants further isolation, particularly for women.

Porter and Sierra (2015, p. 22) study aimed at “closing the gender gap” proved that young women chose male dominated studies as a result of female role-models within the institution. Sealy & Singh (2008) also claims that female role-models have a power to “inoculate” women against negative stereotypes (p. 265) or the “stereotype threat” (p. 268) that have women become disenfranchised with these types of careers due to a lack of visible role models. However, Sealy & Singh (p. 33) takes a broad view in that the “gendered aspects of role-modelling” also needs to understand two related areas that affect women’s opportunities, namely the small number of women in certain industries and how this impacts women’s career decisions. Indeed, if women can source or identify with role models that have the same attributes, career aspirations and experiences, having female role models are more beneficial for all involved.

## **2.9 Chapter Summary**

A Kaupapa Māori world view sets the foundation that enables and empowers the voices of young Māori women and their careers aspirations as Māori first and foremost. As a whakapapa and extension of Kaupapa Māori methodology, Mana Wāhine honours the role of Māori women to fully express the many realities of Māori women. Positioned firmly in the dynamic landscape of Te Taitokerau, Northland the region is in a period of considerable change and so are Māori. It is this evolving contextual setting that provides the inspiration and backdrop for other elements of the literature review.

A broad view of the career literature was outlined recognising that much of this research has its origins in different cultural contexts such as the USA. Boundaryless careers is one metaphor used to describe a contemporary theoretical model (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). As a precursor to validating Māori career experiences it supports the idea that careers are influenced by who we are, where we live and what we believe in. Savickas et. al., (2009) argues that life trajectories in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are more fluid and unpredictable. No longer can assumptions of the more traditional underpinnings of career based on stability and stages as modelled in the ‘professions’ (e.g. accountancy, law, academia) be considered ‘fit for purpose’ in a rapidly changing environment. Mayrhofer (2020) claims that career studies are now at a crossroads and must recognise the myriad of cultural contexts that shape careers. This is recognised by NZ specific studies with a few, exploring the careers of Māori women working in professional roles.

Furthermore, although there is a plethora of research that speaks to the negative layered impact of racism, sexism and discrimination that undermines a women's success, there seems little improvement in the current environment. The critical nature of female identities in the workforce and the context of cultural careers highlights an imperative for further research that continues to unpack organisational structures that are no longer fit for purpose in a society that truly values the mana of women. As such a demand for narratives of women of colour, indigenous and Māori women that enhance their visibility in organisations whilst connecting with women have succeeded despite all the inherent challenges in their careers seems a common sense approach.

More importantly, organizations, be they located in the public government or private business sector, play a central role in the ongoing "reproduction of inequality" (Scully et al., 2018, p. 1080). This is where critical scholars have sought to unravel the perpetuation of systematic disadvantages and how inequities are normalized through the institutionalization of organizational practices (see Acker, 1990; Amis, Munir, Lawrence et al., 2018; Scully et al, 2017). As shown above, much of the career focused research is centred in paid work organisations beset by gendered occupational hierarchies that construct the 'ideal' organisational worker (Acker, 1990) and create a disempowering context for those who are not a match for this 'ideal'. Also much of the research looking specifically at Māori women, has looked at those who are working in professional roles which is not representative of where most Māori women are employed. Therefore, the ability to consider how Māori women will define and enact meaningful careers is important as it will determine the types of relationships and supports required to sustain their career aspirations.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

*He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.*

*What is the most important thing in the world, it is people, it is people, it is people.*

Kaupapa Māori principles and methodology supports a process that honours and upholds the voices of people and respects the embodiment of this whakataukī. In this context it is an empowering methodology that was chosen to maintain the integrity and essence of the stories of the young Māori women living and working in Te Taitokerau Northland.

The first section of the chapter gives an overview of the research design of this study, which adopted a qualitative approach in the intent to explore and understand the aspirations of the participants. The following sections briefly describe the context of the broad landscape of Te Taitokerau, Northland and seeks to localise the participants' stories as mana whenua. More specifically, it describes a Kaupapa Māori methodology and Mana Wāhine perspective to provide a deeper understanding of Te Ao Māori within an academic construct. The chapter concludes by describing the procedures used in data collection and analysis.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The purpose of the research is to understand what influences the career decisions of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau and the influence of older Mana Wāhine. It is a qualitative piece of research that draws on the experiences of six young Māori women ranging from 21-33 years of age, all of whom have whakapapa links to Te Taitokerau, Northland. The participants have followed a range of career trajectories.

According to Dewey (1933 as cited in Gray, 2004, p.16) a researcher must initially engage in a scientific approach referred to as a “paradigm of enquiry” applying inductive discovery (induction) and deductive proof (deduction). The deduction process develops assertions (hypotheses) using two or more abstract concepts which are then “tested through empirical observation or experimentation to find the relationship between them” (Gray, 2004, p. 16).

In contrast, the induction process presumes a more fragmentary approach. Data collection is used to investigate any emerging patterns moving the investigation as Gray (2004) recommends, towards a binding principle whilst being mindful of not making rash inferences based on data.

Ontologies and epistemologies define the philosophical positioning of the research. Gray (2004, p.19) defines ontology as “the study of being, that is, the nature of existence and what constitutes reality or what is”. Epistemology is about understanding “what it means to

know”, providing a philosophical background for deciding what kinds of knowledge are legitimate and adequate” (Gray, 2004, p.19). Hence as Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 108) explain, epistemology asks the question, “what is the nature of the relationship between the would-be knower and what can be known?” This points to how knowledge about reality (ontology) is always historically, socially, and culturally situated (Henry & Pene, 2001). In this research understanding Te Ao Māori as a culture with deeply embedded values aligns with the researchers ontological and epistemological positioning. Henry and Pene (2001) discuss the ontological assumptions, epistemological perspectives and methodological frameworks for doing research with, by and for Māori. They note that many of our contemporary practices and what we know to do in practice or tikanga is linked to the “knowledge and interpretations of oral traditions, events and history.” (p.236). A Kaupapa Māori methodology validates the traditional knowledge of Māori and inherently recognises “the origins of the universe and the world that can be traced back through a series of ordered genealogical webs that go back hundreds of generations to the beginning” (Harmsworth & Awatere, 1996-2022, p. 274). In its essence it acknowledges genealogical ties and the importance of whakapapa.

The definitions above determine the philosophical foundation or kaupapa for this study providing a pathway for the design or framework within which the researcher sought to add to contemporary knowledge on the research topic. The Kaupapa Māori methodology and Mana Wāhine paradigm are holistic approaches that deepen the thematic analysis of the perceptions and experiences of the young Māori women who participated in the research.

### ***3.1.1 Kaupapa Māori Methodology***

In Te Ao Māori the ‘poutokomanawa’ is literally defined as “the figure at the base of a centre pole in a carved house” (Mead, 2016, p. 397). It is also recognised metaphorically as the beating heart of whānau and marae. Kaupapa Māori methodology is the beating heart of the research while a Mana Wāhine perspective, embodies the importance of the ahi puku or burning fire in the belly of each participant, firmly embedding the mana of the young Māori women as participants of this research within the wider context of Te Ao Māori.

Te Ao Māori as a worldview lies at the very heart of the culture, touching, interacting with and strongly influencing every aspect of the culture (Marsden, 2003, as cited in Jackson, Hakopa, & Jackson, 2017, p. 66). A Kaupapa Māori methodology recognises that there is no one Māori worldview. Each iwi (tribe) or hapū (sub-tribe) has variations evidenced in the stories that are told and passed down through the generations. This gives credence to the specific Te Taitokerau worldview at the heart of this research. A Kaupapa Māori

methodology ensures that as mana wāhine, their stories are elevated and located firmly within their own mana motuhake or tino rangatiratanga (self-determination, legitimacy and authority). Henry and Pene (2001) position Kaupapa Māori research as a resistance discourse against Aotearoa's destructive and hegemonic colonial past. This view is reinforced by Russell Bishop who argues that because of a neo-colonial dominance of majority interests, the tradition of research into Māori people's lives has only addressed concerns of researchers who are not Māori. (Bishop, 1999). This has been further perpetuated by the hyper-individualism of post-1980's neo-liberalism, which has driven three decades of economic policies that has resulted in the continuing marginalization and cultural assimilation of Māori. (Smith, 2013).

This research considers the impact of 'marginalisation and cultural assimilation' that undermine the young Māori women as mana wāhine in their decisions about what careers they pursue and how they are included (or not) within a contemporary context. Kaupapa Māori methodology and research seeks to meet a challenge that calls "upon young Māori to build a vision for the future founded on a new humanism, based on ancient values but versed in contemporary idiom" (Szazy, 1993 as cited by Henry, 2001 p. 241). There has never been a more critical time for this research. It will contribute to the decision making of key hapū and iwi leaders to ensure young Māori women's voices are heard and their talents are harnessed within the Māori structures and entities that evolve.

As a novice researcher and a Māori women I acknowledge the sensitivity, care and manaaki that has been developed by experienced Māori researchers as they have experimented and shaped Kaupapa Māori as a methodology. Hiha (2016), is one of the few who openly talks of her personal experiences, both good and bad, using a Kaupapa Māori methodology to conduct research with and for Māori women. This open and insightful portrayal of learning and commitment provided new insights for this novice researcher in that a Kaupapa Māori methodology was not always an easy process to follow and ignited uncomfortable emotions of grief and pain connected with a deeper understanding of the struggles of my own tupuna to share and tell their stories.

Fundamentally, Kaupapa Māori principles and practices drive a methodology "to reclaim a positive space for Māori in Aotearoa society" (Hiha, 2016, p. 136). The experiential voices of young Māori women and their career aspirations is an opportunity that cannot be ignored or overlooked to achieve this endeavour.

The Kaupapa Māori methodology empowers the application of Mana Wāhine, a perspective that is deeply connected to the mana and authority of Māori women and their struggle for autonomy in a post-colonial society. Pihama (2001, p. 266) argues that the “reclamation of Māori women’s knowledge is critical to Mana Wāhine.” This discourse heightening the visibility of Māori women is recognised as a theoretical framework that weaves together a Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wāhine methodology. This ‘weaving’ will in this study enable a better understanding of the layers of complexities of the career experiences and aspirations of young Māori women in the present and the future of Te Taitokerau.

