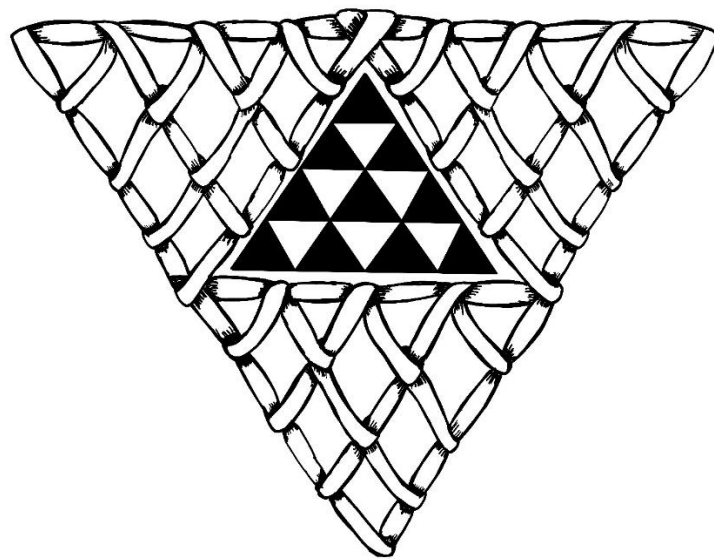


Atua Wahine – Mana Wahine

A whakapapa expressed through the physical
activity of Māori women in contemporary
Aotearoa



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Abstract

Physical activity, as a health behaviour, is known to contribute to improvements in health, both physical and psychological. However, physical activity also has the potential to contribute to a better understanding of people who engage in it, especially those whose experiences aren't already widely explored. In this research, physical activity was a vehicle for coming to know the ways of being and doing of nineteen active wāhine Māori, and their whakapapa to atua wāhine – feminine deities represented in the natural environment. This research was informed and implemented by an intersecting method(ological) framework of Whakapapa, Mana Wahine, and Korikori Tinana – *Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa*. This framework was purposefully constructed to gather mātauranga wahine, but it also became a mechanism for storing and displaying that mātauranga. The research asked: what are the attributes of physically active Māori women, and how do they connect to the attributes of atua wāhine? The kōrero and korikori (conversations and activity) methods allowed a way to answer those questions that resonated with what it meant to be Māori, wahine, and physically active in these challenging contemporary times. They also provided a unique way for wāhine to demonstrate their personality, physicality, and whakapapa expressions to atua.

The findings of this research are presented as five metaphorical categories, or huahuatau. *Ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au* explores the way wāhine described 'environmental transactions' – these included connections to, reflections of, and the range of exchanges that wāhine experienced with different environments (natural and otherwise). *Ahuwhenua* describes the way wāhine demonstrated purposeful planning, creativity, and being resourceful in their cultivation of success. *Ngā taonga tuku iho* explores the different ways that wāhine were committed to moving mātauranga from one to another – learning, teaching, and sharing knowledge. *Rakanga Waewae* relates to a sense of dynamic balance, where wāhine demonstrate skilful 'footwork' in their many roles and responsibilities. Finally, *Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai*, repurposes a whakataukī and explores an acknowledgement of potential and a commitment to its realisation. Each of these huahuatau provide a blueprint for understanding how wāhine and their mana are inextricably (inter)connected with the mana of atua wāhine.

Through *Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa*, this research provides a mechanism for gathering the stories of wāhine, storing them for future generations, and (re)telling them in a way that celebrates their mana. It shows us that wāhine are carriers of (extra)ordinary

knowledge and capabilities, and that those skills are woven into our physical and metaphysical make up – through te whare tangata. Essentially, this research brings to the fore the contemporary successes of wāhine Māori, within the context of physical activity. It prioritises and champions the voices of wāhine Māori in a purposeful way. From the structure of this thesis to the stories and interpretations that bring shape to its message, the intention was to cultivate an expression of whakapapa. In that process of cultivation, this research provides unique contributions to methodology, method, and provides a framework for wāhine to position themselves, in a mana-enhancing way.

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~ Nāku te rourou nāu te rourou ka ora ai te iwi ~

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~ Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini ~

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~ *Ahakoā he iti he pounamu* ~

To my wife, Louise, my number one supporter: for all that you have done for this perpetual student, over the years. For making me sandwiches and bringing me cups of tea. For reading a hefty thesis, more than once, and quoting it in daily life. For all the things you've done for me to get to this place – great and small. I appreciate you and love you. Here's to our next adventure.

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~ *Ko Hine-titama koe, matawai ana te whatu i te tirohanga* ~

To all those who guided my mātauranga. To those who are inextricably connected to my whakapapa, past, present, and future. To those who helped me understand the world by showing me different ways of seeing it. To each person who has contributed in some way to the realisation of this kaupapa. Your influence is embodied in this work.

~ *Mā te whakātu, ka mohio, mā te mohio ka marama,*

mā te marama ka matau, mā te matau ka ora~

Ethics Approval

Ethics approval was received by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC 18/391) on 5 November 2018 and 26 March 20019.

Karakia

Tukutuku te rangaranga Whetū Ao

Weave the constellations of the stars,

No te hautapu o ngā Rehua

Into your sacred being

Whakahekea hei tātai ki te umu e...

Bring them into your heart,

Whakakōpani ake ki te hiringa matua

Hei mauri whakaoho ā hine

Enabling ancient feminine energy.

He whare āhuru e uiuitia ana ki te hora

A sanctuary in a space of seeking,

He takapau wharenui ki te taumata iho wahine

A sacred mat of your feminine blueprint.

Heke, heke, iho ki tāku kauhau ariki,

Channelled from your ancestry,

Hei umu katamu mōku nei e...

A feast for your prosperity.

Nā Rhonda Tibble (Ngāti Porou)

in Māreikura **Tuhi** Journals

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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 other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Deborah Heke

06.10.2021

Glossary

Ahu	To heap up, mound, or move/face towards a certain direction
Āhua	Shape, character, likeness, nature, to approach
Āhuatanga	Likeness, characteristic, attribute, or trait
Ako	To learn, study, teach
Aro	To pay attention to, consider, focus, be understood/comprehended
Aroha	To love, empathise
Aronui	Refers to the pursuit of knowledge, kete aronui – the basket of knowledge of humanities, acquired through careful observation of the environment
Atua / ngā atua	Māori deity. Personification, representation of environmental or cosmological feature(s).
Hā	To breathe, breath
Hā mamao	Distant breath. A greeting / gesture likened to a hongi but used during times of physical distancing. Demonstrated by pointing to your nose with a bent fore finger (without touching) and then motioning that finger to the person you are greeting
Haka	A vigorous and posturing dance. Also used colloquially to indicate someone is making a fuss
Hapū	Pregnant. Also relates to kinship group / sub-tribe
Hapūtanga	Pregnancy
Harirū	Handshake, greeting
Hauora	Health, vigour, wellness
Hawaiki	The ancient homeland from where Māori migrated
Hine	Indicates the feminine
Hinengaro	Mind, consciousness, psychological
Hineruhi	Deity found at dawn; her dance is said to be the sparkle of light that is reflected in the morning dew.
Hinetuakiri	Deity or personified form of gravel
Hinetūparimaunga	Deity of mountains

Hineuku	Deity or personified form of clay
Hoe	Paddle or oar. To paddle or row
Hua	Product, fruit, finding, result. To flower or bloom
Huahuatau	Metaphor
Ikura	Menstruation
Ira	Relates to the life principle, genes
Iwi	Extended kinship group, tribal group, or nation
Kai	Food, meal. Or to eat/consume As a prefix to a verb, it describes a person doing the action
Kaikaranga	Caller – a woman who conducts the ceremonial call at marae or other venues
Kaitiaki	Custodian, keeper. Often refers to a person who cares for the land
Kākahu	Cloak, garment
Kapahaka	Māori performance group
Karakia	To recite ritual chant, prayer, or incantation
Karanga	A formal ceremonial call or welcome
Kauae	Jaw, chin
Kaumātua	Elder, person of status within a whānau
Kaupapa	Purpose, platform, matter for discussion
Kete	Basket, kit
Kiwa	Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. Refers to the Pacific Ocean (atua of)
Koha	Gift, present, or offering of thanks or reciprocity
Kōrero	To speak or say. Speech, story, information
Koretake	To be useless, incompetent
Korikori	To move, movement
Kotahitanga	Unity
Kuia	Elderly woman, grandmother, or female elder
Kupenga	Type of woven net or fishing net

Kurawaka	Depicts the location in creation narrative where the first woman was created
Mahi	To work, perform, or practise
Manaaki	To support or take care, give hospitality, respect, generosity
Māra	Garden, cultivation
Māramatanga	Enlightenment, insight, brainwave
Mātauranga	Knowledge, wisdom, understanding, education, also indicates the act of knowing
Maunga	Mountain, peak
Mauri	Life principle, vital essence
Mihimihi	Greeting or speech to pay tribute
Moana-nui-ā-kiwa	Deity associated with the Pacific Ocean
Moemoea	Dream, vision, or aspiration
Moko	Māori tattooing designs
Mōteatea	Lament, traditional chant, sung poetry
Ngākau	Heart, soul, place of affection
Ngai Tahu	Tribal group associated with much of the South Island of New Zealand, also called Kāi Tahu by southern tribes
Noa	Ordinary, unrestricted
One	Beach, sand, mud, earth
Oriori	Lullaby composed for a child about their ancestry, destined path, or tribal history
Pā	Fortified village, stockade, fort
Pakaru	Broken, broken down, ragged
Pākehā	Refers to a New Zealander of European descent
Papatūānuku	Mother Earth
Para	Rubbish or sediment
Pepeha	Tribal saying, proverb, set form of words – usually indicates tribal connections
Pēpi	Baby, infant

Pōhara	To be poor, broke
Pōwhiri	Welcome [ceremony], rituals of encounter
Puāwai	To bloom, come to fruition, flower or blossom
Puku	Stomach, gut
Pūrākau	Story, legend
Rangātira	To be of high rank, esteemed, have qualities of a leader
Rangatiratanga	Sovereignty, self-determination, autonomy
Rangiātea	A place in Hawaiki, the point where canoes began migration – indicates an origin
Raranga	To weave, plait, weaving
Rarohenga	Underworld, the place of the spirits of the dead
Rātana	A Māori religious movement founded by a faith healer – Tahupōtiki Wiremu Rātana
Reo	Language, speech – often refers to Māori language
Rohe	District, region
Roopū	Group
Ruānuku	Wise elder, alchemist
Tā whakaroaro	Refers to a reflection journal where first impressions were recorded. Tā –to tattoo, to etch, or to print. Whakaaroaro - to ponder, consider, give thought to.
Taiao	Natural world, Earth, nature
Takakau	Unleavened bread
Takatāpui	Close friend of the same gender. Gay men and women
Tāne	Male, man. Sometimes refers to Tāne Māhuta
Tāne-mahuta	Deity of the forests and birdlife – one of the offspring of Ranginui and Papatūānuku.
Tangata / Tāngata	Person, individual / People
Tangata whenua	To be natural, established, local or Indigenous people. Born of the land
Tangiweto	To cry, or be a cry-baby, sook
Tapu	To be sacred, restricted, protected

Tauira	Student, pupil
Tautoko	To assist or support
Te Ao Kapurangi	Notable wahine of Ngāti Rangiwewehi, Tapuika – Te Arawa descent – known for brokering innovative peace-making during war
Te ao Māori	The Māori world
Te ao mārama	The world of light
Te ara whānui o Tāne	The broad path of Tāne – the path taken by the spirits of the dead back to the homeland – displayed as a gleaming sun glistening across the ocean
Te ira tangata	The human element, human genes
Te Ihorangi	Deity or personified form of the rain
Te Pae Mahutonga	The Southern Cross constellation. Also refers to a Māori health promotion model
Te pō	The dark night, or the world of darkness before light
Te whare pora	The house of weaving. The place where weavers are ceremoniously instructed in the art of weaving
Te whare tapa wha	Māori health model developed in the 1980s that represents hauora as the balance between the four walls of a whare – meeting house
Tihei mauri ora!	The sneeze/breath of life. A phrase used to claim the right to speak.
Tikanga	Correct procedure, method, protocol. The customary system of values and practices developed over time
Tino ātaahua	Very beautiful, attractive
Tinana	Body. Person. Actual.
Titiro whakamuri, Kōkiri whakamua	Look to the past to move forward
Tohu	To perform a ritual. Guide, instruct, indicate, or gesticulate
Tohunga	Skilled person, healer, or priest. To be expert or proficient
Toi Tangata	A national Māori agency which specialises in healthy living and healthy learning based on Māori knowledge
Tuakana	Elder sibling of the same gender

Tu meke	To startle or take fright, colloquially used to mean “too much” or to express you are impressed or respect someone’s actions
Tūpuna	Ancestors
Ūkaipō	Mother or source of sustenance – the night-feeding breast
Wahine / Wāhine	Woman / Women
Wahine Toa	Brave, warrior woman
Wai	Water
Wairua	Spirit or soul of a person, attitude, essence
Waka	Canoe, vehicle, medium
Waka ama	Outrigger canoe
Wānanga	To meet and discuss or deliberate. Tribal or philosophical knowledge, learning.
Wero	Challenge
Whaikōrero	To make a formal speech, address, oratory
Whaiora	One who has wellbeing – often refers to mental health service users
Whakamana	To give authority, empower, endorsement
Whakamā	To be shy, ashamed, embarrassed
Whakamāori	To interpret, clarify, decipher, translate into Māori
Whakamoemiti	To praise, or give thanks
Whakatinanatanga	Embodiment, implementation, realisation
Whakawhanaungatanga	The process of establishing relationships
Whanaungatanga	Relationship, kinship, a relationship through shared experience
Whānau	Extended family. To be born or give birth
Whāngai	Foster(ed), adopt(ive)
Whare o aituā	The place of death and disaster.
Whare tangata	The house of humanity. Refers to the womb
Whawhai	To fight, clash

Whenu	Strand (of cord), threads of woven flax
Whenua	Land, ground, nation. Also describes the placenta or after-birth

PART ONE – Whakapapa to Tikanga

The first part of this thesis represents what would conventionally be included in the introduction, literature review, methodology, and methods section. In this thesis, they are represented as the *Whakapapa* – background and rationale; *Kaupapa* – methodology review; and *Tikanga* – research methods description and justification. Each weaves together the use of western and Māori approaches to research, knowledge, or mātauranga to explore the way this thesis can offer a unique contribution to each. They lay the foundation for this research and lead into the presentation of Ngā Hua(huatau), the findings of this research – presented as huahuatau in Part Two.