Mana Wāhine as a research framework serves as an approach that reconnects Māori women to a “genealogy and geography that is undeniably theirs” (Smith, 1996, p. 292). Their realities are a catalyst for action not just a theoretical account. Smith (as cited in Pihama, 2001, p. 259) gives a clearer understanding of how Mana Wāhine theory applies within the discourse of colonisation:

- i. The whānau discourse, which recognises that central to Māori identity is whānau, hapū and iwi, and that critical relationships are engaged through whānaungatanga and whakapapa;*
- ii. Spiritual discourse, which centres the notion of wairua in our analysis as a means of understanding dimensions that reach beyond the material and physical;*
- iii. State discourse, which engages the structural analysis in order to understand the role of state and structural dimensions in Māori women’s struggles;*
- iv. Indigenous women’s discourse, which focuses on engaging our position in the wider international Indigenous context.*

As noted in Chapter two, there are strong links between the principles of Māori feminism and Mana Wāhine. This is epitomised in the writing and activism of Ripeka Evans (1994) who like many of her generation, saw how the opportunities for Mana Wāhine had been marginalised. She noted how “the power and decision-making processes of organisations is in the hands of a small oligarchic menagerie of Māori men, politicians, bureaucrats and lawyers” and lamented how Māori women are often “on the outside looking in” (Evans, 1994, p. 64). Conversely, Evans (1994) points out how such power disparities should not detract from the innovative contribution and leadership of Māori women. More contemporary examples include the Māori Women’s Welfare League, Te Kohanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa, Te Reo Māori and Nga Tamatoa.

This thesis concurs with the need for Māori women to be visible and to be at the forefront of change. This will ensure they take their rightful place in written historiography to challenge the dominant imperialistic images and discourse (Nicholas et al. 2004). This research centres on writing the narratives of young Māori women who whakapapa to the tribes of Te Taitokerau. One of the main aims of the research is to assert their voices and experiences as mana wāhine. The central argument is that their career aspirations matter and this is a necessity if we want to build solutions that enable more resilient Māori communities in Te Taitokerau.

### 3.2 Data Collection Methods

As a Māori researcher the Kaupapa Māori methodology sets the 'tikanga' or practices that determined the protocols that were upheld throughout the entire research (Smith, 1999). Table 1 (below) outlined the practices that provided the foundational aspects of establishing and maintaining a relationship with the young Māori women as participants. Two data collections methods were used. Firstly, the researcher conducted a total of six semi-structured one on one interviews with six young Māori women. Once these interviews were completed, two focus groups were held to accommodate those who could not attend the first focus group. At the first focus group, three of the six women attended and in the second focus group, the remaining three participated. The overall purpose of the focus group meetings was to listen and consider further reflections of the collective (see sections 4.7 and 4.8). The interviews and the focus group were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

*Table 1: Kaupapa Māori Practices*

Aroha ki te tangata	Show respect and compassion to participants
Kanohi kitea	Present yourself face to face with participants
Titiro, whakarongo.....kōrero	Look, listen, then speak with care
Manaaki ki te tāngata	Give hospitality, be generous
Kia tūpato	Be cautious and careful
Kaua e takahia te mana o te tāngata	Do not trample on the mana of the participants



### **3.2.1 Process to identify participants**

Invitations were sent to young Māori women who met the following criteria:

- Young Māori women aged 20-30 years.
- That were descendants of the iwi and hapū and live in Te Taitokerau.
- Were known and visible in their community for their current contributions as mana wāhine; seen as leaders in both a Pākehā world and society, as well as a Māori world within communities of whānau, hapū and iwi.
- Were able to commit to a 1-2hour appointment for a semi-structured interview.
- Optional attendance at a 2-hour focus group meeting with all participants
- Were employed, working and/or self-employed in Te Taitokerau.

Initial contact was made with potential participants by utilising purposive sampling through existing networks including community groups and business entities. At times, this involved contacting the participants directly to gauge possible interest in taking part. If a positive response was received, an email invitation was sent with a Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form attached. (Refer Appendix B & C)

### **3.2.2 One on one semi-structured interviews**

Once the process of identifying and confirming participants was completed including receiving signed consent forms and responding to any questions, appointments were then scheduled for each participant over a two-week period.

The age of participants in this research ranged from 22-33 years old. Of the six participants, two were in their early 20s, one was in their late 20s, and the remaining three were in their early 30s. The women were employed in a range of organisations in industries such as including healthcare, education, justice, policy, law, and whānau ora entities. The careers included a physiotherapist, lawyer, project manager, chief executive, senior policy advisor and a digi-tech tutor and designer. Five of the 6 participants also held governance roles on a variety of trusts and boards. Another 4 of the 6 participants were company directors as well as working full-time in employment. All had attained post-secondary school qualifications in their specific careers and 4 of the 6 were studying towards masters qualifications in a range of subjects including te reo and tikanga Māori qualifications. All were competent in te reo and tikanga Māori well connected to their marae, hapū and iwi. Half of them were working in mainstream organisations at the time, however all of them had

a history of working in mainstream organisations. 5 of the 6 were raising tamariki and 2 of them were single parents.

For the sake of convenience, participants were given the option of meeting face to face or zoom. Of the six interviews, two were held face to face and four via zoom to accommodate their capacity and workload. Both face to face interviews were held at venues convenient for the participants. The venues allowed for privacy and an opportunity to speak freely and openly on the questions asked. The interviews ranged from 1 to 1.5 hours long to allow time for Kaupapa Māori methodological practices to be incorporated in the interviews.

Utilising Kaupapa Māori practices as recommended by Smith (1999, p.120), specifically the demonstration of “manaaki ki te tangata” or being a good host and taking care of the participants, each interview began with appropriate tikanga or Māori protocols. These included a karakia to start the meeting, a mihi to acknowledge the kaupapa or the purpose for our meeting and whānaungatanga, an opportunity to establish our connections through whakapapa or ancestral connections and go over the purpose of the research again “kanohi ki te kanohi” or ‘face to face’.

Once the appropriate tikanga or protocols were completed the interview began with three structured questions and took a semi-structured approach so that it allowed the kōrero and discussion to flow. Each of the participants responded openly to the key questions by sharing details about their jobs, careers and life experiences. As a researcher I jotted down key points, while recording the interviews either through zoom or recorded by utilising my cell phone. A professional transcript service was contracted, subject to a confidentiality agreement, to provide verbatim transcripts due to time constraints.

### **3.2.3 Data Analysis**

The method of analysis was thematic as it aimed to identify patterns across the interviews and subsequent themes compiled from the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As the researcher this provided a clear process (see Table 2) as part of the construction of the themes (see Table 3 for examples).

*Table 2: Thematic Analysis*

Familiarizing myself with the data	Correcting interview transcriptions, reading and re-reading the data, noting initial thoughts
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Generating initial codes	Assigning codes to interesting features of the data. Collating data relevant to each code.
Searching for themes	Grouping codes and data extracts into potential themes. Summarising and paraphrasing codes and relationships between them.
Reviewing themes	Summarising and paraphrasing themes and reviewing in relation to methodology and research questions
Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine and define themes and label each
Producing the report	Selection of format for re-presentation of findings and extract examples.

The following is an illustration of the application of the process above for the data collected in the one to one interviews with the participants.

#### ***3.2.4 Familiarising myself with the data***

Initially each transcript from the interviews was read and re-read to begin a process of identifying key ideas by using highlighting interesting thoughts and comments. These included noting common language and words particularly in te reo Māori recognising “the counter-hegemonic energy held within Māori language and how it creates liberating frameworks to enable Māori to engage with integrity in any issue initiating entry points to deeper understandings of Māori knowledge and cultural practices.” (Pohatu, 2013) For the researcher as a Māori woman of Te Taitokerau, this part of the process was difficult. It brought to the fore common experiences of the intergenerational pain evidenced in the young women’s narratives and during the interviews we would pause the process and acknowledge the mamae and pain between us. This would mean pausing the interview process, taking a break if required and allowing the kōrero to flow with the expressions of emotions. During the process of familiarising myself with the data I would repeat simple karakia quietly to myself as a process to ground myself in the wairua of our tupuna asking for their support and guidance. The sense of loss that was compounded by a whakapapa connection felt very real both physically and emotionally. What evolved however, was a deeper understanding and commitment to the young women’s stories and contributions.

Table 3 below gives an example of this process and how the transcript extracts were re-written as a summary.

*Table 3: Transcript Extracts and Summary*

Transcript Extracts	Summary
<p>I will probably start back when I am being happy as a young mom and, that being quite a pivotal time in my life, and that is when I really got that people treat me as a Māori young, Wāhine, different.</p> <p>Society treats me differently especially at that time, I was aware of, once I had my baby, just the bulls**t of how people viewed me in that space and my husband, too.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B states the experience she had as a young Māori woman who got pregnant when she was still at school and the stigma, she faced which impacted her and her husband at the time.</li> <li>• Being treated differently by society.</li> <li>• Stigmatised as a young Māori mother.</li> </ul>
<p>She kind of was a strong, my first kind of strong advocate for me. But also, been around other Wāhine like me, you know, young moms. And so, I am grateful for that space. It was not anything flash, but I think you found a community, I disconnected with my mates. So, I think that was another pivotal moment and I think that is why I really refined my drive.</p> <p>So, I think that was another pivotal moment and I think that is why I really refined my drive, I supposed, or it provided me with this drive to ensure that other people do not feel this; this</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gained support from a Māori woman as a young mother that advocated for her and found a space in her community.</li> <li>• A sense of injustice in personal experiences and the driver for the type of careers she chooses so she can ensure that other young mothers do not have to experience the same things she did.</li> <li>• Sense of justice</li> <li>• Driven by change for other young Māori women.</li> </ul>

whole kind of flavour around injustices and the fact I don't want them to feel s**t like I did.	
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### ***3.2.5 An iterative process to identify themes***

In the process of identifying and searching for themes the summaries from the transcript extracts were written as headings on pink post-it notes. These post-it notes were then placed as mind-maps (refer Appendix F) on big sheets of paper framed under headings of each of the main interview questions. Key ideas as the mind-maps were being organised were noted simultaneously on yellow post-it notes and re-organised to help continue the search for themes. The mind-map was useful for sifting and sorting post-it notes as the themes were being explored. Blue post-it notes were then used to identify codes to assist with refining common themes or re-naming them. While this was a repetitive and messy iterative process, it was by necessity, a way to make sense of the interview data. This helped for an initial attempt at identifying themes noted in Table 4 below.

*Table 4: Initial attempt at identifying themes*

Familiarising myself with the data	Identification and searching for themes
	Layers of complexities and responsibilities/expectations on the young women – got to be good at being Māori as well as being in a Pākeha world
	5 of 6 of them are young mothers and raising families – have a support structure in Te Taitokerau (TTT)
	Closely connected with marae and their 'people'
	Notion of 'returning home' to give back to their people is important
	Choose careers where they want to make/drive change
	Identify as Māori first and have a clear expression of what that means for them (all of them started with their pepeha and used te reo throughout their interviews)

	Experienced barriers of 'not being heard' or taken seriously
	Have had negative experiences when they've challenged racism, stereotyping, devalued, assumptions and belittled – nothing's changed, being dramatic (making little things big), excluded

### 3.2.6 Generating initial codes

After reviewing the initial analyses and referring to the transcripts, the initial codes were generated and attached to the initial themes identified from the mind-map analysis.

Below is an example of the subsequent coding process in Table 5 to generate initial codes.

*Table 5: Initial Themes and Codes Extract*

<b>Ideas from initial data analysis</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Layers of complexities, responsibilities and expectations on the young women and a sense of having to be good at being Māori as well as being in a Pākehā world	Definition of success and aspirations
5 of 6 of them are young mothers and raising families and have a support structure in Te Taitokerau.	Support Structures

### 3.2.7 Searching for themes

Searching for themes was again an iterative process that incorporated a review of the data analysis. The coding helped to strengthen the formulation of themes then I would cross-reference and test the themes against each stage of the data analysis described and its relevance to the research questions. I utilised te reo Māori to name the themes as it captured the importance of the language and concepts in the participant's descriptions of their experiences.

The five themes that were established as a result of this process were:

- Career aspirations are 'Kaupapa Driven' - The theme of being 'Kaupapa Driven' or having a greater purpose in how the participants defined career was common and distinctive.

- Ngā Ao e Rua – Representing living in two worlds and the pressure to be successful in both Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā.
- Whakamā and Mamae – The impact and pain that the women experienced of being rejected, discriminated against and devalued in their lives and careers as young Māori women.
- Kotahitanga – The power of being collective and connected to whānau, hapū and iwi is important.
- Mana Wāhine - The mana of Māori women as protectors, nurturers and the influence of mothers, grandmothers and generations of women before them.

### ***3.2.8 Focus Group Meetings***

Following the one-on-one interviews two focus group meetings were scheduled to facilitate a collective reflection process. Zoom provided the conduit. Initially, only one focus group meeting was planned with the young women with three attending the first meeting. A second focus group meeting scheduled to allow for the three women who were keen to attend but could not make the first meeting.

Given the participant's identities had been kept confidential until these focus group meetings it was uplifting to observe the women recognise and acknowledge each other. The utilisation of mihi and fluency of te reo Māori to manaaki the space demonstrated their aroha and respect for the process. They also expressed how much they appreciated the opportunity to meet via zoom, within the context of the research. It was inspiring to see them practice "aroha ki te tangata" showing love and respect immediately for each other and their ability to "Titiro, whakarongo.....kōrero", look, listen and speak openly and honestly. This tikanga or intent was established at the beginning of the meeting with karakia and a mihi to begin the proceedings appropriately.

### ***3.2.9 Key Purpose for the focus group meetings***

The focus group meetings were an opportunity to reflect on the key themes identified from the interview data and seek clarification on these from the collective. It was also an opportunity to understand the voice of the collective and whether any new ideas or thoughts about the research would come to the fore (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

To prepare for the focus group meetings more mind mapping (Refer Appendix F) was done to visualise the themes from the interviews and ensure alignment with the overall research

questions. This was an important part of the process as it prepared the researcher emotionally to facilitate the focus group conversations. Dell (2018) notes how a researcher “can identify and interpret imprinted or transferred emotions from participants in the research process and integrate that emotional data into the research outcomes”. To assist the researcher facilitate the focus group meetings via zoom, a series of questions were compiled. These broad questions listed below were sent to all the participants.

### **Kaupapa Driven Careers**

- Define what this means for young Māori wāhine?
- What are the challenges for young Māori wāhine in their careers?
- What are the opportunities?

### **Ngā Ao e Rua – Living and working in two worlds.**

- Acknowledging the challenges, what are the advantages for young Māori wāhine to drive their career aspirations?

### **Mana Wāhine**

- What role do older women play to enable success?
- What resources and information are needed to enable young Māori wāhine to succeed?
- What does this mean for young Māori wāhine as a collective with mana and authority?

#### ***3.2.10 Manifestations of key themes from the focus group meetings***

The identification of key themes from the focus groups was a less complex process as it was an opportunity to test and reinforce themes already identified. Three key themes were derived as ‘natural’ groupings that showed ‘whānaungatanga’ or a relationship between the initial themes listed below:

- Kaupapa Driven
- Ngā Ao e Rua, Two Worlds
- Identity as Mana Wāhine and influencers



### **3.2.11 Personal Reflections - Rongomātau**

Personal reflections were noted after each interview and on completion of the focus groups to identify any of my own emotional responses or the impact of the experiences that the participants shared in the interviews described as “*rongomātau*, or ‘sensing the knowing’” (Dell, 2018, p. 5). These reflections are an important part that “recognises the researcher as an emotionally-absorbent being, with capabilities to feel into the emotional lives of others” (Dell, 2018, pg. 1). Deeply connected by whakapapa through our ancestral linkages and woven into a Kaupapa Māori methodology I was able to acknowledge my personal emotions by capturing notes of personal reflections in a diary. Some of the experiences shared by the young women were very similar to my own and resonated with my own experiences. My anger, frustrations and sadness expressed in diary notes helped to separate and maintain my consciousness as a researcher, acknowledge how deeply I was impacted in writing down these thoughts down and remain focused on the importance of what had been shared in these young women’s stories. As the researcher these reflections were part of the “imprinted emotions onto the researcher and its meaningful analysis” (Dell, 2018, p. 1). As a Māori woman the depth of our whakapapa connections shared in the process together.

### **3.3 Chapter Summary**

In summary, this research utilised a qualitative approach. Guided by Kaupapa Māori methodology and Mana Wāhine perspectives, a thematic analysis of the interviews and focus groups provided a vehicle to explore young Māori women's career experiences and a process of data collection and analysis that maintained the integrity of Kaupapa Māori practices. As a researcher searching for themes was an emotional experience as the narratives being woven together between the participants, older mana wāhine and our ancestors aspirations drew closer together. Interviews led to key insights in the form of five themes that were then further refined to three themes through groups. These findings will be discussed in the following chapter.

## Chapter Four: Research Findings

This chapter will elaborate on the key themes that emerged from analysis of the data beginning with the interviews and then the focus groups. Participants comments are in italics with identifiers P1-P6 given in light of the small number of participants and to ensure confidentiality. The chapter ends by summarising the overall themes regarding the research topic and questions. Following this, is a further discussion of the findings in Chapter six.

### 4.1 Themes – One on One Interviews

#### 4.1.1 Career aspirations are Kaupapa Driven

The theme of being 'Kaupapa Driven' or having a greater purpose in how the participants defined career was common and easily identifiable within all of the data gathered. Even the word 'kaupapa' featured many times as a pre-cursor to things that were significant for the participants that eventuated into important themes for the research. The kaupapa signalled the connection between the participants about roles and responsibilities as young Māori women living in a Māori world and choosing careers that could influence the greatest change not only for themselves but also for their whānau, hapū and iwi. To summarise the importance of the kaupapa, Participant 1 stated:

*Being Kaupapa driven is that burning fire in your puku and it's intrinsically who you are as a leader, as a wāhine Māori.*

The responsibility to give back to their people, particularly those that had contributed to achievement of the participants' goals in attaining higher education and qualifications in pursuit of careers and for those ancestors who had suffered great hardship in the past. Being kaupapa driven was also amplified by being personally affected by similar hardships and negative stereotypes that made them more determined to lead out on behalf of others. Most of the women had personally experienced being belittled, stigmatised, or treated differently mainly for being Māori. Career was then viewed as a pathway to deconstruct a system that was considered discriminatory and racist. To illustrate this participant 1 stated:

*It provided me with this drive to ensure that other people don't feel this; this whole kind of flavour around injustices and the way I was treated as a young Māori mum and for young Wāhine like myself, I didn't want them to feel like s\*\*t and the way I had been made to feel.*

The women would talk of their own negative experiences and those of their own immediate whānau, when describing and connecting these experiences to the changes they were looking for both in careers and in the variety of sectors and industries they were involved in.

The kaupapa shaping their career choices and efforts to influence changes directly within the system. In another example, participant 2 stated:

*That experience was my first introduction to the law and seeing how it's racist or kaikiri to a Māori, and that there's an opportunity there if we implement our own Māori processes that it can be better for our tamariki, for our people that have unfortunately fallen into the justice system, and we need to take the lead.*

All the women talked about the kaupapa as a life purpose to make things better for their people, for whānau, community, and Māori holistically. Two of the women described this as a fire that burned inside of them and a determination in their actions and decisions to ensure it would not happen to other Māori. In her commitment to ensure Māori were not going to be colonised and assimilated again by the IT industry, participant 4 stated:

*The main area is where I need to work for my people, Māori people, helping them to emerge and get an understanding of the technology industry.*

Similarly, participant 6 commented:

*At the end of the day, no matter what space I'm in, it's always about advancing Kaupapa Māori perspectives, uplifting our people, doing things differently. Changing the system that is damaging for our people and for everyone else. The individualistic way of thinking about things does not foster a community. The really important things – aroha, wairua, manaaki. No matter where I am the kaupapa will always be at the front.*

#### **4.1.2 Huarahi Rua**

*This theme describes "Living in two worlds and the pressure to be successful in both worlds in Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā".*

Being first in their whānau to achieve the qualifications and careers they had achieved, as well as being one of few young Māori women in their professional roles seemed to intensify the pressure they felt to represent Māori in both worlds. Living in two worlds meant they had put expectations on themselves to be successful as a Māori, as a Māori woman and also as a professional.