Chapter 1 Whakapapa – Introduction

1.1 Preface

This chapter will outline the background and rationale to this research. It provides a description of the whakapapa or the history that it descends from, and then continues to present rationale as to why it should exist in this current context. But as I have come to develop my kete o mātauranga Māori (Māori tool kit), I have found it is important to use terms that resonate with being Māori, in the position that I am currently in. I do not mean for these terms to be strictly interpreted, nor do I assume that they would be endorsed or applied the same way by all Māori. But in my thesis, using my current interpretations and sometimes metaphorical interpretations, I have decided to present this opening chapter as the *Whakapapa*.

In anticipation of any potential confusion of the many uses of the term whakapapa in this thesis; I will clarify its use in this chapter. In this case the *Whakapapa* chapter provides the reader with a background to why I personally chose to do this research; its significance and aims; what current situation warrants it; and a brief description of how I intend to proceed. Included in this chapter is a review of relevant literature in health, psychology, physical activity, with a review of both Māori and western approaches. I also begin an introduction and review of relevant contemporary mātauranga Māori sources as they relate to physical activity, health, and/or atua wāhine.

1.2 Ko wai (rangah)au¹?

He uri ahau no Ngāpuhi me Te Arawa. Ko Te Ahuahu te maunga. Ko Omapere te roto. Ko Waitangi te awa. Ko Ngātokimatawhauroa te waka. Ko Parawhenua te marae. Ko Ngāti Hineira me Te Uritaniwha ngā hapū. Ko Turei raua ko Karen oku mātua. Ko Deborah Mareta Heke toku ingoa.²

The pepeha I present here is a way of introducing myself that identifies my connection to people and places of significance. It represents my whakapapa to tūpuna who played an integral role in shaping who I am and how I am. Between each line of my pepeha are

¹ Ko wai (rangah)au? – This phrase asks, from where does this research originate and from where do I originate?

² I am a descendant of the tribes of Ngāpuhi and Te Arawa. Te Ahuahu is the mountain I connect to. Omapere is the lake. Waitangi is the river. Ngātokimatawhauroa is the waka. Parawhenua is the meeting place, and Ngāti Hineira and Te Uritaniwha are the sub-tribes. Turei is my father. Karen is my mother. My name is Deborah Mareta Heke.

stories that depict the way my tūpuna survived, adapted, and thrived in order for me to be who and how I am today. The more I recite this pepeha, the more I come to learn about myself and the whakapapa it represents.

This process of engaging with these places, spaces, and people also mirrors the way I hope to represent this research. Getting to know myself better involves engaging with the many environments that have and continue to shape me. So too, this research attempts to better understand wāhine, atua wāhine, and their connection through physical activity, by engaging in the environments that have shaped them.

Below I will outline how this research came about. I will trace its whakapapa and provide the background to this research. I begin here with the initial idea; I continue by outlining its significance and rationale. Included in this *Whakapapa* is a review of literature that contributes to its rationale.

Origins of Atua Wahine – Mana Wahine

The whakapapa of this research, its rationale, originates from an opportunity I had to discover Aroha Yates-Smith's ground-breaking work in *Hine! E Hine! Rediscovering the feminine in Māori spirituality* (Yates-Smith, 1998), and the influence of Ihirangi Heke introducing me to the *Atua Matua Māori Health Framework* (Heke, 2014). In the summer of 2016/17, I was fortunate to have been a part of Toi Tangata – a national Māori agency that “specialises in healthy living and healthy learning based on Māori knowledge” (Toi Tangata, 2021, p. 1). As part of their *Growing the Puna*, summer internship programme, I was supported to develop a project that would allow me to grow my understanding of Te Ao Māori in the context of physical activity and nutrition. I came into the programme with limited connection te ao Māori, and what little I had was based on a skewed appreciation of what it meant to be Māori. Throughout my youth and early adult life, I did not have any real connection with what it meant to be Māori, or any of the significance of te ao Māori.

Unbeknownst to me, my time at Toi Tangata and the summer project I began, allowed me to establish the foundations of this doctoral research. Over that period, I was learning about ngā atua and unlearning a lifetime of (dis)information that had influenced the way I saw the world. Through conversations with colleagues and ‘mobile wānanga’ run by Ihirangi Heke, I began to see and understand the significance of ngā atua as ancestors, and their stories as practical instructions about how to engage in our taiao and

with others. One significant moment in coming to understand this in a practical sense was when I was invited, as a Toi Tangata intern, to engage in a practical wānanga session with Ihirangi over the summer of 2016-17. The wānanga involved riding dirt bikes at the Dome Valley Moto-X Park, which was a dusty clay and gravel course, involving tight turns, bumps and bends, and an eventual face-to-face introduction to Hinetuakiri, Hineuku, and Papatūānuku herself. I call this interaction with the atua of gravel, clay, and mother earth herself: the *highspeed hongī*. But in actual fact it was a fairly unremarkable crash that eventuated in a cracked visor on my helmet, and a few gnarly scrapes. But that interaction was probably one of the most important moments for me coming to understand what atua had to teach us – at least in the physical activity space. That highspeed hongī taught me that different environments require us to behave in different ways. Such interactions teach us what works and what doesn't work. On that occasion, it taught me that if I take my eyes off the track while travelling at speed on dusty gravel terrain, it is a good idea to be wearing a helmet. But most important of all, that hongī taught me that ngā atua and your relationships with them can be understood in a range of ways – physical activity just resonated with me despite the crash.

Further to these practical learnings, I became aware of the (mis)representations or lack of representation of the feminine aspect of atua. Like many others, I had some recollection of stories of atua – Tāne separating his parents to bring light to the world; Maui fishing up the North Island (Te ika a Maui); and even Hine-nui-te-pō subsequently crushing Maui between her thighs after one of his many escapades. But most of the atua Māori that I had heard about were male, and most of the stories were about their feats and courageous endeavours. Whenever I stretched my mind to recall a story of an atua wahine, they were rarely the hero and even less likely to be a prominent character. That did not sit well with me, and I wondered why this was the case. This curiosity was the impetus for the internship project and provided the pathway to discover the work of Aroha Yates-Smith, and subsequent other influential authors.

For the Toi Tangata project, the idea to interview successful wāhine in the physical activity, health and wellbeing space can be credited to support from the then CEO Megan Tunks. She, along with other colleagues, supported me to contact a range of wāhine in their networks that could offer insights into physical activity, their connection with it, and any understandings of atua, specifically atua wāhine. I was able to connect and kōrero with a range of women from the Toi Tangata network and my own, who

offered some insightful kōrero. These wāhine were academics, PhD candidates, former dancers, lawyers, and professionals in health and fitness, and they all shared freely to contribute to the kaupapa.

The opportunity for me to kōrero with these wāhine allowed me to introduce the idea of this research into practice and to gain the first sparks of momentum for the direction of this current PhD kaupapa. Interviewing wāhine was only one method I wanted to employ. Being a physically active person myself, I wanted to incorporate an active element to this project. I wanted to use what I learnt when I shared that first highspeed hongī with Hineuku on Ihirangi's dirt bike and get to know these wāhine by sharing an activity with them. If not only to trial a unique approach to gathering data, but also because it seemed like it would add an element of fun to the process.

In order to incorporate an active component to the internship project I decided to invite those wāhine involved to share their kōrero, either while engaging in an activity or after an activity of their choice. Those who chose to, or had the capacity to, share an activity with me also were able to display aspects of their personality, physicality, or connection with natural environments that I may not have observed in a conversation alone. One wāhine invited me to walk with her up Hakarimata Summit track, in Ngāruawāhia. As we walked, she shared her meaningful connection with that area and specifically that track. She talked about that particular walk being an invaluable tool for both her physical and mental health. She shared how she would do the walk whenever she was back 'home', from living in Auckland. She talked of its significant influence when she was having tough times and she noted it challenged her during her weight loss journey. She explained that it was a place that she felt a strong connection with, and although it was always a challenge to reach the summit she kept coming back over and over again. My opportunity to engage in that space with her was also an invaluable learning that would ultimately inform the way I would conduct this doctoral research.

Although the Toi Tangata project covered just a fraction of the summer internship – which was around 10 weeks in total – some of the preliminary findings from the wāhine I interviewed were remarkable. From the small group of women involved, themes began to emerge relating to adaptability, balance, supporting and complementing roles, survival, competitiveness, fulfilling potential, resilience, the power and influence of moko, and the connection to certain environmental energies. Many of these themes were already significant areas of interest, both with relevance to contemporary academic

literature (Boulton & Gifford, 2014; Yates-Smith, 2003) and traditional mātauranga Māori or whakapapa (Heke, 2014; Waiti & Kingi, 2014; Yates-Smith, 1998). These themes could also provide an initial foundation in my search for relevant participants and mātauranga themes for this PhD research.

It became clear that the summer project had the potential to extend beyond the scope of the internship and potentially contribute a positive narrative relating to Māori women in this space. This process led to the desire to continue to grow my understanding and application of the wider concept of whakapapa both on an academic and a personal level. I have come to accept that it is important for me, as a researcher but more so as a wahine Māori, to turn the microscope back on myself and come to understand who I am in te ao Māori before I can try to examine others. Therefore, it became clear that I would need to come to better understand my own whakapapa and my relationship with activity before I could come to understand it as a philosophical framework and understand other key concepts of this research. This process also involved starting the journey to improve my proficiency of te reo me ona tikanga³ and engage in relevant wānanga or hui in related areas. Each of these journeys are ongoing, sporadic at times, but are not only the beginnings of a PhD but also a (re)awakening of my whakapapa connection to tūpuna Māori and their influence on who I am to be.

As I embarked on and continue my journey to embrace te ao Māori, Mana Wahine theory, practice and community, I have realised there are many others on a similar journey. Since beginning this research process, I have come across wāhine (re)discovering and sharing knowledge of atua wāhine, mana wahine, and the connection between the two. One in particular is Nuku, a podcast hosted by a former journalist and photographer Qiane Matata-Sipu and is dedicated to telling the stories of “kickass Indigenous women”. Qiane and her Nuku team have committed to interviewing and documenting the stories of one hundred Indigenous women so that wāhine can see the world through “a lens made by and made for Indigenous women” (Matata-Sipu, 2021). The kaupapa of Nuku resonated with me and the kaupapa I had developed for my research. The podcasts became a foundation for me coming to learn more about the expansive successes of wāhine outside of my own mahi, and eventually offered an opportunity to join with other mana wahine at the Nuku 2.0 wānanga in 2020, and then again in 2021 with their Atua workshop series. At the 2020 wānanga, I

³ Te reo me ona tikanga relates to Māori language and its practices.

was able to listen, share, and commune with inspiring wāhine like Hinewirangi Kohu-Morgan. Her kōrero with me over lunch and her later presentation provided a much-appreciated affirmation of the thinking and kaupapa that drives this research.