They described Te Ao Māori as a world determined by Kaupapa Māori principles and practices of being a young Māori woman and the expectations that they had to perform certain roles and duties on behalf of their whānau and hapū, particularly on the marae. This

took on a range of roles including ringa wera (working in the kitchen), kaikaranga (calling the visitors onto marae) or kaiāwhina (volunteer/supporter) and was an opportunity for the women to give back for the support they had received to be successful in both educational and career aspirations. All the women were well versed in te reo and tikanga Māori specific to their hapū and felt a sense of pride in being able to uphold learnings passed down by their mothers, grandmothers and kuia. Participant 6 stated:

*I've been amazingly supported by whānau and community, and I'm privileged to have an education and mātauranga Māori at my table with a roof over my head.*

Participant 3 commented:

*I like to take those opportunities where I can build a relationship with kaumatua and share their knowledge with mine, then capitalise on those interactions, because everything we do is to benefit our hapū, our iwi.*

On the other hand, the participants described Te Ao Pākehā as a system where they felt isolated and responsible for having to speak on behalf of Māori to ensure they received respectful and culturally appropriate supports. They felt additional pressure to always adapt or compromise cultural values that conflicted with systems that made Māori clients, service users and their whānau feel hakama or embarrassed. All women experienced requests for cultural expertise as they were seen to represent a Māori view in the different roles they had. For one of few Māori women with their capabilities their peers and managers would make assumptions that part of the women's roles was to provide cultural expertise over and above what they already did in their day-to-day work. This pressure was exacerbated by feelings of obligation to outperform their peers and advocate on behalf of their whānau, hapū and iwi. Participant 6 reflecting in her statement the struggle:

*In our Pākehā jobs we must wear our Pākehā jackets and take them on and off and be careful not to show our full Māoriness.*

Participant 5 commented:

*Being Māori and a Māori woman, I guess I am more settled in myself there is a difference in how we stand up in the system and having to deal with people's assumptions that we are the waiata singers rather than the person who actually created the frameworks.*

Participant 2 stated:

*Even though I'm employed as a lawyer, I don't think it says I've got to do karakia, mihi, karanga, waiata and translate all the te reo Māori documents that come through.*

In their professional roles this meant they worked harder than their peers and advocated through difficult situations to ensure that Māori consumers, customers and clients voices were heard within the different spaces. Sometimes this was self-initiated as the participants would advocate on behalf of Māori and other times it was assumed by peers and managers, seemingly with good intent to get it right. For example speaking of the health care experiences of Māori patients participant 3 stated:

*It's showing them 'this is what's killing our people' then they can see what it is like 'for Māori' and if they had practiced in a certain way they might have come back and trusted the system.*

She was frustrated that her peers and managers lacked the understanding of how Māori, particularly kuia and kaumatua had developed a mistrust of organisations when not engaged in culturally appropriate ways or treated within a clinical model and approach. She commented further:

*I think the challenge is making people I work with sit face to face and tell them what's going on and how we can make changes, realising there is a bigger issue they're contributing to, by letting the system play out.*

Another interesting view was how some of the young women articulated their views of how they were perceived within a Pākehā feminist construct commenting on the complexities and challenges they faced. Participant 6 stated:

*I struggle with Pākehā feminism. There's inequity in that – it's different for white women than it is for brown women. I struggle with the lack of understanding for our culture because our women can't speak on the marae. They think our culture's sexist. And I'm like 'I think they're self-internalising their own sexism.*

Some of the women also talked about the challenges of being respectful in their cultural roles in Te Ao Māori but also wanting to voice some of their concerns in hui and on the marae. Their desire to share their knowledge and experiences and how they may be able to help or contribute expertise to the kōrero sometimes limited to taking a 'back seat'. Given they were well versed in te reo and tikanga Māori they struggled with being unable to speak

freely on a marae or challenge others when they may have had different opinions and wanted to offer different perspectives. In not wanting to disrespect their kaumatua and kuia by speaking up, participant 3 voiced her concerns:

*I don't know if it's just that respect, we have for our kaumatua that we take the back seat. We fear being disrespectful to speak over our kaumatua. It's always been something I've had a bit of an issue with.*

Similarly, participant 3 commented of her challenge:

*Over the years I've developed the confidence to speak up in particular situations. I think I'm a lot more confident to do that in the Pākehā world than I am at home on the marae.*

Participant 2 described her struggle stating:

*In Te Ao Māori there's struggles as well, and I think that's more on the Wāhine side. In te ao Pākehā there is still the Wāhine stuff, and this is a struggle I have in myself. Getting over the idea that I'm a young kotiro and I have to be running around after my kaumatua and my tane leaders.*

Living and navigating two worlds and the pressure to succeed in both, described some of the complexities as young Māori women they encountered, how they viewed themselves and the impacts on their self-esteem and confidence. In a Pākehā world participant 6 compares herself against Pākehā women noting the individualistic nature of career and the increased workload commenting:

*I see that's affected the way I view myself and the way my mother views herself, especially when you're physically brown as it's not part of beauty standards or if it is, you're too brown and I say to myself 'I want to be tan but not too brown.' I find myself with a lot of negative self-talk. I've seen it with the women in my life and how it's affected them with body image issues and a lack of self-confidence.*

*I find myself sometimes not doing enough. As a brown woman, as a Māori woman you always have to work double time, do more than anyone else.*

#### **4.1.3 Whakamā and Mamae**

*This theme describes "the impact and pain that the women experienced of being rejected, discriminated against and devalued in their lives and careers as young Māori women."*

In simple terms whakamā is defined as shy or embarrassed. Mamae is an expression of the depth of trauma or shame that can be passed on through generations or likened to the loss of a loved one.

In describing their career experiences and aspirations the participants spoke of the times that they felt judged, isolated and devalued in te ao Pākehā. Common experiences working in mainstream organisations were particularly ‘mamae’ or painful when they would challenge what they felt was inappropriate behaviour or decisions that were causing direct harm and putting Māori at risk. Describing how difficult it was to raise these issues and the risk of manager’s responses Participant 1 for example stated:

*Finding that strength to have those really tough conversations that others have put off because they’re worried about what the outcomes might be.*

Participant 6 described how peers got offended with her when she would raise issues of not being listened to stated:

*In their actions, behaviour and body language they literally are making eye contact with someone else the whole time and you’re right there, but when you raise it everyone stops in their tracks like you’ve been disrespectful or arrogant.*

#### **4.1.4 Kotahitanga**

*This theme describes “the power of being collective and connected to whānau, hapū and iwi is important.”*

Throughout the interviews the advantage of being part of a collective and connected to whānau was important. All but one participant interviewed were also young mothers raising young families, so being at home close to whānau and living in Te Taitokerau had supported them to get through the challenges they experienced. However, for all of them it meant they could pursue intensive career pathways or careers with mana and influence. Participant 1 commented:

*I think it’s really important to have people in your corner. If you know there’s going to be someone who’ll tautoko you with whatever decision you’ll make, it’ll make you do it.*

This was also deeply connected to being a part of the wider collective of tribal identities of hapū, iwi and communities aligning to their values of 'kōtahitanga'. Participant 1 explains further:

*Having a really supportive whānau helps me to be able to stay in my job because it does get really tiring and really tough, our wairua, to do the stuff we want to do.*

Participant 4 expressed the challenges of having limited time:

*Time is my biggest issue and if i didn't have my day job to worry about it would make a massive difference, but right now we have to work full time jobs, as well as all the other mahi which is often bigger than our full-time jobs*

In addition to the practical considerations of support, choosing to live in Te Taitokerau was also about their cultural learnings, identity and connections. Their ability to raise tamariki within the communities and gain mātauranga that they could pass on to their tamariki was a critical part of their career aspirations. As articulated by participant 1 and the role of a Māori women stated:

*We bring our tamariki up at home because it shows how much we treasure the turanga of a Wāhine in everything we bring to our mahi and our work.*

The principle of kōtahitanga and these examples of how they lived it in practice enhanced the young women's abilities to belong, support and influence the solidarity of Māori to achieve a vision that would improve the lives of generations to come.

#### **4.1.5 Mana Wāhine**

*This theme describes "the mana of Māori women as protectors, nurturers and the influence of mothers, grandmothers and generations of women before them."*

The weaving together of career stories with the struggles of their mothers and grandmothers was a poignant connection made by the young women in discussions of the influence of Mana Wāhine and their decisions were deeply intertwined with their mothers and grandmother's histories and stories.

It was noticeable the shift in their emotional responses as some of their grandmothers had passed and their sadness that they no longer had direct access to their wisdom or support. Stories of mothers and grandmothers who had also chosen pathways to help their people was a common thread throughout the interviews. Participants also felt a responsibility to continue this legacy in the careers that they chose for themselves.



*It starts with my mum, my grandmother, but also in my reo circles, kapa haka, everywhere is a tua wāhine, a wāhine hero that inspires me to do the best I can in all the positions (p2)*

*I think, probably my main person would have to be my Mum. She taught me a lot about making sure our people are being heard and making sure our people being looked after. That is what I have been brought up on (p4)*

The women spoke proudly of watching and observing the roles they (mothers and grandmothers) played and how they were respected as community 'heroes' historically as teachers, mentors and leaders in a variety of roles. The sense of pride throughout these interviews displayed by the young women in their expressions was apparent and they would stop to gather themselves when the tears would fill their eyes remembering those that had passed away.

Stories of their own Wāhine tua as community heroes who had been on the front line of kaupapa movements were shared as examples below:

*My grandmother in all her roles as a Māori warden was probably a jack of all trades, and a master of being a Māori woman. She would do the miles for her people, and some told me she was scary, but I think it was because they respected her. (p5)*

*Mana wāhine comes from having a strong mum and grandmother. My grandmother was staunch, and she knew how to make a difference for her people, she was one of the great teachers of Ngāpuhi. (p3)*

*Watching my mum and her journey uplifted my understanding of 'that's what you do, it's just part of life' and education is a privilege. (p6)*

*My kuia was the epitome of mana wāhine. She went through the experiences of getting hidings for speaking te reo and losing her whenua, but she was always proud of her whakapapa, and she taught us what it meant to be mana wāhine. (p1)*

These stories were deeply entrenched in the identities of the young women and how they addressed their current environment knowing that the mana of those Wāhine from the past was also an intrinsic part of their own mana guiding their decisions from afar.

## **4.2 Focus groups meetings**

The focus groups were a chance to reflect and consolidate the thinking from the research findings. Bringing the women together as a collective helped to deepen the thinking and

understanding of the five key themes and as a result three final themes emerged, Kaupapa Driven Careers, Ngā Ao e Rua- Two Worlds and, Identity as Mana Wāhine and influencers.

#### **4.2.1 Kaupapa Driven Careers**

The focus group discussions confirmed the importance of kaupapa driven careers. Participants discussed how financial rewards were less important in comparison to the kaupapa itself. The women articulated together that the value of kaupapa driven careers strengthened their identities as Māori women and was seen as a pathway and connection to becoming more influential to represent their whānau in their respective careers.

*It's about having the heart and mindset of being Māori. (p1)*

*Being **Kaupapa Driven** are many roles young Māori women choose in their lives because it drives the Kaupapa of being Māori, being myself and being able to influence what happens for the collective driven by values of being Māori and for the Kaupapa itself. (p4)*

Participant 3 commented further below about the rewards of a kaupapa driven career:

*I'm often surprised how my peers are all about the money or just focused on themselves, but money is not what drives me, it's about my whānau. The impact we can have on change in our communities is another type of currency. (p3)*

Interestingly, as a group they also talked about whānau networks as a competitive advantage to their peers who were not Māori as it gave them further access to leaders of influence through whakapapa connections. As a group they saw kaupapa driven careers as an advantage that helped them to succeed in both worlds. There were some drawbacks to this as the women found it difficult to find time to connect and reach out for support by other successful Māori women. Participant 1 acknowledged:

*Having a database or network of Māori women who have succeeded to the highest accolade in our careers are hard to find in Te Taitokerau and we don't know where they are and it's about finding the right people who understand what we are dealing with and are willing to share their knowledge with us.*

Participant (3) recommended:

*We need a way to capture information from the right people and working with others so we can think about a way forward but make sure it doesn't put more pressure on us to do the doing and create more work for ourselves.*

#### **4.2.2 Ngā Ao e Rua or Two Worlds; Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā**

Within the two focus groups the importance of Ngā Ao e Rua was reinforced and built on by the women. They felt comfortable to share common experiences of how the Te Ao Pākehā system had undermined their career aspirations to influence positive changes for whānau. Sharing personal examples within the group was powerful as women would speak and offer awhi and aroha for each other. An example shared by participant 5:

*Being Māori is integral to our success, but sometimes it feels like this is not enough. In my student placement I was basically told by my supervisor I would fail my placement if I could not switch off as a Māori and needed to pretend, I was Pākehā.*  
(p5)

Te Ao Māori was viewed as a world that supported their activism and collectivism. It provided a platform to research and gather ideas prospecting for mātauranga Māori through their kaumatua, kuia and other mana wāhine. The young women saw these connections on marae and in their circles of whānau as a place to regain strength and remind them of their contribution to the whole, particularly when faced with challenges of the system.

#### **4.2.3 Identities of Mana Wāhine**

In the previous section, their experiences as young mothers were not discussed as much as other experiences in the interviews. However, in the focus group it was more important as it personified their relatedness within the context of whakapapa in recognition of their ancestral linkages. All the women spoke of their aspirations to raise tamariki that knew their own language and the protocols of being Māori first. This included aspirations of their tamariki attending local kohanga reo and kura kaupapa within communities. In turn, increasing their own cultural leadership as they became more confident themselves when learning alongside and teaching their tamariki. Additionally, creating more opportunities to draw on Mātauranga of mana wāhine and kuia from home meant they actively pursued time with women they respected at wananga, on marae and in communities. Participant 4 expressed:

*We need support in Te Ao Māori. If our Whaea have that knowledge, then we need their guidance. We are well versed in te ao Pākeha, but we are hungry for mātauranga Māori to balance the world we have become accustomed to.*

They acknowledged that having these natural supports and wider networks around them was a strength and distinguished them from Pākeha peers, particularly as young Māori mothers. As a collective of six young Māori women within a network of mana wāhine they saw this as a strength and foundation that gave them leverage gained through these relationships and unique life experiences. The wisdom of the collective elevating their mana as young women alongside other women.

Participant 3 declared:

*Our support structures and networks mean if we fall, they pick us up and there is always someone who we can ask for support and find ways to keep going. There is always someone who we have in our whakapapa networks that we can call upon.*

Participant 1 supported this by stating:

*Our brains are in lots of different spaces all the time, so we have to know how to prioritise, and we've had to do all of this, study, find a home, raise children, have a career and work on our marae.*

The focus groups helped the women to distinguish the very important linkages with each other across their identities and they began to clarify a purpose in response to the system and challenges that they were experiencing in their lives that informed and shaped their career choices. As summarised by participant 5:

*All of us have chosen to uphold te mana o te wāhine as it feels like we live in the past and present but always thinking about what the future looks like for our daughters, like our mothers and those who have gone before us.*

### **4.3 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has highlighted in the context of five key themes that emerged from analysis of the data. It describes findings from the individual semi-structured interviews to identify five themes. Building on and reflecting on these five themes with two focus groups meetings three final themes emerge consolidating how the women expressed career aspirations and the importance and influence of older Māori women on the forming of their identities and shaping of their career choices. The next chapter discusses these findings to help form considered responses to the main research questions.

## **Chapter Five: Discussion of the findings**

This chapter will explore the final themes outlined in the previous chapter in the context of the three main research questions. The sections are structured to investigate and form a response to these questions, consider the literature review with a commitment as a researcher to maintain the mana and integrity of the young women's voices and experiences.

### **5.1 Research Question One**

#### ***5.1.1 What are the career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau?***

The findings revealed that being kaupapa driven was critical to the participants career aspirations. As Māori women first and foremost the kaupapa of representing the aspirations of their whānau, hapū and iwi was fundamental to their well-being as it encompassed expressions of identity and connection to a whakapapa within a Te Ao Māori world. Bound to the ancestral ties and legacies of Māori women as Mana Wāhine, as mothers and as professionals they challenge colonial ideologies in their commitment to the kaupapa (Pihama, 2020).

Principles of upholding the mana of their whānau and giving back to their communities resulted in an ongoing process of “rethinking routines and turning points” (Hodkinson, 2009, p. 9) in their careers so that they were able to adapt to the many challenges they encountered. This entailed taking on a number of roles to influence change being one of few Māori women in their professions with their qualifications on boards, trusts and in governance roles to represent a Māori perspective. The mātauranga and wisdom gained from being immersed in Te Ao Māori working on the marae surrounded by kuia and kaumatua sustained the young women to forge identities and understanding of what it was to become a Mana Wāhine. Being immersed in Te Ao Māori structures empowered the women to choose careers and work in organisations to influence systemic changes focused on achieving better outcomes for Māori.

Therefore, the kaupapa determined decisions that were intertwined with career choices. For example choosing to live in Te Taitokerau meant that they had access to whānau support structures so that their tamariki could be raised in te reo and tikanga Māori. In terms of career choices they would work in sectors or industries where they could also influence better outcomes in areas of health, education, legal and whānau ora sectors for Māori. These decisions were also linked with giving back to their whānau and communities, particularly those that had supported them to achieve the qualifications required for their

careers. Holistically, the women's career pathways and aspirations were deeply entrenched in their ways of viewing and understanding the world. (Hodkinson, 2009).

The theme Ngā Ao e Rua provided a rare and specific insight into the systemic issues and challenges the participants had to address in forging kaupapa driven careers. Their experiences of being devalued, belittled and ignored was a reality constantly reminding the women of the historical grievances suffered by their ancestors. The women's stories resonated with feelings of grief when asked about their career aspirations and what careers meant to them. They spoke about how this mamae was inflicted by systems that excluded Māori cultural protocols and practices that trampled on their mana. Bombarded with these experiences, they carried the knowledge that these same experiences were also shared by their mothers and grandmothers in their careers. This 'brought home' the emotional impact and burden of traditional knowledge that was passed down through the women's whakapapa. Forster and Palmer (2016) comment on how this amalgam of the past and present provokes a sense that the contribution and leadership of Māori women is not valued in contemporary organisations. Participants felt misunderstood, stereotyped and isolated. Moreover, colleagues, peers and managers assumed that as Māori they should hold the roles of cultural translators, teachers or guides so that tikanga Māori could be better understood rather than take responsibility for their own learnings.

Although a heavy burden to carry, the women derived strength from these experiences making what they do in their careers more meaningful and purposeful. Staying true to the kaupapa, claiming and as Mana Wāhine they exposed in their voices and presence the common and inherent bias that exists within society and organisations that perpetuate the stereotypical 'ideal worker' who is white and male (Ackers, 1990). Furthermore, they are re-defining the 'ideal worker' with their own cultural values and roles in their careers in Te Ao Pākeha. In their own way these young Māori women are manifesting "a cultural space approach to career, whereby the pathway to being Māori has contributed to the career journey". (Reid, 2011, p. 194). As these young women are actively moving inside and outside of the system, holding on to kaupapa Māori strategies, they engage with the institution of the Pākeha world, through their peers and managers and are driving for more fundamental structural changes whilst defining newly kaupapa careers simultaneously. (Smith, 1997: 483 as cited (Henry E. P., 2001).

## **5.2 Research Question Two**

### ***5.2.1 To what extent did they draw strength and mana from older, successful Mana Wāhine?***

The findings confirmed that the participants drew strength and mana from older, successful Mana Wāhine. The weaving together of their career aspirations with the struggles of their mothers and grandmothers was a significant connection made by the young women in discussions of the influence of Mana Wāhine. Their life and career decisions were deeply intertwined with their mothers and grandmother's narratives. Stories of decisions made to choose pathways to help their people was a strong theme and core to the formation of identities as young women also apparent. Following in the footsteps of their mothers and grandmothers was critical as it was seen as a way to carry on the work and legacies that had been imprinted in the young women's hearts and minds.