Hinewirangi introduced me to the atua wahine Wainuiātea, she expanded my understanding on the source, location, and manifestation of mana, and she provided a perspective on atua wāhine that would help guide my future thinking on the matter. Such an opportunity through the network established in the Nuku community and others, meant that wāhine could convene and kōrero in a mana wahine space. And just as I hope to contribute to a narrative that enhances the mana of wāhine Māori, the Nuku movement allows a wider audience to “see how the world can be shaped by our voice, the unique picture we see” (Matata-Sipu, 2021). A sentiment that continues to resonate with me as I continue to engage with mana wāhine who inspire mana wāhine.

1.3 Background

As Māori we are the embodiment of the successes of our tūpuna, our ancestors. Our ancestors were a strong and active people whose relationship with their natural environment was fundamental to their ability to adapt and flourish in a land rather unlike that of their own ancestors. Our ancestors navigated across expansive oceans using the knowledge of their ancestors and their unique relationship with the natural world to discover a new land. Upon discovery, it was said to be described by Kuramārōtini, the wife of Kupe, as “he ao, he ao, he Aotearoa” (Royal, 2005a; Tregear, 2001). We as Māori, trace our whakapapa, our lineage, all the way back to the creation of the natural world, through ngā atua, our ultimate ancestors. Through this whakapapa we are connected inextricably to the natural world (Mikaere, 2003, 2011; Roberts et al., 2004). That which resides within te taiao, upon, below and above Papatūānuku – Earth Mother, are our tūpuna, our whānau. Those who came before us succeeded in continuing their lineage because, among other things, they were able to adapt, evolve and eventually flourish under changing and challenging conditions. It is now our wero, our challenge as contemporary Māori, living under conditions that have and will continue to challenge our ability to adapt, evolve and flourish, to do just that. We have, not only the tools of today and the advantages that they bring, but also the knowledge of our ancestors that reinforces an inherent connection with our natural world. With these tools, contemporary Māori have the opportunity to navigate and thrive, as our tūpuna did, in our own changing and challenging conditions. Titiro whakamuri, kōkiri whakamua – the past gives us the insights to move forward into the future.

Pre-European Māori sustained a physically active and demanding lifestyle connected to the natural environment in which they lived. The physical aspects of life were demonstrably connected to the metaphysical; therefore, many activities were linked to atua or a connection with the environment (Marsden & Henare, 1992). Early Māori were described as being fit and healthy people (Lange, 2011), having “remarkable agility”, possessing “great powers of endurance”, and kept in “robust health” due in part to the “simple life and fare, combined with highly necessary industry” (Best, 1924, p. 10). Additional to the necessity of activity in daily life, Māori also displayed their physicality in a range of traditional games and activities that honed motor skills, contained mātauranga, and engaged a sense of recreation or whanaungatanga within and between communities (Brown, 2014).

The demands associated with daily life, likely resulted in the limited survival of those unfit members of society and a consequently reduced burden for the remainder. However, those survivors were known to exhibit some remarkable cases of relative longevity (Best, 1924). The holistic lifestyle exhibited by Māori involved the interplay between facilitating and fostering not only physical wellbeing of individuals, but also psychological, spiritual, and wider whānau wellbeing. Often described through a contemporary health model known as Te Whare Tapa Wha (Durie, 1994); all aspects of wellbeing were seen to impact each other and the balance between these aspects was linked to the way Māori viewed the world they lived in. Like many other Indigenous cultures, Māori viewed all aspects of their natural environment as ancient ancestors to which they traced their own genealogies – through whakapapa. This connection reached back as far as the time of creation. The connection fostered a reciprocal and respectful relationship with the natural world and the interactions with it (Marsden, 1989).

Unlike contemporary approaches to physical activity that can often revolve around specific improvements to individual health outcomes, such as weight loss or improved metabolic measures, the physicality of traditional Māori was a result of the nature of daily life (Marsden & Royal, 2003). Known health behaviours such as participating in regular physical activity, consuming nutritious foods and fostering social connectedness (Bouchard et al., 2012; Hawkey & Cacioppo, 2010; McArdle et al., 2015) were also inherent in traditional Māori life for the purpose of continuing the well-being and whakapapa of the collective (Marsden & Henare, 1992). Unfortunately, the current depiction of Māori health in New Zealand is not unlike that of many first world

Indigenous populations, where poor health and well-being statistics, especially those related to cardiometabolic disorders, are associated with declines in the aforementioned health behaviours (Ajwani et al., 2003; Durie, 1994; World Health Organization, 2010a). The reasons for the poor health of Indigenous peoples, specifically Māori, are complex but are partly due to the changes to traditional diet, physical activity levels and other socio-cultural factors, many resulting from the processes of colonisation (Ajwani et al., 2003; Ministry of Health, 2015; Simpson et al., 2015).

Throughout the ongoing processes of colonisation, urbanisation and the subsequent displacement from tribal lands, many Māori have become separated from the cultural and natural systems that had been vital to their vitality. These processes have contributed to the current inequities in health outcomes experienced by Māori (Durie, 1994; Smith, 1999). Physical activity levels have a significant part to play in the manifestation of such health inequities, but it should be acknowledged that physical activity is just one aspect of a multi-faceted and complex interplay of other health behaviours and bio-psychosocial factors at play (Bouchard et al., 2012; Dishman et al., 1985; French et al., 2001; Penedo & Dahn, 2005).

The extent of literature on the health effects of colonisation on Indigenous peoples, direct and indirect, is considerable (Came et al., 2017; Durie, 2004c; Mikaere, 2011; Moewaka Barnes & McCreanor, 2019). Current Indigenous health status has been broadly categorised into four main causes including genetic predisposition, socio-economic disadvantage, alienation from resources, and oppressive policy. Cohen (1999) then argues that the loss of sovereignty and dispossession of tribal spaces has led to the creation of an oppressive environment for Indigenous peoples. The consequences of these factors are known to facilitate lifestyles and behaviours that impact or predispose disease or injury (Durie, 2003; National Health Committee, 1998). In stark contrast to the reports of Māori being relatively long-lived people (Best, 1924), Māori now experience worse health and life expectancy than non-Māori, even when adjusted for socioeconomic factors (Atkinson, 2014). Such disparities are seen to persist, in part, as a consequence of the ongoing effects of colonisation, loss of cultural connection to ancestral lands, and the perpetuation of deficit practices (Ajwani et al., 2003; King et al., 2009; Robson & Harris 2007). Consequently, it will likely take a considerable effort to deconstruct these factors – decolonizing and (re)indigenizing– to reduce the disparities and return Māori to a place where their relative health can be admired as it once was (Smith, 1999). Such decolonizing practices could indeed include the

identification and celebration of those who successfully navigate the colonially influenced pathways to maintain a level of physical activity shown to contribute to good health and well-being.

1.4 Significance

The specific health benefits of physical activity are well known, but the rates of inactivity for Māori continue to contribute to the poor health outcomes that are experienced across the board (Ministry of Health, 2015). Public health initiatives often perpetuate the narrative of deficit when it comes to Māori health and health behaviours, resulting in the development of interventions aimed at improving health outcomes such as weight loss. In theory, this approach seems valid; however, such an approach could be flawed in practice if considering the previously mentioned purpose behind traditional Māori activity being collective well-being and continuing whakapapa. There is the potential that with a better understanding of individuals whose attributes and/or environments have contributed to successful participation in an important health behaviour, the efficacy of public health approaches and physical activity initiatives could be improved (Friedman & Martin, 2011; Heke, 2014). Using physical activity as a vehicle for understanding individual or environmental attributes may also hold potential.

Studies have found that factors such as particular personality traits, living or working with a sense of purpose, or being involved with helping others are also associated with improved health and well-being (Friedman & Martin, 2011; Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2010). Traits associated with healthy behaviours and the subjective sense of well-being have been shown to be influenced by genetic or early life experiences, and a range of other biosocial variables (Friedman & Kern, 2014; McCrae et al., 2000). The ongoing influence of many of the changes to social and natural environments for Māori have come about as a result of colonisation and consequent urbanisation of Māori. These changes will have contributed to a range of physiological and psychological expressions that may indeed impact the engagement in healthy behaviours by Māori.

It is the intent of this research to explore an empowering and mana-enhancing narrative that identifies wāhine Māori who are successful in maintaining healthy lifestyle behaviours, specifically regular physical activity. The aim is to explore and identify the whakapapa of physically active Māori women. Specifically identifying characteristics or traits within a group of self-declared physically active Māori women will provide the

context to then weave connections with themes or characteristics of atua [wāhine] - ancient ancestors connected to natural environments. By exploring these characteristics of success, within a context of Māori values, there is the opportunity – not often afforded to Māori – to articulate and interpret our successes in a way that actually resonates with Māori.

Whakapapa is not merely a framework for organising genealogical connections, in essence it provides a framework for organising all mātauranga. In a research context it provides the advantage of both method and methodology, and it allows a dynamic and flexible way to view and interpret knowledge (Royal, 1998). As a part of this research, wāhine will contribute to the development of a system of knowledge (whakapapa) that connects traits displayed through their physical activity with the potential of others. It will then draw parallels with their most significant feminine ancestors. In the past much of what has been researched of Māori, and wāhine in particular, there has been little in the way of identifying their strengths, abilities and factors that make them successful. Even fewer narratives favour Māori knowledge or ideals. Among the limited literature that does comprise methodology and design that highlights the value of mātauranga Māori or mātauranga wāhine, there are some inspiring authors providing a voice for the narratives of mana wāhine, while still acknowledging the complementing balancing essence of mana tāne (Brown, 1994; Forster et al., 2016; Te Awēkotuku, 1991). It is also the purpose of this research to contribute to the narrative addressing the interpretation of feminine aspects of mātauranga Māori through a Mana Wahine lens (Johnston & Pihama, 1995; Simmonds, 2011).

Much of what is known regarding Māori cosmogony was initially orally transmitted by tōhunga or through waiata, whakataukī, or whakapapa (Marsden & Royal, 2003). However, after the arrival of Europeans to Aotearoa, many authors also collected, compiled, and published stories of Māori mythology, cosmology, and history (Best, 1897; Grey, 1971; Shortland, 1882). The collection and recording of Māori stories by European authors brought both the advantages of perpetuity and the issues associated with (mis)interpretation, (mis)representation, and the potential of biased distortions. Unsurprisingly, the majority of early authors of Māori history and cosmology were European men whose religious and cultural biases of the time influenced how Māori were portrayed. This is especially evident in the portrayal of women and the feminine aspect of ngā atua. In fact, very few, if any, early Māori women were sought for contribution by authors and those atua wāhine who featured in publications were a

significant minority to their male counterparts (Yates-Smith, 1998). Additionally, female atua were often conveyed in ways that demonized, diminished, or misappropriated illustrations of their actual powerful and diverse personas, and the significance they held within Māori cosmogony. Recent authors also discuss the uncanny resemblances between retellings of atua wāhine and female biblical or fairy-tale characters (Mikaere, 1994; Murphy, 2011; Yates-Smith, 1998).

In her ground-breaking doctoral thesis and consequent contributions, Aroha Yates-Smith addresses concerns about the diverse feminine personas, in relation to birth and death practices of Māori, but also lays a path for further endeavours into the understanding and (re)interpreting of other aspects of atua wāhine for prospective researchers (Yates-Smith, 1998, 2003). My intent is to contribute to the voicing of narratives of wāhine Māori without the historical euro-masculine distortion or misrepresentation, but with the intention to empower and enhance the mana of those speaking the narratives and also those who may relate to them. It is also my intent to present a contemporary narrative of our divine feminine ancestors, their influence on our contemporary lives as wāhine Māori, and how we can (re)claim and reassert their mana. Te mana o ngā atua wahine.

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the unique attributes/traits/characteristics shared by physically active Māori women?
- 2- How do the attributes of physically active Māori women connect to themes or attributed associated with atua wāhine?

In seeking the answers to and relevance of these questions, this research also aims to prioritize and empower the voices of wāhine Māori. Part of empowering those voices is aiming to communicate their stories in a way that resonates with what it means to be Māori, wahine, and physically active in this contemporary time. This means that the way the research is conducted, and consequently presented, reflects what it means to be those three things.

The aim of this research is to identify characteristics or traits, within a group of self-identified physically active Māori women. Through an intersecting lens of whakapapa, Mana Wahine, and physical activity, a contemporary whakapapa description will connect those traits to relevant themes aligned to atua wāhine or feminine aspects of

mātauranga Māori. In essence this research seeks to answer the question: **how do the traits of physically active wāhine Māori connect to atua wahine?**

Interviews were conducted with nineteen self-identified active wāhine over the age of 18 years and included participant-led physical activity sessions which were the means to provide an answer. These activity sessions provided an alternative perspective of the connection wāhine have to certain activities, to contribute to a sense of rapport where the participants acted as experts in their preferred activity. Pūrākau (stories) were shared by wāhine and pūrākau around atua wāhine reviewed and (re)interpreted through a Mana Wahine lens. The research design includes both Māori and western approaches, utilizing the genealogical framework of whakapapa as a methodology, a Mana Wahine lens and physical activity as a vehicle for communication. Characteristics of wāhine involved were thematically analysed using whakapapa as a frame and themes consulted on by advisors and participants alike. Consequently, interview data and themes gathered from a review and (re)interpreting of atua wāhine pūrākau are woven together to illustrate their connections.