The participants described their grandmothers and mothers as 'wāhine tua' or 'community superheroes' holding many influential roles in their hapū and iwi. This is encapsulated in a statement made by one of the young women, she describes her grandmother's legacy as a Mana Wāhine who fought relentlessly for her people's rights through Waitangi Treaty claims and years of dedicated service in the Māori women's welfare league. Other young women shared stories of their mothers and grandmothers as prominent educators, kohanga reo pioneers, professors and chief executives.

Being born and bred in Te Taitokerau the young Māori women were also acutely aware of the influence and leadership of Mana Wāhine whose names were synonymous with protest and activism. Growing up with these examples of Mana Wāhine leadership and those of their own mothers and grandmothers, they worked hard to honour these women choosing kaupapa driven careers that reflect the generational aspirations of Mana Wāhine. Across the country Mana Wāhine such as Dame Whina Cooper, Dame Titiwhai Harawira, Ripeka Evans, Hilda Harawira, Mariameno Kapa-Kingi and Annette Sykes synonymous with activism and drive for radical change. These women among others are role-modelling how young Māori women can continue to drive explicit political stances (Smith, 1992; Simmonds, 2011). As young Māori women they are using their careers to create leverage and competitive advantage as part of a Mana Wāhine collective to assert their own prominence and influence (Pihama, 2020) in their chosen careers. Effectively, these connections may enable a unity and expression of Māori feminism and activism as 'Mana Wāhine' so that across generations the complexities and diversity of being Māori and female (Simmonds,



2011) evolves within cultural connections and a commitment to relationships that support career aspirations of young Māori women.

### **5.3 Research Question Three**

#### ***5.3.1 How do we improve the likelihood of these young Māori woman succeeding in meaningful careers?***

Meaningful careers build a connection to a greater sense of contribution both in work and in life, so it is important that role-models and mentors are able to build a dynamic relationship with young Māori women that is cognisant of career aspirations within a kaupapa Māori world view. The women spoke about how they would like to network with other successful Māori women in their specific careers and how difficult it was to do this due to the rurality and isolation of the communities they live in. They were also too busy to make connections in their daily lives as employees, business owners, mothers and community volunteers. Previous experiences of reaching out to networks resulting in increased workload for them to organise and co-ordinate events and meetings.

They spoke about the struggle to access easily other Māori women that they could whakapapa to and relate to in the career world. In their humility they did not want to be a 'hoha', seemingly unworthy of the time and attention of other Mana Wāhine that were seen as successful in their field. There was a strong sense of not wanting to burden other Māori women given their experiences. Consequently, solutions to facilitate relationships through whakapapa first was recommended given the importance of having role models and mentors that understood and could relate to their career experiences. A particular example shared by one of the women that reached out to a Māori female judge in her specific area of expertise was happy to discover that her and the judge had whakapapa linkages. In turn it made it easier for her through familial connections versus professional networks to ask for advice and support. Effectively, she had established a connection that validated her career aspirations.

The critical point is that the women are looking for role models and mentors that understand the challenges of being Māori women in their careers and have succeeded, nonetheless. However, the concern of time and resource to make connections seemed overwhelming and raised concerns that would place further burden on both parties. Their experiences of having to take on the responsibilities of building networks and sourcing information as well as their existing roles proving too much for their individual workloads. Although they knew there would be benefits in this, they felt it was left for them to co-ordinate and organise a group of women with already too many responsibilities.

#### **5.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter was a discussion of the research findings and answer the three main research questions. Drawing on a Kaupapa Māori methodology and Mana Wāhine perspectives, the young Māori women shared that their careers aspirations are part of the holistic and collective aspirations of being Māori. As such their commitment to growing and learning what being Māori meant as their cultural identity was core to their career decisions.

In their stories of living between two worlds they experienced first-hand the disadvantages of inequality for not only themselves but for their own whānau and kuia, kaumatua fuelling the “fire in their puku” to draw on the legacies of Mana Wāhine as leaders, activists and protestors. As a result there are some clear recommendations that they have helped form in the final question of being able to improve the likelihood of their success.

## **Chapter Six: Concluding Whakaaro and Thoughts**

The main purpose of this research was to provide a space for the voices of young Māori women from Te Taitokerau, Northland to be heard and listened to. Specifically, it explored the career aspirations of six young Māori women from Te Taitokerau utilising kaupapa Māori methodologies and a Mana Wāhine paradigm in response to three main questions:

1. What are the career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau?
2. To what extent in the present do they draw strength and mana from older, successful Mana Wāhine?
3. How do we improve the likelihood of these young Māori woman succeeding in meaningful careers?

The research concluded that the career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau were kaupapa driven. In its essence the kaupapa was about representing their whānau, hapū and iwi aspirations whilst simultaneously challenging the systems and structures of organisations they worked for as they witnessed first-hand in their careers, systemic process and practices that devalued and undermined their 'kaupapa'.

At this point-in-time, their career experiences speak to feelings of isolation and rejection. They talk of 'standing up' to challenge their peers and managers for culturally inappropriate practices and incidents. They also felt ignored when raising concerns about bureaucracies that made it more difficult for Māori communities to access support and resources. These concerns were expressed in multiple ways. For example, the assumption that they would be the 'waiata singers', translators and kaikaranga, placing additional strain and pressure on the women within the organisations they worked for. The pakaru pipeline was thus, a reality for Māori women cast into culturally inappropriate roles (Naepi, 2019) or restrained by cultural boundaries (Staniland, et al. 2019) within a career context that affected their ability to advance or progress in their career aspirations.

The research also concluded that they all drew strength and mana from older successful Mana Wāhine. The influence and presence of Mana Wāhine as powerful role-models for kaupapa driven careers. Being able to forge their own cultural identities, this group of women drew on the strength and leadership of mothers and grandmothers' narratives and career experiences. The wisdom and mātauranga of kuia and kaumatua were instrumental in being able to navigate two conflicting world views described as Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākeha. As such, they were prepared to carry the legacies of Mana Wāhine of Te Taitokerau, looking for their opportunities for radical change and activism. In doing so, they

challenged through their careers “decision-making processes, organisations that are in the hands of a small oligarchic menagerie of Māori men, politicians, bureaucrats, and lawyers” (Evans, 1994, p. 64), and a system that favours an ‘ideal worker’ who is white and more likely, male. (Acker, 2016).

To address the final research question of how to improve the likelihood of success for young Māori women in Aotearoa New Zealand to achieve meaningful careers, is complex and multi-layered. Researchers need to firstly ensure that there are more spaces for the unique voices of young Māori women to connect with and share their stories in ways that will excel career aspirations as Mana Wāhine. Secondly, from the perspective of young Māori women, it is about building their capacity and confidence to build what they see as ‘meaningful’ careers. Here, connections with other young Māori women that “inoculate” them against negative stereotypes (Singh, 2010, p. 265) and feelings of isolation and rejection are paramount.

The young Māori women in this research expressed the desire to have older more successful Mana Wāhine as mentors. This they saw as a conduit to grow both in their cultural roles as well as in their professional careers specifically building relationships that will enhance career paths that differentiate from traditional models of careers (Eby, 1997). We must be cautious however, not to ‘overload’ or put undue pressure on young Māori women. Strategies that are founded on Kaupapa Māori principles and practices must be considered to facilitate these mentoring opportunities without causing more stress and pressure on a group of women who already contribute so much to our communities.

In reflection, drawing on Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wāhine perspectives was an empowering approach as was the methodology shaped by this worldview. As a methodology, it gives meaning to the life of being Māori and helps to conceptualise Māori knowledge (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2000, p. 3). It gave meaning to the young women’s career experiences within the context of culture and validated their experiences of systemic bias and institutional racism (Henry and Pene, 2001) as a resistance discourse against Aotearoa’s destructive and hegemonic colonial past.

Unfortunately, their experiences confirm that even with solid whānau support structures, higher educational qualifications and successful careers, the colonial past of a white and dominant world view still exists in this century. The insidious nature of this worldview is “aggressive” (Drake-Clarke, 2006) and pervasive, resulting in beautiful and intelligent young Māori women feeling whakamā and mamae for being ‘too brown’ in a Pākehā world. To

sustain their aspirations, hopes and optimism, we must protect those same aspirations as if they were our own.

The findings of this study have to be seen in light of some limitations. The first limitation is that there is little research for young Māori women in Aotearoa, NZ that studies 'kaupapa driven careers' based on Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wāhine methodologies. Another limitation of the research is an acknowledgment of my own cultural bias and a tendency to interpret the study according to my own cultural career experiences, which meant that there were moments it was challenging to interpret discussions and findings objectively. As a Māori woman also committed to the aspirations of whānau, hapū and iwi there were times it was difficult to separate myself as a researcher and not be emotionally impacted by the women's experiences of isolation and rejection. There were also limitations as a result of COVID-19 restrictions that resulted in having to conduct some of the interviews virtually which meant that we were unable to meet kānohi ki te kānohi as planned. The opportunity to meet face to face would have allowed for deeper more enriching korero

In this enduring commitment as a Māori researcher, a recommendation for further research would be a longitudinal study to re-visit the careers and lives of the six young Māori women every five years over the next 20 years so that we could learn and gather a deeper understanding of career aspirations within their ongoing journey as Mana Wāhine. The study could consider further the influence of Mana Wāhine as role-models and identify effective strategies to support young Māori women's aspirations across future generations. It would also be interesting to gauge how young Māori women will influence systemic and structural change in Te Ao Pākehā. Furthermore, research that considered the voices of Māori women from different iwi across the country and/or Māori women from different ages and stages of life in their career aspirations would be beneficial. There are still many stories to be told and much more work to do.

As a final thought I conclude this research with a whakataukī from one of our great rangatira and tupuna of Ngātihine, Ta Hemi Henare, Sir James Henare:

***“Kua tawhiti kē tō haerenga mai, kia kore e haere tonu.***

***He nui rawa ō mahi, kia kore e mahi tonu”***

***“We have come too far not to go further; we have done too much not to do more”***

**No reira, tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna tātou katoa.**

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## **Appendices**

**Appendix A: AUTECH Ethics Approval Letter**

**Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet**

**Appendix C Participant Consent Form**

**Appendix D Email Invitation to Participants**

**Appendix E Indicative Interview Questions**

**Appendix F Research Outputs**

**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)**

Auckland University of Technology  
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ  
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316  
E: [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz)  
[www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics](http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics)

12 February 2021

Nimbus Staniland

Faculty of Business Economics and Law

Dear Nimbus

Re Ethics Application: **20/406 He Taonga Tuku Iho” – Shaping the future of Mana Wāhine in Te Taitokerau**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 12 February 2024.

**Non-Standard Conditions of Approval**

1. Please update escalation plan in the Researcher Safety Protocol for any occasion where you are not accompanied by a family member. This involves choosing a support person who you will contact after each interview to let them know you're safe and noting the actions they will take should they not hear from you, and within what time frame. An example might be – 'I will call my husband when I enter and leave each interview. If he doesn't hear from me within 30 minutes of the end of an interview, he will contact emergency services.

Non-standard conditions must be completed before commencing your study. Non-standard conditions do not need to be reviewed by AUTEC before commencing your study, but please send updated document for our file.

**Standard Conditions of Approval**

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEC in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard and that all the dates on the documents are updated.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all

ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz). The forms mentioned above are available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTECH Secretariat

**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee**

Cc: aurioler@nrc.govt.nz;auriole.ruka@gmail.com; Irene Ryan

## Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

24/11/2020

Project Title

"He Taonga Tuku Iho"

Shaping the future of Mana Wāhine in Te Taitokerau

- The career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau.

The purpose of this form is to ensure that at all times your korero and contribution is respected and valued for the mana you bring to the research. It also aims to establish a relationship of trust providing clarity on the purpose of the research, how it contributes to Te Taitokerau and the expectations if you agree to be part of this research.

Ngā mihi,

An Invitation

Tēnā koe e te mareikura, he mihi mahana tēnei kia koe,

My name is Auriol Ruka (Ngāpuhi/Ngāti Tuwharetoa) and this is an invitation to participate in research committed to contributing to helping to shape the future of mana wāhine from Te Taitokerau. Your participation will help to explore the experiences of Māori women; their career decisions and aspirations.

The research is to complete a thesis that fulfils the requirements and completion of a Master's in Business. It is also important that if you believe there is a potential conflict of interest or any other issues that it is your choice to participate in the research. If you choose not to; your decision will be treated with respect.

What is the purpose of this research?

The main aim of the research is to assert the voice and experiences of young Māori women of Te Taitokerau. As 'mana wahine' your career aspirations are a critical part of the solutions and action plans for resilient independent Māori communities, whānau, hapū and iwi.

The research will also aim within this context to understand what drives the career decisions and aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau and how it will help shape the future of what mana wahine will mean to Māori; perhaps for all of Aotearoa.

The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

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

You were identified by the following ways:

Through existing networks including community groups and entities to contact participants that are known to the researcher. Through the researcher contacting the participants directly by phone or email to gauge their interest in taking part and if a positive response was received, the researcher forwarded an email invitation with Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form attached.

You have received this information sheet as you meet the inclusion criteria for the study and are acknowledged as a Māori wahine who is recognised for the contribution you make to your community, whānau, hapū and iwi already.

Specific inclusion criteria are detailed as below:

Young Māori women, mana kōhine (six)

- Young Māori women aged 20-30 years
- Whakapapa to the iwi and hapū of and live in Te Taitokerau
- Known and visible in their community for their current contributions as mana wāhine, leaders both in Pākehā and Māori organisations and societies
- Currently employed, working and/or self-employed in Te Taitokerau

Or:

Mana Wāhine (two)

- Experienced mana wahine, viewed as leaders and influencers in te Ao Māori and Te Taitokerau

- Whakapapa to the iwi and hapū and live in Te Taitokerau
- Known and visible in their community for their current contributions as mana wāhine, leaders both in Pākehā and Māori organisations and societies

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

If you agree to participate in 'He Taonga Tuku Iho' you can advise me either via phone/text (027 2930774) or email [auriole.ruka@gmail.com](mailto:auriole.ruka@gmail.com). I have attached a consent form so if you can also send a scanned copy of the consent form signed and dated that would be much appreciated. Alternatively, we can go over these documents when we meet at a time and venue suitable for you and complete them together before the interview starts. I will have hard copies available and ensure we take the time to go over these face to face if you have any other questions.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and it is your choice. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

#### What will happen in this research?

The individual interviews are estimated to take 1-2 hours scheduled at a time and venue that is convenient for you and your work and whanau commitments; conducive to a feeling of privacy and safety to respond in a manner of tika, pono and aroha. Two hours is not a necessity; but allows a flexibility for whanaungatanga such as welcomes and introductions if required. There will be a number of structured questions for you to answer but the main premise of the interview is to hear your voice and experiences so the questions will flow with your korero.

On completion of the individual interviews, you will be invited to a hui with other participants to discuss further the themes and ideas found in regard to the research. Potentially, looking to the future and any recommendations for the research.

The focus group is anticipated to take three hours to allow for whanaungatanga and time to acknowledge each other followed by a light supper/kai and similar to the individuals there will be a number of pre-prepared questions facilitated and allowing for the korero to flow between the collective. This event will be held at the Hihiaua Cultural Centre in Whangarei at a date to be determined. It is not a compulsory to attend this event as part of the research.

All interviews and the focus groups will be recorded on a dictaphone so that I can transcribe the notes for the purpose of data collection for the research. All data collected is private and confidential to you for the individual interviews and pseudonym names and codes will be used to protect your identity and what you choose to share with me. Draft transcripts will be sent to you for checking and review and if you request a summary of the findings these will also be sent to you via email.

#### What are the discomforts and risks?

As Māori women we may have some discomforts sharing our personal achievements and career aspirations including 'talking about ourselves'. We may also believe we do not have the right to be acknowledged as mana wāhine or associated with other mana wāhine. It may also be difficult to make time to meet as a woman who has many other work, whanau and community commitments.

#### How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

At any time through the process you have the right to withdraw from the research without feeling whakamā or embarrassed about your decision. Listed below are ways to support your participation, particularly during the interviews:

- Before each interview beginning with karakia and mihi (if appropriate)
- Having your whānau present at the interview for support
- Only sharing what you want to share of your experiences and that at any time you can choose to continue to NOT participate in the research.
- What you share, and your information will be treated with the utmost respect, privacy and confidentiality and that the transcripts, notes will need to be approved by you before it is included in the research.
- Protect your identity by using pseudonyms or code names and removing any potentially identifying material from the transcripts.
- You can indicate in the consent form if you would like to receive a key summary of the progress/learnings of the research.

#### What are the benefits?

##### Potential benefits for you as the participant?

- An opportunity to be part of a network of mana wahine who share common goals and interests and to focus on strategies that will assist in your career aspirations.
- To support and Inform your thinking and decision making as an individual within theoretical research and te Ao Māori frameworks.

##### Researcher

- To become an informed Māori researcher for my whānau/hapū and gain a recognised qualification that will assist my learning in an area that I am passionate about.

##### Wider community

- The wider community will benefit from a wider perspective that values and considers the voices of mana wahine Māori and the work they are doing.
- Develop strategies that can transform the economic and social challenges of our communities within a Māori worldview.

#### What compensation is available for injury or negligence?

In the unlikely event of a physical injury as a result of your participation in this study, rehabilitation and compensation for injury by accident may be available from the Accident Compensation Corporation, providing the incident details satisfy the requirements of the law and the Corporation's regulations.

#### How will my privacy be protected?

##### To ensure your privacy will be protected:

- The researcher will not record names in the notes taken around interviews.
- The interviews will be recorded in audio form but no identifiers such as names will appear in the written notes and transcripts.
- Consent forms will be stored separately to the notes taken so that data cannot be associated with specific individuals.
- Participants will not be identified in the final report
- Reference will not be made in interviews to the views of, or information provided by other participants.
- Interviews will be arranged in venues that enable them to participate in the research in a confidential manner.
- The researcher cannot guarantee full anonymity as participants may be known to the researcher through existing networks and will also be asked to participate in a focus group. Therefore, confidentiality is limited in this regard.

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

There are no anticipated costs associated other than your time totalling 5 hours (incl. focus group) with participating in this research and there will be a koha of a \$50 kai voucher as a gesture to acknowledge your contribution to the research.

#### What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Three weeks will be given to confirm whether you will participate in this research and I will follow this invitation up after two weeks via phone or email to check in.

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

If you would like feedback on the results of this research, you can let me know at any time during the research and I will send a summary of the findings to you via email.

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

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor,  
*Dr. Nimbus Staniland*, Senior Lecturer, Department of Management, Faculty of Business, Law and Economics, (AUT)  
P 09 921 9999 ext. 6594 E [nimbus.staniland@aut.ac.nz](mailto:nimbus.staniland@aut.ac.nz) W [aut.ac.nz](http://aut.ac.nz)

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

There are also free counselling services or advice provided here locally for your information should you require further support:

<https://www.manaiaapho.co.nz/YouthMentalHealth>

**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:**

Auriol Ruka, Ph. (027) 293 0774 or E [auriol.ruka@gmail.com](mailto:auriol.ruka@gmail.com).

**Project Supervisor Contact Details:**

*Dr. Nimbus Staniland*, Senior Lecturer, Department of Management, Faculty of Business, Law and Economics, (AUT)  
P 09 921 9999 ext 6594 E [nimbus.staniland@aut.ac.nz](mailto:nimbus.staniland@aut.ac.nz) W [aut.ac.nz](http://aut.ac.nz)

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *type the date final ethics approval was granted*, ATEC Reference number *type the reference number*.



## Consent Form

*Project title:*

"He Taonga Tuku Iho"

Shaping the future of Mana Wāhine in Te Taitokerau

- The career aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau.

The purpose of this form is to ensure that at all times your korero and contribution is respected and valued for the mana you bring to the research and to confirm your agreement to participate in the research and the focus group hui.

Ngā mihi,

*Project Supervisor:* Primary Supervisor, Dr. Nimbus Staniland

Secondary Supervisor, Dr. Irene Ryan

*Researcher:* Auriola Ruka

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 24/11/2020.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that identity of other Māori women and our discussions in the focus group is confidential to the group and I agree to keep this information confidential.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the focus group and that it will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then, while it may not be possible to destroy all records of the focus group discussion of which I was part, I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature: .....