It is the purpose of this research to contribute to the (re)interpretation and restoration of mana wahine and mātauranga wahine (Johnston & Pihama, 1995; Simmonds, 2011) utilising physical activity as a means of understanding, communicating, and displaying that mana. By exploring and celebrating the narratives of successfully active wāhine, the findings of this research aim to provide a platform for mana wahine, atua wahine in the context of contemporary Aotearoa. By doing so, it is possible that it contributes to the development of more culturally relevant and mana enhancing understandings of wāhine, their physical activity, and its application to mana atua wahine.

1.5 Order and structure of the thesis

As a signpost for the flow of the thesis chapters and the flow of this thesis, below I provide a brief description of the arrangement of this thesis. The thesis is divided into three parts. This first part contains the three chapters – *Whakapapa*, *Kaupapa*, and *Tikanga*. The second part contains five chapters, addressing Ngā Hua(huatau) developed from analysis of korikori kōrero, kōrero, and tā whakaaroaro. The final part contains the contextualisation, interpretation, and realisation. It consists of three chapters – *Whakamāori*, *Aro Atua*, and *Whakatinanatanga*.

Whakapapa – Background and Rationale

This chapter provides a background for the decision to do this research, its significance in this area and the research aims. It reviews the relevant literature and identifies the gaps that justify this research. It outlines the current situation and how I intend to proceed. I also introduce myself and preface the journey of this research to this point and my place in it.

Kaupapa – Platform, Purpose, and Philosophy

This chapter reviews relevant methodological approaches and evaluates their use. It describes this research project's philosophical approach; ways of knowing and ways of doing. It provides an explanation of the methodology employed and the process by which it was developed.

Tikanga – Practical Expression of Philosophy

This chapter outlines the research methods from recruitment to data collection to analysis and dissemination. It provides an introduction and description of the way the research findings and subsequent discussion of those findings were arrived at, and then examined. It also clarifies the structuring of this research and how it is presented. Within this chapter are the transcripts of the Tā Whakaaroaro – the journal reflections containing my first impressions of wāhine who participated in this research.

Ngā Hua(huatau) – Findings

This chapter presents the valuable contributions of wāhine in this research. It displays the taonga (treasures) provided in interviews by the wāhine involved, in the form of *Huahuatau* (metaphorical categories) and are made up of a number of sub-traits or āhuatanga. Each huahuatau illustrates a broad description of traits or behaviours exhibited or discussed by wāhine.

Whakamāori – Discussion and Contextualisation

To whakamāori is to decipher something or translate it into Māori. In this chapter, the findings will not be literally translated into te reo Māori, but they will be interpreted and translated in order to make sense of them in relation to what is already currently known, using a particular methodological lens. This chapter will contextualise huahuatau and connect them to existing relevant literature in te ao Māori (the Māori world) as well as te ao tauīwi (the western world).

Aro Atua

This chapter will contain the woven whenu (strands) that connect mana wahine and atua wahine. It presents a range of pūrākau of atua wāhine and, using a Mana Wahine lens, explores how their characteristics are expressed in contemporary wāhine, through whakapapa.

Whakatinanatanga

The closing chapter brings together all that has been gathered and contextualised throughout the previous chapters. Whakatinanatanga describes the implementation, the realisation, and the embodiment of the process of mātauranga, whakapapa, and huahuatau. It summarises the journey of the research, highlights its contributions, and proposes potential avenues for the future.

1.6 Literature Review

As part of understanding the whakapapa of this research, this section will provide an overview and critique of relevant literature. This review identifies the work that provides a foundation to this current research, and it identifies where this current work can fill an existing gap. It will begin by outlining physical activity benefits, recommendations, rates, and past/present approaches taken to improve activity. It compares activity campaigns, physical activity models, Māori approaches, and understandings of those factors that influence physical activity. It considers the impact of personality towards that understanding and presents some promising contemporary approaches that may resonate with Māori. Finally, this review introduces the way that atua, specifically atua wāhine understandings are applied in a contemporary context to give a sense of how this current research can also be applied.

1.6.1 Physical activity background

This section will provide a context for this research by critically reviewing literature pertinent to factors correlated with physical activity behaviours, both internationally and within the Aotearoa New Zealand context. Additionally, previous attempts to improve physical activity through targeted initiatives and interventions will be analysed with regard to their relevance to Māori, and the rationale for the approach taken to this research will be justified through reflection of Māori knowledge systems and principles of traditional Māori life.

The strength and extent of empirical evidence connecting physical activity to health and well-being improvements has been well documented (Fogelholm, 2010; Penedo & Dahn, 2005). The risk of overall mortality is reduced through regular physical activity, and specific disease risk such as coronary heart disease, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, and certain types of cancer is also reduced (World Health Organization, 2010b). Physical activity is even shown to improve a range of mental well-being measures (Fox, 2007). Consequently, the World Health Organization recommends a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week. Despite the overwhelming evidence of the healthful benefits of regular physical activity, a large proportion of individuals do not meet recommended physical activity guidelines (Ministry of Health, 2015, 2020; World Health Organization, 2010a). Research exploring why individuals do not achieve recommended physical activity levels, often cite the lack of time, knowledge or affordability (Research New Zealand, 2016; Vanden Auweele et al., 1997); however, there are a range of other bio-psychosocial factors that have been found to influence physical activity and other related health behaviours (Adler & Matthews, 1994; Friedman & Kern, 2014; Seefeldt et al., 2002).

With the purpose of addressing declining physical activity levels, poor dietary behaviours and the associated health risks, there have been a range of public health initiatives and interventions that have been implemented with varying results (Ministry of Health, 2016a; Research New Zealand, 2016). There have also been more focussed attempts to address the disparities in health experienced by Māori with targeted interventions incorporating Māori values, health models, and various approaches to improving health behaviours such as physical activity. However, with current physical activity and relevant health statistics as they stand, the successes of these initiatives and the messages they are delivering appear to have gaps, especially relating to Māori.

In 1998, a national Physical Activity Taskforce was established which in turn recommended a national media campaign aimed at raising awareness of, the then new, physical activity guidelines. The ‘Push Play’ campaign was adopted by the Hillary Commission (once known as SPARC, now Sport NZ) and included a range of commercials, resources, and merchandise. Although this campaign was successful in providing a generic message to consider lifestyle-related activity in a fun way, an evaluation found a lack of sustained changes to physical activity behaviour as a result of the campaign (Bauman et al., 2003). However, small improvements to achieving

activity recommendations (3% increase) were detected by a more detailed SPARC survey in the same year (Sport and Recreation New Zealand, 2003).

Under the umbrella of the Push Play campaign came further national programmes such as the Green Prescription Initiative (GRx) and He Oranga Poutama – a physical activity programme targeted at Māori. GRx is a referral system whereby a health professional provides written advice to become more physically active and eat healthier, to patients living with, or at risk of chronic conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease and obesity (Ministry of Health, 2016b). The effectiveness of GRx appeared to improve activity levels and other positive experiences (Elley et al., 2003; Research New Zealand, 2016; Tavae & Nosa, 2012); however, some of the programme practices, such as telephone support and relatively short intervention periods, may explain the low participation rates of Māori (Williams et al., 2015). In response, a modified GRx programme was trialled with Māori in the Waikato and Ngāti Tūwharetoa regions with extended intervention periods (18 instead of 3 months), ongoing support from Māori community health workers (MCHW), and face-to-face contact instead of telephone support. Results indicated that participants preferred the face-to-face contact; felt a strong sense of whanaungatanga; and valued the ongoing relationship with the MCHW, all of which contributed to establishing trust and supporting improvements to physical activity (Williams et al., 2015).

The He Oranga Poutama (HOP) initiative focusses on the culturally distinctive pathways important for Māori to participate in sport and traditional physical recreation, as Māori. Additionally, the prioritisation of fostering relationships, as in kaupapa Māori programmes and Māori communities, is paramount. As the initiative has evolved, HOP developed a framework – Te Whetu Rēhua – that works to encapsulate what it means to participate in sport and recreation, as Māori. The framework provides five key concepts whereby activities are either more or less aligned with participating as Māori, or instead by Māori, in mainstream initiatives. Strong alignment to ‘as Māori’ HOP goals include engaging in significant Māori environments; through traditional games or activities; delivered by whānau, hapū, iwi, Māori; for whānau with the emphasis on whakapapa or whanaungatanga and te reo me ōna tikanga. In a 2013 report, national HOP project participation ranged from 20,401 (2009-2010) to 18,013 (2010-2011) (McKegg et al., 2013). In Tamaki (Auckland) alone, between 2016-2017, 15,627 participants engaged in HOP supported projects ranging from Ki o Rahi tournament (a traditional Māori game), Te Whare Tu Taua (traditional Māori weaponry wananga), He Pī Ka Rere (early

childhood activity programme), Iwi of Origin (urban Māori sport and recreation event), and more (Sport Waitakere, 2017). Redirecting the priority towards Māori valued principles and projects is an encouraging step-change towards undoing processes that in the past have not resonated with Māori. Additionally, they allow the reconstructing and revitalising of cultural pathways through sport and recreation to influence positive change (Mertens, 2009; Warbrick et al., 2014).

Of further promise is the recent popularity of mātauranga Māori physical activity initiatives from a range of parties, from private businesses to larger organisations. One example includes a private gym and social enterprise franchise group called Patu™. Patu™ delivers an initiative to increase physical activity for Māori, by Māori, and using concepts of Te Ao Māori within local franchised gyms across Aotearoa. Using Māori language, tikanga, and customs, many of the training sessions relate to atua Māori and encourage a team culture or whanaungatanga (Patu Aotearoa, 2015). In an evaluation of a nine-week pilot study, participants identified the practice of whanaungatanga to be of paramount importance. Reductions in body fat percentage ($-2.8 \pm 0.54\%$, $P < 0.001$), BMI ($-1.4 \pm 0.32 \text{ kg/m}^2$, $P < 0.001$), and weight ($-4.3 \pm 0.97 \text{ kg}$, $P < 0.001$) were found in those who completed the final assessment. Although the reported drop-out rate of the nine-week challenge (67%) was similar to mainstream physical activity initiatives (Foley et al., 2011), many of those challenge participants who dropped out, still continued to attend Patu™ sessions outside of the study parameters (Forrest et al., 2016). This anomaly could be related to recent findings illustrating initiatives focussing on weight loss or other potentially culturally incongruent outcomes can result in low-uptake, or in this case low-completion. There is an argument that tailoring culturally relevant physical activity interventions and acknowledging the unique motivations of marginalized populations could improve efficacy and consequent activity levels (Warbrick et al., 2018). Such acknowledgements could indeed be informed by a better understanding of those success factors of already active individuals, as proposed by this current research.

1.6.2 Indigeneity and physical activity

Consistent examination of the physical activity of Indigenous people is limited and often considers the concept of physical activity mainly within western constructs. Although hugely diverse communities from many areas of the world, Indigenous peoples will often view physical activity differently to the way it is measured in the research tools utilised. They may consider such activities as household tasks, active

transport, and foraging as physical activity as opposed to merely sports or organised exercise (Hunt et al., 2008; Lavallée, 2007; Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013). Researchers have attempted to utilise adapted tools to better represent Indigenous views; however, this has garnered mixed results (Akbar et al., 2020; Lavallée, 2008). This can mean that Indigenous people's physical activity is not accurately measured; is often marginalised; or is completely ignored (Coble & Rhodes, 2006).

Much of what is presented within the literature tends to utilise a biomedical approach or attempt to categorise barriers vs facilitators of Indigenous activity in order to develop appropriate health interventions. A review conducted by Coble and Rhodes (2006) found that social environments were integral to the physical activity behaviour of Native Americans. The importance of family and community support to Indigenous communities is consistently reported (Hunt et al., 2008), with family support often determining the level and type of sport in which a child participates (Nelson, 2009; Nelson et al., 2012). Beyond the mere provision of transportation, teaching of skills (Akbar et al., 2020), or support with household tasks (Thompson et al., 2002), physical activity for Indigenous people has been described as being “embedded in a complex web of meaning which links family and their larger Indigenous community together” (Dahlberg et al., 2018, p. 5). Often, the social and familial connection to participation in physical activity is far more significant than any health benefit it provides (Thompson et al., 2000). This is also reflected in a more recent study of Māori men (Warbrick et al., 2016).

Cultural connectedness is also a significant facilitator of physical activity behaviour. Indigenous youth who have strong familial support to connect with their culture are more likely to participate in the recommended physical activity (Lévesque et al., 2015). Other facilitators have been presented in an Indigenous ecological model (Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013) which consider factors that are intrapersonal, interpersonal, or within wider structures such as organisational, community, or systemic. A strong sense of identity, pride in their culture and consequent emotional health was found to be a significant intrapersonal factor to increased physical activity. This was evident in young people who described a relationship between the physical expressions of their body and their culture. These connections are possible reflections of traditional activities providing a way to reclaim cultural identity and address oppressive effects of colonisation (Lavallée, 2008; Lévesque et al., 2015). Physical activity that reinforced a connection to culture and a connection to land was also evident. The benefit of cultural

activities such as powwows, hunting, and fishing provided both a way to participate in exercise while also providing nourishment (both physical and cultural) (Akbar et al., 2020; Crowe et al., 2017). The physical connection to land and culture is reflected in Indigenous cultures around the world and similarly, the disconnection experienced by Indigenous people in urban areas is reflected in the tendency to be less physically active than their rural counterparts (Crowe et al., 2017).

Examining the facilitating factors, along with the range of barriers that Indigenous communities face in accessing and maintaining regular physical activity, often provides a foundation to developing interventions, programmes, or policy to improve rates of activity. With the considerations outlined above, there are calls for research and intervention approaches to be more compatible with Indigenous community or cultural norms through facilitating culturally relevant support systems (Thompson et al., 2000; Thompson et al., 2013). Unfortunately, there are also suggestions that most approaches continue to use a problem-based angle as opposed to a strengths-based one (Paraschak & Thompson, 2014). These deficit-based and westernised approaches do little to improve the longstanding mistrust by the communities they target as a result of a continued focus on disparity, deprivation, disadvantage, dysfunction, and difference (Walter & Andersen, 2013; Walter & Suina, 2019). Instead of targeting Indigenous communities to prevent or intervene in so-called risky, anti-social, or deviant health behaviours, what Indigenous communities seem to be calling for is an approach that includes consideration of whānau/family, culture, and the significance of community or collective connections and one that prioritises their worldview (Lavallée, 2008; Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013; Lévesque et al., 2015).

Encouragingly, physical activity does provide an opportunity for Indigenous people to reclaim cultural identities, physical and cultural nourishment, and to contribute to a decolonising practice through that reclamation. McGuire-Adams and Giles (2018) describe the way that physical activity, sport in particular,

has the paradoxical potential to oppress Indigenous bodies, while at the same time providing a space where personal empowerment can be achieved, which then may assist in resistance to and regeneration from the effects of colonialism on Indigenous peoples' bodies (p. 208).

Their research examined the stories of the Anishinaabekweg (Anishinaabe women from areas in Canada/North America) who told their own dibaajimowinan (personal stories) of how their physical activity (running) became an act of healing and ceremony for

them. The women described that running as a group had a sense of family and that as mothers, they wanted to model a healthy and active example for their children. In this discovery, these women described a process of decolonising, which refused remaining a victim and restored their Indigenous values and capabilities (Wilson, 2005). Just as my proposed research aims to empower the voices of wāhine through their physical activity, McGuire-Adams and Giles (2018) have provided a platform for the Anishinaabekweg to showcase a strengths-based resistance and a mindful reconnection to their activity through ceremony, healing, and inspiring wellbeing potential.

What becomes clear is that the western concept of individual exercise programs is not always the best approach for Indigenous communities. The consideration of family, culture, and the natural environment is important in ensuring an effective and sustainable approach to future physical activity research and intervention programmes. Understanding the perceptions and applying the values of this population to any research or intervention to encourage physical activity, and consequently improve wellbeing for Indigenous people, will likely garner better outcomes (Dahlberg et al., 2018).

1.6.3 Factors influencing activity

On a wider scale, research aiming to identify factors that influence participation in physical activity is far reaching. As mentioned earlier, there is a clear understanding of the healthful benefits of regular physical activity; however, many people still do not achieve the recommended levels. Research has found a range of reported reasons people do not exercise or participate in regular physical activity; and further research has attempted to account for these factors with adapted approaches to interventions. Much data has pointed to people's busy lifestyles and the lack of time to exercise or be active. Other reasons include lack of knowledge, where some people are unsure of the right activities to engage in or how to get started safely. Issues related to the costs of exercise or physical activity are also noted (McArdle et al., 2015; Research New Zealand, 2016; Sport New Zealand, 2018; Vanden Auweele et al., 1997). Further reasons relate to social or environmental factors such as family commitments, limited access to appropriate facilities or neighbourhood safety (Netz et al., 2008).

The rate of physical activity or inactivity is simply the number of people choosing to initiate a lifestyle of regular physical activity and the number of those who eventually drop out, or discontinue regular activity (Dishman & Buckworth, 1996). The more

complicated concern is understanding what makes some people choose to engage in regular physical activity and to maintain it, while others do not. These concerns have garnered much research, and some suggest a negative relationship between exercise intensity, affect, and consequent adherence (Ekkekakis et al., 2011; Hall et al., 2002). Hedonic theory suggests that people are likely to do what brings them pleasure, while avoiding that which is displeasing, therefore, if people feel displeasure from intense activities, they are unlikely to engage in them. How pleasurable experiences of activity are perceived can indeed depend on individual differences. There is a further assumption, termed dual-mode theory (DMT), that the affective response to aerobic exercise is connected to certain physiological processes, such as hyperventilation and increased blood lactate. The displeasure felt around these physiological landmarks may represent evolutionary responses to critical metabolic changes in the body linked to the survival or the perception of survival (Hall et al., 2002). It is clear, however, that individual differences to the experience of, preference for, and adherence to exercise do exist and displeasure for certain activity may occur regardless of exercise intensity or physiological responses. Conversely, it is possible that positive affective valence can occur at a range of intensities, and adherence or exercise intention may continue despite affective responses. Additionally, psychological or personality-related factors are also significant at an individual level, and clearly there is need to understand the psychological (and other) processes involved (Ekkekakis et al., 2005).

1.6.4 Personality

Personality traits have been widely researched in relation to human behaviour but also physical activity, both on their influence on health-related behaviours and the consequent experience of health and longevity (Bogg & Roberts, 2004; Friedman & Kern, 2014; Friedman & Martin, 2011). Personality itself can be defined a number of ways, but generally is described as the organised system of components – traits, basic tendencies, temperaments – that develop, interact, and can account for the relative consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours of an individual (Cervone & Pervin, 2008; Funder, 2010; Larsen & Buss, 2010).

The development of these traits and the impact they have on health-related behaviours, such as physical activity, and consequent longevity has been the focus of the analysis of an eight-decade longitudinal study. In 1921, a team led by an American psychologist from Stanford University – Dr Lewis Terman – began collecting data from around 1500 “bright” and “gifted” boys and girls. The research conducted by Dr Terman’s team was

interested in understanding the sources of intellectual leadership and identifying early markers of potential. However, subsequent researchers have analysed the comprehensive data from the Terman study and investigated why some people thrive into longevity, while others do not (Friedman & Martin, 2011). This analysis discovered, from the Terman data and subsequent contemporary comparison studies, that those who live longer lives possess “certain constellations of habits and patterns of living” (Friedman & Martin, 2011, p. x). Certain traits, taken from one of the many taxonomies of personality – Five Factor Model (FFM) or Big Five Taxonomy – are found to be strongly correlated with health behaviours (Bogg & Roberts, 2004; Rhodes & Smith, 2006) and longevity (Bogg & Roberts, 2013; Friedman et al., 1993). The association is complex but is thought to relate to healthy pathways established as a result of individual dispositions and social environments (Roberts et al., 2005).

These findings are both interesting in terms of their application to understanding health-related behaviours and longevity, and in the case of this proposed research, identifying and classifying traits related to physical activity and what we can learn from them. With a range of potential limitations in its application to certain populations, the Terman study and consequent comparison studies data do, however, offer a framework from which to begin to understand the pathways that lead to good health and health behaviours. The concept that personality can encapsulate a combination of genetic, familial, social and cultural elements leads to its usefulness in understanding these pathways or patterns of development (Kern & Friedman, 2010).

Individual differences and the ability to develop personality traits and associated behaviours over a life-course is a potentially significant area to explore, especially in cross-cultural contexts or in a space where knowledge systems may interface. By reviewing what’s known about the influence of personality traits and their relevant pathways, there could exist a basis from which to apply a Māori lens. With the understanding that Māori have had a strong and reciprocal relationship with their natural environment, it is possible that the breakdown of this relationship has contributed to poorer standing in health outcomes, potentially through these proposed pathways, via personality traits. These pathways, for Māori, have been influenced by massive changes to environments, familial, cultural, and social structures (Durie, 2004c; Marsden, 1989). It is then possible that with a better understanding of characteristics or traits of those who have successfully navigated these interruptions well, there is the potential to apply this to contributing to more successful pathways for others.

One aspect of FFM that has acquired much interest in terms of its consistent connection to lower mortality risk, and positive health behaviours like physical activity, is that of conscientiousness. This trait relates to the predisposition of individuals to follow socially prescribed norms and rules. With facets related to impulse control, being task- or goal-directed, orderly, and good planning, conscientiousness' predictive value on health has been shown to be as strong if not stronger than many other seemingly more obvious risk factors (John & Srivastava, 1999; Kern & Friedman, 2008). Research has found that certain facets of conscientiousness are more strongly associated with health benefits than others, such as persistence, orderliness, organisation, discipline and responsibility (Bogg & Roberts, 2004; Kern & Friedman, 2008).

According to problem-behaviour theory, these facets are thought to correlate with health behaviours in part through the interaction of what are termed the personality system, the perceived environment system, and the behaviour system. Essentially, how one sees and responds to their environment based on certain personality traits. It is seen that a dimension of conventionality–unconventionality underlies each of these systems, which means individuals display a degree of “orientation toward, commitment to, and involvement in the prevailing values, standards of behaviour, and established institutions” (Donovan et al., 1991, p. 52). These concepts are especially related to the facets of traditionalism (upholding social norms and traditions) and responsibility (avoiding trouble and not letting others down).

These particular facets of conscientiousness, and others, can also be seen to translate closely with concepts related to mātauranga Māori such as tikanga, tapu and noa. Such concepts were also practical and were in place to establish a system of social order, risk management, whānau well-being, and the continuation of whakapapa. For example, the nature, balance, and interaction of tapu, noa, and mana within Māori society were important for maintaining social conventions and well-being. Individuals and whānau members who adhered to these social conventions could be seen to be contributing to the continuation of whakapapa by minimizing risk and/or burden to the wider community (Best, 1924; Marsden & Royal, 2003). These behaviours or traits that align with contemporary personality psychology, may illustrate some parallels between the impacts they have on healthy behaviour pathways, and the previously mentioned successes and relative longevity experienced by pre-colonial Māori.

Despite the apparent parallels between some aspects of personality psychology and Māori ways of being and doing, there still remains the need to acknowledge those Māori ways in a genuinely 'Māori' way. Those who have attempted to take an interest in the Māori world from a psychological perspective in the past, have received some criticism for the research 'on' Māori as opposed to research 'with' Māori. Being guided by the dominant western psychological paradigms of the times, early efforts have still been described as having value that is sometimes overlooked by contemporary researchers (Nikora, 2007a). Documentation of Māori life as examined by Beaglehole & Beaglehole (1946), Ritchie (1992), and others provided the background for developing cross-cultural and community psychology, based on "living conditions, problem solving and responses to a rapidly changing environment" (Nikora, 2007a, p. 81). Such examinations contributed to the understanding of issues of culture change as it related to Māori in contemporary social contexts.

The problem remained that Māori were being viewed through a non-Māori lens, an issue that is often known to contribute to narratives that do not always represent fair portrayals in the context of their realities. Portraying Māori and/or Indigenous peoples through contemporary western psychological tools, among other western tools, although useful in some applications, can also contribute to perpetuated narratives that embed disparity, deprivation, disadvantage, dysfunction, and difference within Indigenous identity. The problem is that the narrative labels and categorises Indigenous populations based on a knowledge system not derived from that population and outside of relevant context (Walter & Suina, 2019).

Other authors argue that coming to understand Māori personality or identity requires an appreciation of traditional Māori ways of being and knowing, and perspectives of the universe and its origins (Durie & Kingi, 1998; Nikora, 2007a; Waiti & Kingi, 2014). These ways of being and knowing are inherently connected to the natural world, its creation, and the spiritual or metaphysical relationship with ngā atua. The intimate connection between physical and spiritual worlds are observed and understood through everyday activities that are guided or overseen by the organisation and functions of ngā atua or spiritual realms (Marsden & Royal, 2003). Marsden goes on to describe this relationship: "the cultural milieu (of the Māori) is rooted both in the temporal world and the transcendent world. This brings a person into intimate relationship with the gods and [their] universe" (p. 137). This means that despite any parallels that might exist between western approaches and Māori, without an appreciation for the wider context

within which Māori are situated (physically, socially, and spiritually), an essential gap continues to exist.