Participant's name: .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

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

Date:

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *type the date on which the final approval was granted* AUTEK Reference number *type the AUTEK reference number***

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



## Email Invitation to Participants

Subject: Invitation to participate in Research – “He Taonga Tuku Iho”

Date: dd/mm/yyyy

Tēnā koe e te mareikura, he mihi mahana tēnei kia koe,

This is an invitation to participate in research committed to contributing to helping to shape the future of mana wāhine from Te Taitokerau. Your participation will help to explore the experiences of young Māori women; their career decisions and aspirations.

The main aim of the research is to assert the voice and experiences of young Māori women of Te Taitokerau. As ‘mana wahine’ your career aspirations are a critical part of the solutions and action plans for resilient independent Māori communities, whānau, hapū and iwi.

The research will also aim within this context to understand what drives the career decisions and aspirations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau and how it will help shape the future of what mana wahine will mean to Māori; perhaps for all of Aotearoa. The research is also to complete a thesis that fulfils the requirements and completion of a Master’s in Business.

If you are interested in participating in the research and would like to know more, please find attached a Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form that outlines further details about the research and the expectations if you agree to be part of this research.

If you have any questions in regard to this invitation, please feel free to contact me via email – [auriole.ruka@gmail.com](mailto:auriole.ruka@gmail.com) or phone/text (027) 293 0774.

I will follow up to gauge your interest and whether or not you would like to participate two weeks from the date of this email via email/one follow up phone call. Please know that this is voluntary, and it is your choice to participate or not as I appreciate that time is a valuable resource and that your decision either way will be respected.

Mauri ora kia koe,

Auriole Ruka, Researcher

Ngāpuhi/Ngāti Tuwharetoa

## Indicative Questions

### He Taonga Tuku Iho

#### Participant Questions - Interviews

- Tell us a bit about yourself
- Why did you choose the career you are in?
- What are the things that matter most in your career?
- What are some of the key drivers that influenced you to choose your career?
- What do you hope to achieve? What are your aspirations?
- Have other older Māori women or mana wāhine influenced your decisions? In what ways?
- What are the challenges faced for young Māori women (from a career perspective) living in Te Taitokerau?
- How do we ensure that young Māori women and their career aspirations are a critical part of the future decisions that impact Te Taitokerau?

#### Focus Group Questions

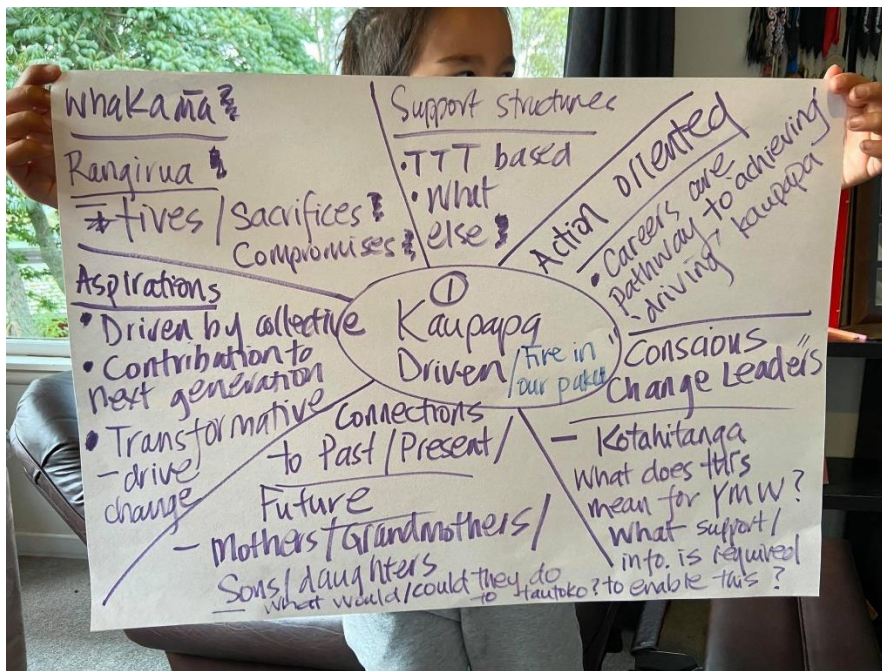
- What are the opportunities for Māori women in Te Taitokerau? What are the challenges?
- What are the aspirations for Māori women in Te Taitokerau?
- What are the key decisions and influencers that drive career aspirations?
- How do we ensure success for future generations of young Māori women in Te Taitokerau?

## Thematic Analysis – Mindmaps

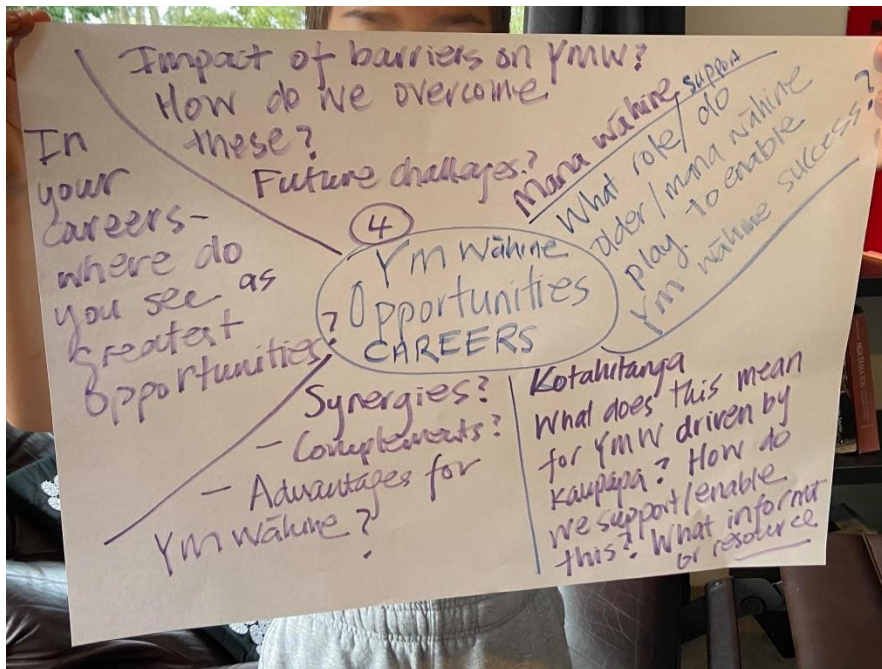
Mindmap 1 – Themes from one on one interview categorised under key questions



Mind maps 2 & 3 – Preparation for the Focus group meetings



Mindmap 2



## Analysis of Data noting initial thoughts

Familiarising myself with the data      Correcting interview transcriptions, reading and re-reading the data, noting initial thoughts



Definition of success/aspirations	Layers of complexities and responsibilities/expectations on the young women – got to be good at being Māori as well as being in a Pākehā world
Support Structures	5 of 6 of them are young mothers and raising families – have a support structure in Te Taitokerau (TTT)
Support Structures	Closely connected with marae and their ‘people’
Definition of success/aspirations	Notion of ‘returning home’ to give back to their people is important
Key drivers/Kaupapa Driven/Change Leaders	Choose careers where they want to make/drive change
Kaupapa Driven Definition of success/aspirations	Identify as Māori first and have a clear expression of what that means for them (all of them started with their pepeha and used te reo throughout their interviews)
Specific challenges for young Māori women	Experienced barriers of ‘not being heard’ or taken seriously
Young, Māori and women - intersectionality	Have had negative experiences when they’ve challenged racism, stereotyping, devalued, assumptions and belittled – nothing’s changed, being dramatic (making little things big), excluded
Tensions – Te Ao Māori/Te Ao Pākehā	Won’t challenge tane Māori, kaumatua if they have a different opinion out of fear of disrespecting tikanga
Young Māori women in Te Ao Māori	
Diminished voices	
Impact on Te Ao Māori?	
Impact on te Ao Pākehā?	
Key drivers/Kaupapa Driven/Change Leaders	Driven by Kaupapa as key reason for the career path

What is systemic change?	All used words like coloniser, breaking the system, or matrix
Tikanga versus Process?	
Support Structures	Draw support from older Māori women – watching learning and observing what they do
Key Drivers	Career is not about money but about dealing with injustices on a personal and ‘our people’ level
Kaupapa Driven/I exist for a bigger purpose	Career is not the language used by the women – they talked more about Kaupapa or purpose
Change Leaders	
Young Māori women in Te Ao Māori – Who am I? Where can I make the most difference?	Proud of the term ‘Mana Wāhine’ but struggled seeing themselves as Mana Wāhine
My decisions are connected to my mothers, myself and my daughters	
Young Māori women’s experiences	Feelings of isolation, as they are achieving lots of firsts ‘only young Māori Wāhine in TTT as a physiotherapist’, on iwi boards, national boards, in digitech. No time to make the connections with others.
Diminished voices/subject to?	
Conscious – Change Leaders	Very conscious and educated about treaty claims, Mana Wāhine claims and movements.
Kaupapa Driven	
Young Māori women in Te Ao Māori – Where can I make the most difference?	Assumptions that there has been change historically and connects to the history of Māori both on a personal and professional levels
Connection to past, present and future	

My decisions are connected  
to my mothers, myself and my  
daughters

My decisions are connected  
to my mothers, myself and my  
daughters

Believes it's their responsibility to do something that will  
change the systems

My decisions are connected  
to my mothers, myself and my  
children

Real changes are a collectivism and having voices heard  
as a collective of Mana Wāhine, Māori women and  
career minded professional women

Collectivism of Te Ao Māori –  
impacts?

Individualism of te ao Pākehā  
– impacts?

Dual/Plural pathways for  
young Māori Wāhine

Conscious – Change Leaders  
Kaupapa Driven

Personal experiences of being discriminated against as a  
key influence for their choices/decisions

Action oriented – careers are  
the source for young Māori  
women's activism

Sense of urgency that change must happen now.

Action oriented – careers are  
the source for young Māori  
women's activism

Articulate and conscious about their mana and authority