Lesley Rameka addresses this in a discussion about the achievement of Māori children in education. In it she provides insight into a by-Māori and for-Māori assessment and analyses the nature of understanding and practice that reflects traditional Māori values. The *Best of Both World's* assessment framework “highlights culturally relevant assessment that makes sense to Māori, reflects ‘being Māori’ and supports Māori ideals and aspirations for children” (Rameka, 2011, p. 245). Its application to understanding personality or identity within this review is in the way the assessment mirrors the personality structures of Māui tikitiki a Taranga, the demigod hero, known throughout Polynesia. Māui was a romanticised figure of mythology, known to make mischief, be quick-witted, and be brave. He used his trickery and courage to often deceive others in order to achieve many of his accomplishments (Walker, 1996). Walker describes Māui and his characteristics “[h]e was quick, intelligent, bold, resourceful, cunning and fearless, epitomising the basic personality structures idealised by Māori society” (1990, p. 15). Māui’s multiple nicknames allude to the many characteristics that contribute to the assessment tool that provides a Māori way of viewing children’s behaviours and traits. Māui-mōhio refers to his attainment of great knowledge. Māui-atamai relates to his quick-wittedness. Māui-toa illustrates his great bravery. Māui-nukurau is his trickster nature, and Māui-tinihanga describes his many devices (Walker, 1990). Using these character traits, the *Best of Both World's* assessment identifies six categories of personality structures upon which children can be assessed from a Māori worldview. These structures include:

Mana: Identity, pride, inner strength, self-assurance, confidence.
 Manaakitanga: Caring, sharing, kindness, friendship, love, nurturance.
 Whanaungatanga: Developing relationships, taking responsibility for oneself and others, tuakana/teina.
 Rangatiratanga: Confidence, self-reliance, leadership, standing up for oneself, perseverance, determination, working through difficulty.
 Whakato: Cheekiness, spiritedness, displaying and enjoying humour, having fun.
 Tinihanga: Cunningness, trickery, deception, testing limits, challenging, questioning, curiosity, exploring, risk-taking, lateral thinking
 (Rameka, 2011, p. 251).

This type of approach, one that supports the development of Māori identity by reflecting Māori perspectives, is culturally grounding for Māori children and ultimately for wāhine and tāne alike. Rather than being required to fit within structures defined by

approaches that do not stem from a Māori worldview, there is potential for tamariki, and wider Māori to see themselves within personality structures and narratives that they align with more closely. As such, this assessment and its approach in general, provides a way to celebrate Māori ways of knowing, being, and doing albeit using a template of a male cultural icon. It does provide a template whereby the personality structures of an iconic wahine of Māori cosmology could emerge in a similar frame. Wairaka of Whakatāne who challenged conventional practice and took on the so-called traits of a man to paddle her family to safety. Hine-tī-tama and her self-empowered transition to Hine-nui-te-po. Te Ao Kapurangi of Te Arawa (my own tūpuna) who creatively negotiated peace treaties to ensure the survival of her whānau, hapu, iwi. All of these narratives include mana wāhine with inspiring characteristics and bold behaviours with the potential to contribute to or be adapted into another such assessment framework that highlights wāhine traits to aspire to or align with.

In another example, Rebecca Wirihana, in her doctoral thesis, collates the life-stories of a group of distinguished female Māori leaders. In it she illustrates the significance and source of contemporary wāhine leadership and alludes to their whakapapa to traditional roles. Wirihana's research analyses aspects of women's leadership such as social contributions, personal traits, aspirations, and education. Utilising pūrākau as analysis and deconstructing the traditional narrative term, she identifies it as a culmination of four words and consequent themes aligned with these women's contributions. Pū, which represents the source of their leadership being initiated from their ūkaipō (the nurturing and protection they received in early childhood). Leadership was seen to be sustained by whakapapa and guided by the expectations that their whānau had for them. Rā (light) describes the experiences that created enlightenment in the development and maintenance of those roles. This included moemoeā (aspirations) for their communities and involved wairua (spirituality), mātauranga (education), and challenging experiences such as discrimination. Ka represents the past, present, and future, and describes how current and historical experiences have influenced their future aspirations as leaders. Finally, ū references nourishment and explores the individual attributes of these wāhine leaders, how they were "nurtured and encouraged from generation to generation in Māori communities" (p. ii) and connects to traditional characteristics promoted in whakataukī (Wirihana, 2012).

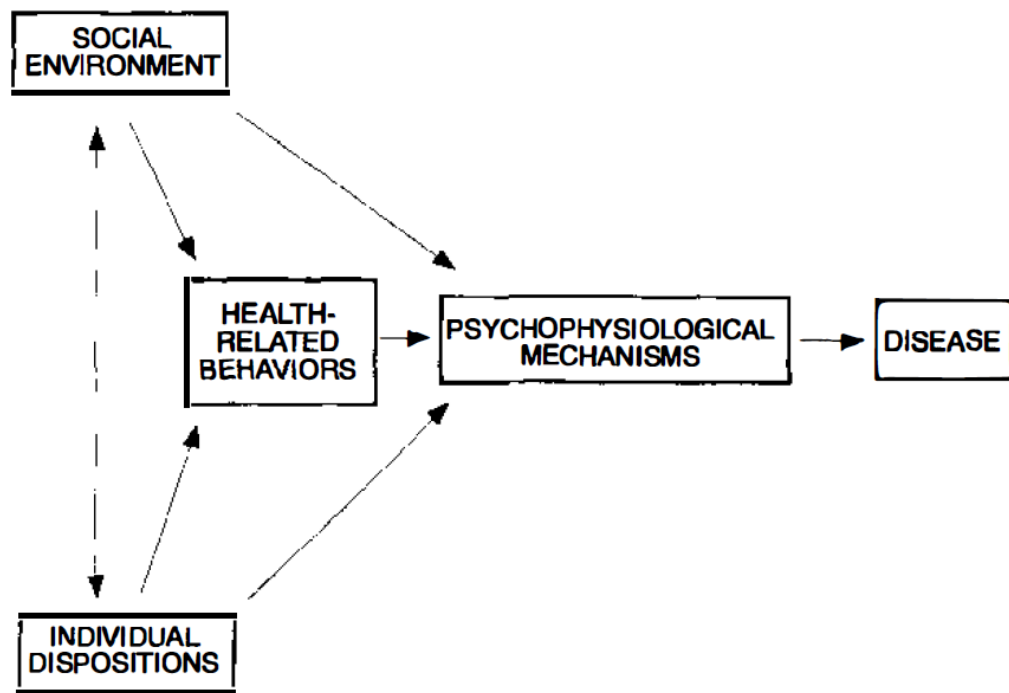
Wirihana uses this uniquely Māori term – Pūrākau – creatively, which in itself is a way to prioritise Māori ways of knowing and doing – through its connection to storytelling

and reclaiming cultural narratives. Using pūrākau to analyse traits or contributions to character provides a Māori-centric and strength-based way to describe wāhine in leadership roles and potentially in other areas of success. Such an approach offers a creative way to understand personality traits, identity, and their contributing influence on behaviour, whether its leadership, health behaviour, or other. Wirihihana herself, in her creative use of an inherently Māori term to describe inherently Māori behaviours and traits, displays her own strengths in leadership. She strives to nurture and sustain the stories of her participants, she prioritises their mana for others to learn from, and she sheds light on a way of viewing the world (or mana wāhine leadership) through a uniquely Māori lens.

These western and Māori approaches of expressing personality, identity, and their influence on behaviour and success, whether in education, leadership, or physical activity, offer a foundation of understanding. Some of the literature that connects aspects of FFM to physical activity behaviour and consequent health and longevity is intriguing. However, the historical misalignment of such approaches to Indigenous or minority populations means there may be gaps in its successful application to Māori and Indigenous communities. These gaps may well be filled by approaches that appreciate and prioritise Māori ways of knowing, being, and doing. Further still, the gaps are often wider for approaches significant to women, even more so women of indigeneity or minority. Those reviewed above offer a glimpse into the way in which a Māori worldview can inform such approaches. Through that glimpse, our cultural identity, which is inextricably connected through whakapapa to our universe and each other, is appreciated in terms, assessments, or descriptions that enhance our mana, and those who whakapapa to and from us.

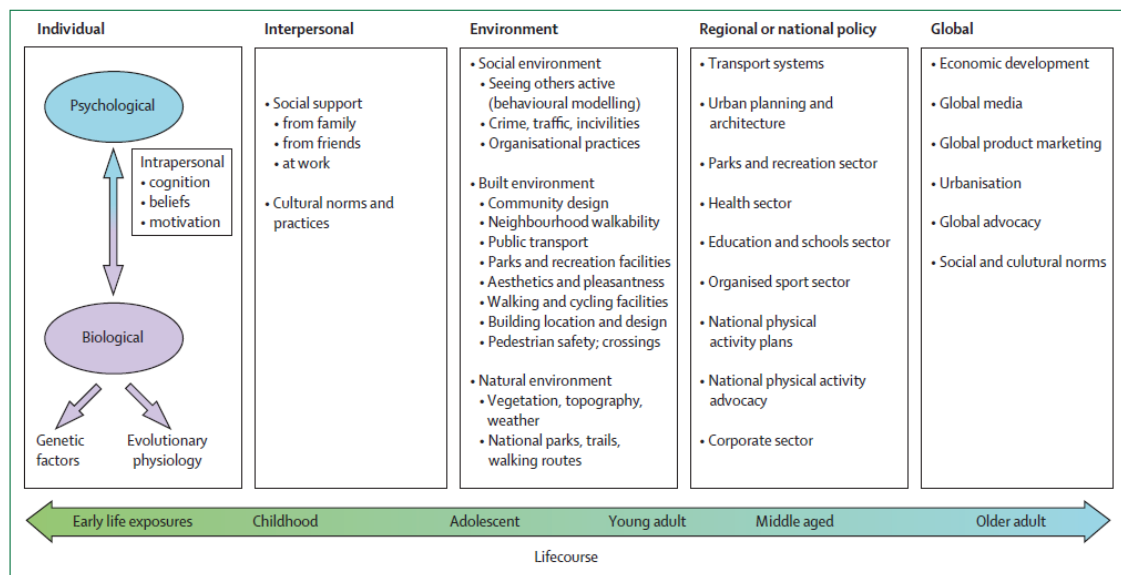
1.6.5 Physical activity models

Different authors contest the way in which traits, temperament and other proposed factors can influence or be influenced by health behaviours, such as physical activity. One conceptual model proposed by Adler and Matthews (1994) as part of their review process, illustrates the potential relationship between individual predispositions, socio-environmental factors, health related behaviours, psychophysiological mechanisms, and disease (or lack thereof).

Figure 1*Adler and Matthews (1994) Contributors to disease*

Note. Reused with permission – See Appendix F

Figure 1 proposes the two-way influence between one's social environment and individual (biologically based) disposition on health behaviour, and their combined consequent influence on the mechanics of psychological, physiological, and potential disease outcomes. In this example, physical activity behaviour manifests out of a combined influence from individual dispositions (temperament or biological qualities) and the social environment (arguably including natural environments). The model proposed could complement a Māori perspective, with Māori often describing their traits or tendencies to connect to specific features of their natural environment – also referred to as their ancestors who could theoretically account for both environmental and temperamental influences (Marsden, 1989; Marsden & Henare, 1992). With a Māori lens, the conceptual model that Adler and Matthews (1994) used to present their review approach could present *atua* – representations of natural environments, and *whānau* – social environments/relationships, as influences on individuals and their health behaviours and the consequent mechanism that determine health or *hauora*. Although a mechanism for outlining their research approach and findings, it holds some value in understanding how health behaviour may manifest and ultimately impact health outcomes.

Figure 2*Adapted ecological model of the determinants of physical activity*

Note. Reused with permission – see Appendix F

An adapted ecological model by Bauman et al. (2012) displayed above, developed after collating systematic reviews of correlates of physical activity, examines specific determinants of physical activity using a range of high-level factors including individual, intrapersonal, environmental, regional/national policy and global factors. By examining the interrelations between individuals and their social and physical environments, this ecological model has the potential to inform the development of interventions on multiple levels, rather than just targeting individuals or even groups. The ecological model aligns well with whakapapa and serves as a hierarchical model that illustrates the interconnected nature of each high-level factor in describing how or why an individual or community may engage in a particular activity, or not (Bauman et al., 2012; Sallis, 2008). However, the paucity of research related to the specific determinants, correlates, and/or characteristics influencing women's physical activity, albeit Māori or Indigenous women, means there is space for exploration into those distinctive aspects, and the relevance of the already existing knowledge – to wāhine.

From the two models described, determinants of physical activity behaviours (or other health related behaviours) relate to a range of higher-level factors that involve the interplay of a range of specific factors such as biological or genetic factors to natural or social environments. Similarly, a recently developed framework based on traditional Māori knowledge systems illustrates the connection of Māori to natural environments using a hierarchy, through whakapapa. The Atua Matua Māori Health Framework

relates the understanding of certain natural features of the environment with incidental physical activity and health. The emphasis in this model is what mātauranga can be learned from engaging physically in a certain environment, rather than engaging for health or fitness purposes. In this sense, health or fitness become incidental to the understanding gained from the activity and the environmental influence. Similarly, the framework suggests that individuals from a particular region may engage in activities related to, and potentially exhibit characteristics of their region's physical environment due in part to a whakapapa connection to it. The basis of this framework emphasises whakapapa, not only as a genealogical tool but also as a framework for understanding the world through interrelationships, metaphors, and the application of mātauranga (Heke, 2014; I. Heke, 2017).

In the context of this research, Atua Matua contributes to the literature connecting personal, physical, tribal attributes with particular physical activity behaviour, using an ancestral framework. Conceptually, this framework offers a lens through which traditional/environmental knowledge can be prioritised by understanding an individual's relationship with/to it, in this case through physical activity. As such, the framework of whakapapa described by Heke, being Mātauranga (background knowledge), Whakapapa (interconnectedness of phenomena), Huahuatau (metaphor or what can be learned), Whakatinanatanga (application or action), may provide a useful structure of research design and/or data analysis framework (2014).

Each of the frameworks outlined in this section share a recognition of environmental influences on physical activity behaviour, in varying ways. This recognition is important in that, for Māori, whether recognised as external environmental influences or as ancestral templates for learning, the role they play is significant. What stands out is that environments that individuals encounter (natural, physical, or social) can have varying impacts on their health-related behaviours, incidentally or not. And when considering the direct relationship that Māori can trace to these [natural] environments, there is much to learn about an individual's ability to reap learning from how they choose to engage in them.

1.6.6 Contemporary application of atua

The Atua Matua framework as a model for understanding physical activity, also offers us ways to comprehend some of the larger concepts of mātauranga Māori. The complexities of this model lie in the ability for a skilled practitioner to trace the

whakapapa of an activity, through its environment, to tūpuna and ngā atua. The learnings afforded by that process and that knowledge, can help gain an understanding of ngā atua and the behavioural templates that they offer. An example of this includes the notion of coming to ‘know’ a particular deity associated with a certain environment through engaging with it on a number of occasions. The example of Kiwa (atua of the Pacific Ocean) is given, whereby an individual comes to know aspects of the current, waves, temperature, tidal rhythms, etc through regular engagement, such as swimming, surfing, diving, or merely walking a beach. By engaging with these aspects of ‘knowing’ Kiwa, individuals benefit from health and physical activity incidentally, rather than for the sake of those health outcomes (Heke, 2014, 2016). As was mentioned earlier, the traction that health outcome or weight loss targeted initiatives have had does not always result in success for Māori populations (Warbrick et al., 2018). It is suggested that what resonates with Māori and what engages them in this particular approach may be the connection to Māori ways of knowing and doing, as has been exhibited in the thriving growth of Māori traditional games, waka ama, and kapahaka (Heke, 2014; Sport New Zealand, 2021).

In another area - models of Māori women’s leadership styles, although not directly related to physical activity behaviour, do describe characteristics of leadership based on female archetypes within traditional pūrākau (Forster et al., 2016). Using the powerful female archetypes in Māori cosmogony can provide a template for Māori women leaders to follow or gauge themselves against (Mikaere, 2003). Female cosmological archetypes are described and serve as a construct with specific and relevant purposes for contemporary application. Protection, sacrifice, nurturing and women’s roles of teachers, guardians of knowledge or mentors are connected to Papatūānuku (primordial and earth mother), Hineahuone (who represents the mother of humanity), Hine-tī-tama, and Hine-nui-te-pō. The transition that Hine-tī-tama makes by becoming Hine-nui-te-pō describes a scenario of mana wahine, where an ethical dilemma (Hine-tī-tama discovering that her husband was actually her own father), challenges her to make a personal sacrifice to leave her children, deviate from normal expectations, and take up an alternate version of her destiny as Hine-nui-te-pō. Hine-nui-te-pō – the guardian of the underworld - holds responsibility for mortality and establishes the boundaries of humanity (Mikaere, 2003; Yates-Smith, 1998). Within these archetypes are key themes related to the importance of whakapapa, manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga, and tikanga (Forster et al., 2016; Ruwhiu & Cone, 2013).

Adding to these archetypes, an adapted model from Henry (1994), describes the culturally authentic leadership styles of Māori women that align with roles in traditional Māori contexts. The generational and relational roles describe leadership styles such as *Rangātira* (chief) being confident, directive, and autocratic; or *Kuia* (grandmother) who represent esteemed, venerable, and manipulative leadership; or *Tōhunga* (specialist) whose leadership is analytical, idealistic, confident in their area of expertise. These examples, among the several other descriptions could also contribute to descriptions of characteristics relevant to health behaviours such as those of interest in this particular research.

Atua wāhine themes are increasingly being explored within many realms of academia and beyond. Since the ground-breaking work of Aroha Yates-Smith examining atua wāhine in relation to birth and death practices, several other wāhine Māori are taking the opportunity to explore the relevance and application of atua wāhine in areas such as healing, art, ritual practices, geography and more. Ngāhuia Murphy's master's thesis explored the stories, ceremonies, and traditional practices around menstruation in Māori society before colonial influences (Murphy, 2011). That work and a subsequent doctoral thesis (Murphy, 2019) has contributed to the understanding and re-indigenising of women's practices relating to menstruation. Murphy's work has contributed significantly to the way wāhine Māori can revisit and reclaim the rites and roles of menstruation in Māori society and cosmology. It has provided an examination of the way atua wāhine have meaningful application in the lives of contemporary wāhine Māori. By exploring those rituals and traditional practices, and then by representing the contemporary stories of native practitioners, Murphy provides a range of pūrākau and contemporary applications that allow Māori (and other Indigenous) women, to reclaim a uniquely wahine space, which has been the site of much colonial influence and subjugation (Murphy, 2011, 2019). She, like many other wāhine authors are (re)presenting the stories of atua wāhine through a Mana Wahine lens – one that identifies the power and significance of their roles and one that brings to light the connection between the colonial subjugation of their significance with that of wāhine Māori, throughout colonisation (Mikaere, 2003, 2011; Pihama, 2001; Te Awekotuku, 2003).

Naomi Simmonds, through her work in social sciences and geography, is able to relate the roles and significance of Papatūānuku and Hineteiwaiwa to women's bodies and specifically birthing practices. Her master's thesis draws parallels between

conceptualisations of Papatūānuku and wāhine Māori maternal embodiment. She argues that wāhine are inextricably tied to Papatūānuku through their “spatial relationship to turangawaewae, home space and wider environmental concerns” (Simmonds, 2009, p. iv). She explores the dual meanings that connect wāhine to Papatūānuku, examining geographical spaces of both wāhine and atua to demonstrate a “co-constitution of participants’ bodies and subjectivities” (p. 82, Simmonds, 2009). These types of parallels are pertinent to a contemporary understanding of atua wāhine relevance to contemporary wāhine Māori.

Hinewirangi Kohu-Morgan, who is a writer, poet, expert in taonga pūoro, among other skills, speaks of the ability to come to understand the significance of the atua wāhine within. She suggests that we as wāhine Māori relate to certain atua wāhine, depending on what is happening in our lives and what is needed. Hinewirangi describes how she can cultivate her relationship with Papatūānuku by tending to her suburban garden. She describes a reciprocal relationship that that cultivation fosters, where it provides food for her year-round, if she cares for it properly (Kohu-Morgan & Hibbs, 2006). She also relates the importance of atua wāhine as balancing energies to the male atua who “when they meet, they clash, whawhai” (Kohu-Morgan, 1992, pp. 55-56). This imbalance is reflected in the marginalisation of atua wāhine stories and consequently in the marginalised roles of wāhine Māori in their homes and wider communities (Lee-Morgan, 2016; Mikaere, 2011; Yates-Smith, 1998). The relevance and application of atua (tāne and wāhine) is increasingly being explored by a range of authors and in a range of fields. It is promising that the (re)claiming of these narratives can also contribute to [wāhine] Māori wellbeing through a more genuine and empowering connection to cultural identity.

The potential that lies within the examination of atua as templates for our contemporary selves as Māori, and specifically for wāhine Māori, is immense. From the ground-breaking work of Aroha Yates-Smith, who brought to the fore a discussion of the power and influence of atua wāhine, to the more recent reclamations of Māori women’s traditional ritual practices examined by Ngāhuia Murphy. There are endless opportunities for the examination and implementation of atua wāhine and tāne as they relate to contemporary Māori success. This research aims to take the opportunity to (re)claim, (re)interpret, and (re)tell the stories of atua wāhine, wāhine Māori, and the whakapapa of the mana that moves between them using physical activity. Taking what previous authors present in their own fields as they relate to physical activity, the

influence of personality, identity, or merely ways of being and doing, it is possible to contribute to the further understanding of our health behaviours as [wāhine] Māori.

1.7 Conclusion

It was the intention of this first chapter to outline the whakapapa of this research and identify what the current literature offers. This chapter has provided a background for why I came to conduct this research and how it can be significant in this area. It has reviewed how the relevant literature is positioned and how my research has the opportunity to concentrate on the relevant gaps that exist.

The ultimate aim of this research is to (re)frame, (re)interpret, and (re)tell the stories of both wāhine Māori and atua wāhine, and the relationship they have, focussing on physical activity. Furthermore, this research will provide a platform for further research in this area and expand upon what was explored in previous research of atua wahine (Yates-Smith, 1998). There is the potential for the findings of this research to inform the development of a system that better resonates with wāhine Māori because it would be based on the successes of wāhine Māori through whakapapa. This area has not been given the attention of much research and has the opportunity to inform current and potential physical activity initiatives along with other areas where recruitment, retention and engagement with Māori has been difficult. It also offers a platform for wāhine Māori to (re)assert their mana within te ao Māori, te ao hurihuri, and as it relates to their connection to atua. It is an opportune time for research such as this, as the re-emergence of interest in mātauranga Māori is growing. The potential for the insights of traditional knowledge to influence contemporary challenges is the manifestation of the previously stated and guiding whakataukī: Titiro whakamuri, kōkiri whakamua.

Chapter 2 Kaupapa – Methodology

2.1 Preface

The kaupapa of this research is positioned at the intersections of a number of methodological positions. These intersections are not static, and they represent a shifting space that I myself occupy. At the beginning of this research journey, I believe I had a glimpse of this position but was unaware of the extent to which that position would continue to shift. I present this prelude here to inform the reader of the evolving nature of this kaupapa and the resulting research. I wrote in an early research journal that the position of standing and leaning between worlds was one that brought with it the benefits of seeing or experiencing the world in a way that many others do not, and it can afford you many advantages. But I also noted the responsibility and constant (re)balancing that was required of occupying that space. Below I will outline that space at those intersections within this kaupapa. But I also wish to declare that my position as the researcher, the holder of this kaupapa, and the one who implemented it, has shifted significantly since I first wrote those words. Although they remain true to me, my practical understanding of them has changed. My view of this research has changed. And the intentions that I have for this research have also changed. The research questions remain (for the most part) the same. However, the way they are answered will come from the position that I currently occupy, with my current understanding, one that I expect will evolve again. With this said, I also wish to add that my interpretations and representations of this work, the kaupapa that drives it, and the tikanga that implements it, are not expected to represent a homogenous interpretation of the philosophies, approaches, or methods that I employed. This research represents a position similar to my own – a changing position, an evolving position, and a position that acknowledges the power and responsibility of holding and representing the evolving knowledge of others.

2.2 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to identify some of the unique attributes and traits of physically active Māori women and explore their parallels with relevant attributes of atua wāhine as identified in aspects of traditional and contemporary mātauranga Māori. The first mechanism to achieve this purpose, is to identify a range of characteristics common or distinctive within a cross-section of Māori women over the age of 18 years who identified themselves as physically active. The characteristics were presumed to

include personal, physical, psychological, socio-cultural, and environmental factors, as identified through the initial literature review. Further, in order to explore the parallels and shared traits of active wāhine and atua wāhine, a range of sources of mātauranga Māori were explored. My limited fluency in te reo Māori meant that the sources I accessed were usually those in English, who cited and referenced original or reo Māori sources. The use of these types of sources is also to acknowledge the work of contemporary predecessors whose mahi has paved a way for current and future researchers.

The characteristics of participating active wāhine, eventually identified as broad metaphorical categories (huahuatau), would be then woven back into those (re)interpreted characteristics of atua wāhine to reflect an illustration of whakapapa and a wider expression of mana wahine. This process is presented in later chapters, but the intention is that narratives of wāhine and narratives of atua wāhine are (re)told to whakamana and empower the messages that they hold. The broader aims of this research are to (re)interpret and (re)tell stories of atua / tūpuna wāhine and contemporary wāhine using a uniquely Māori way of viewing the world. The intention is to enhance the mana and achievements of the wāhine involved and provide an empowering template for others to aspire to or position themselves within. The methodology and research methods also express a (re)interpretation and (re)telling of the way in which mātauranga, knowledge, and ways of knowing are translated and transmitted. This study was conducted as an exploration of mana wāhine in the context of physical activity through a unique interview process and through (re)view and (re)presenting of atua wāhine themes within mātauranga Māori as they related to kōrero shared by wāhine.

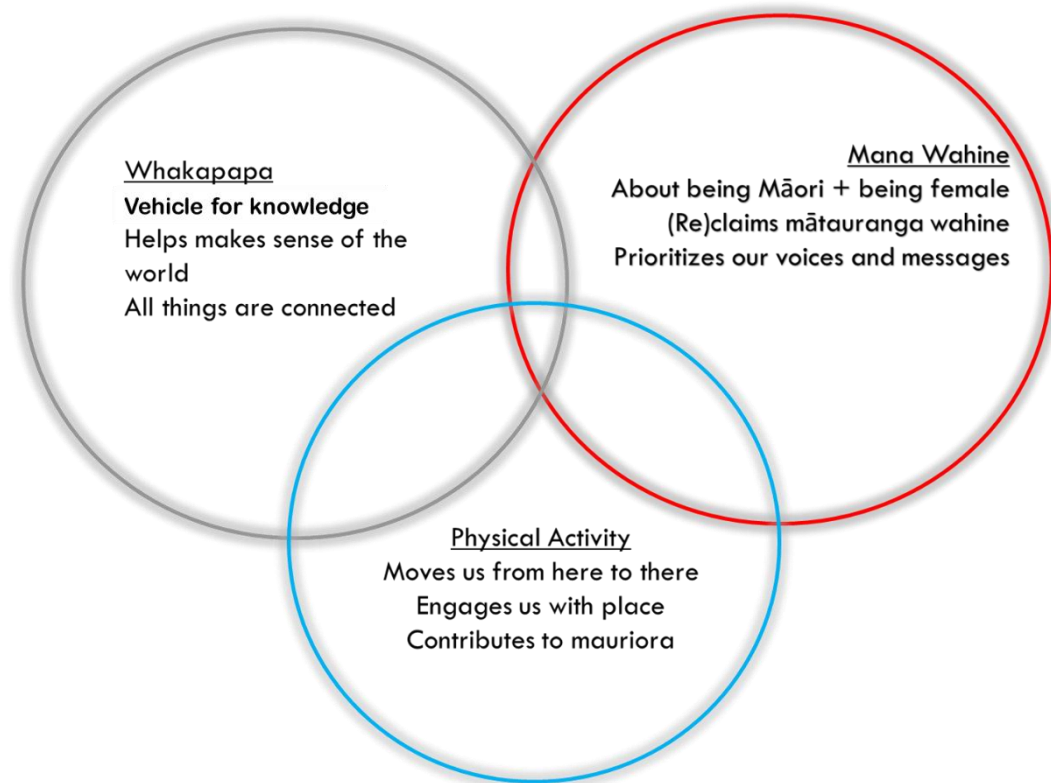
2.3 Methodological Lens Introduced

The research design – both method and methodology – was envisioned as three intersecting lenses of Whakapapa, Mana Wahine, and Physical activity (see below). Each lens offered a unique way to view the world and position yourself within it. But at the intersection of those lenses, they also offered some important shared qualities that would shape the way this research would evolve. The diagram below illustrates the ways in which the three lenses were first conceptualised. Representing the initial stage of my understanding of the significance of these lenses, this diagram would eventually evolve into an important tool to illustrate my methodological intentions and actual research methods, to an outside audience. The lenses or method[ological] approaches,

whakapapa, Mana Wahine theory are introduced next, where physical activity was previously discussed in Chapter 1 (see 1.6.2).

Figure 3

Methodological lenses



Whakapapa is a theoretical framework or methodology that can also act as a method of enquiry. It provides the structure to research design, the blueprint to understanding my place as the researcher and that of those who came to participate. It also provides the key to decipher the findings. Whakapapa is commonly known as genealogy, but it is also the relational framework that organises mātauranga Māori or Māori ways of knowing (Marsden & Royal, 2003). Essentially whakapapa shows us that all things are connected, and it can help us to understand the nature, origin, and relationship of phenomena, but can also locate and display trends, and predict future occurrences of phenomena (Royal, 1998).

Mana Wahine theory as a theoretical framework also underpins this research. By default, Mana Wahine provides a space for me as wahine Māori and for those involved in the research, to critically engage with how we see ourselves and our places in society (Pihama, 2001; Simmonds, 2011). In this research, it declares that we are the holders of

this mātauranga wāhine, and it is our right to decide how that mātauranga is transmitted and delivered into the world.

Finally, physical activity or korikori tinana, which extends beyond being just a variable of interest in this research but is the shared space occupied by these wāhine and is utilised as a vehicle to engage and interact in a range of environments. Coincidentally, physical activity contributes to hau ora, mauri ora, or health and wellbeing – which is integral to the continuation of whakapapa (Durie, 1999, 2004b). Physical activity, in this research, offered a unique and integral aspect of the data collection process that influenced how wāhine shared their kōrero, and how I, as the researcher was able to interpret it.

Although these three lenses are distinctive on their own, there are areas where they overlap and share space, meaning that their similarities allow them to work well together. My assessment of their similarities is that, firstly, they provide a way to interact with and better understand the world and your place in it. Whakapapa provides a framework for understanding the world and the interconnectedness of it (Royal, 1998). Mana Wahine defines a position at an important intersection of society for Māori women (Pihama, 2001). And physical activity is a means for moving about those positions. Secondly, these lenses are by nature flexible, dynamic and in a way, are about encouraging growth or movement from one place to another. Again, whakapapa is about the layering of generations, where the present generation can adapt from the learnings from previous generations (Marsden & Royal, 2003). Mana Wahine infers a sense of reclamation, a movement away from a subjugated position towards an empowered position among Māori and contemporary society (Simmonds, 2011). Physical activity in its essence is about movement and the benefits it includes. Finally, they provide both theoretical and practical ways to understand where you come from and the potential for where you are going to go. Their whakapapa and tikanga (background and application) are outlined in more detail in the following section.

2.4 Kaupapa – Philosophy – Methodology

The purpose and associated research questions of this thesis cover a range of distinct, but at times, interwoven areas. From identifying contemporary traits of active wāhine, to (re)interpreting stories of cosmological characters, to expressing their shared whakapapa. This thesis will attempt to answer these questions by outlining and implementing a methodological approach and research methods based on the concepts

of whakapapa. Underpinned by the overarching theoretical framework of Mana Wahine theory, this research prioritises the voice of wāhine in re(shaping) the narrative of what it means to be wahine, Māori, and physically active in contemporary Aotearoa.

2.4.1 Interface

As introduced above, this research was envisioned through three intersecting lenses. The illustration of three circles (representing lenses or ways to view the world) allows us to see three separate perspectives, but also a number of other ways in which those separate perspectives intersect and blend their characteristics to provide many new ways to see the world. One of the lenses, Whakapapa, describes the interconnectedness of phenomena. Within those interconnections are shared spaces, intersecting spaces. In this context they include the intersecting spaces between Māori and western approaches or ways of being, but also the integral space between being Māori and being wahine – the realm of Mana Wahine theory. These intersecting spaces (or the interface) can be both challenging and empowering, they can offer advantages not available to other perspectives, but also the responsibility of ensuring each knowledge system or perspective is afforded the appropriate integrity (Durie, 2004a). In that position of standing and leaning between multiple worlds and multiple realities there is the unique opportunity to take the learnings afforded from that balancing act to inform the way theory is put into practice, and the way narratives are presented.

The interface approach illustrates the creative potential of Indigenous knowledge and its prospective contemporary application in parallel with other knowledge systems. Such an approach allows the researcher to access both systems and utilize the insights and methods of one to enhance the other. One of the benefits of such an approach to this type of research is that it reflects many contemporary Māori, like many other Indigenous peoples in first world countries, who live at that interface. The integration, and more importantly, the synthesis of approaches has the potential to lead to innovation and the creation of new knowledge for the advancement of Māori (Durie, 2004a). This is the intent of this current research, where the integration and synthesis of perspectives, theoretical approaches, and methods can lead to a new way of understanding. The following sections will rationalise how and why this research stands and leans between the multiple worlds of Māori, wāhine, western, methods and methodologies and beyond.

2.4.2 Mana Wahine

Mana Wahine, as a theoretical and methodological approach, is a Māori feminist discourse that explicitly explores the intersection of being Māori and being female (Johnston & Pihama, 1995; Simmonds, 2011). Mana wahine, more broadly, also exists as a complementary part to mana tāne; is an essential contributor to mana whānau; an integral aspect of mana whenua; and conduit of mana atua (Hinewirangi & Hibbs, 2006). Within a broad description of mana wahine, wahine means woman, while mana refers to a concept of power, strength and status, but also the acknowledgement of distinction (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021).

Mana, along with tapu and noa, are three fundamental concepts that make up the governing infrastructure of traditional Māori society, the source of which is atua or our ultimate ancestors (Marsden & Royal, 2003; Mikaere, 2011). Mana and tapu would guide the practicalities of traditional life, and virtually every activity had a connection with maintaining or enhancing mana. For mana to be inherited or acquired, the person (or object) is often said to have a discernible high-ranking lineage, or they would possess a skill that was highly valued in society. These connections or skills were seen as a reflection of the mana of atua, and their extraordinary authority over nature (Best, 1973, 2005; Marsden & Royal, 2003). In relation to this research, the mana of wahine is assumed as an expression of their proficiency and dedication to a physically active lifestyle. This reflection of ngā atua, expressed in the āhua and korikori of wāhine is how whakapapa and mana wahine interact within the scope of this research. See Figure 5 in Tikanga Chapter.

Mana Wahine, in the context of research methodology, is an expression of a kaupapa Māori theory that creates a platform for the diverse narratives and experiences of Māori women (Johnston & Pihama, 1995), or the wider feminine aspect of te ao Māori. Linda Smith describes it as being:

a strong cultural concept, which situates Māori women in relation to each other and upholds their mana as women or particular genealogical groupings. It also situates women in relation to the outside world and reaffirms their mana as Māori, Indigenous women (1993, p. 38).

The disrupting effects of colonisation on Māori and other Indigenous peoples are known to be wide ranging and have led to the need for Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine theories to emerge within the academy (Johnston & Pihama, 1995; Pihama, 2001). In

past experiences of research, Māori have been subjected to what has been described as a colonising agenda, as has been the case in many social institutions. Such an agenda moves to normalise racialised frames and negative stereotypes and leads to an undermining of Māori well-being (Harris & Mercier, 2006; Harris et al., 2012; Mikaere, 2011). This approach has recently been described in the context of Indigenous data, as the 5 Ds, where information gathered and presented about Indigenous peoples is often laden with disparity, deprivation, disadvantage, dysfunction, and difference (Walter & Carroll, 2020). These practices contribute to the dominant discourse that now manifest in the deficit narrative associated with all aspects of Indigenous society from health, criminal justice, and all manner of other Indigenous statistics (Smith, 1999; Walter & Suina, 2019). The picture it then presents is one that is often devoid of the relevant context, especially in relation to Indigenous, or in this case, wāhine Māori.

Mana Wahine is itself distinctly different to western feminism and shares with Kaupapa Māori methodology an important decolonising component (Johnston & Pihama, 1995). While western iterations of feminism have tended to ignore the compounding effects of overlapping oppression (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013), Mana Wahine, is more akin to intersectional feminism (Joy, 2019). Such intersectional approaches acknowledge that concurrent forms of oppression cannot be understood in isolation of each other but are part of a constellation of intersecting realities (Collins & Chepp, 2013). Kaupapa Māori theory, in part, seeks to empower an anticolonial (or decolonised) critical consciousness (Mahuika, 2008) and facilitate the regaining control of Māori lives, culture and research (Bishop, 1994). Mana Wahine extends the focus to the wāhine position with an acknowledgement of the extent to which wāhine Māori, and tāne, have internalised and ultimately perpetuated colonial discourses themselves (Johnston & Pihama, 1995).

The necessity for and complexity of a distinctly Māori “feminist” discourse is both empowering and restorative in nature and offers the opportunity to (re)define and (re)present those diverse stories and experiences of what it means and has meant to be wāhine Māori, in many contexts (Simmonds, 2011). The opportunity to contribute to this discourse by aligning the historical suppression and fabrication of wāhine significance to the same process that erased the significance of atua wāhine, also allows the opportunity to reveal and express their true and powerful significance (Murphy, 2019). Contributing to this process is about bringing a sense of rebalance to the imbalances inflicted by the processes of colonisation, assimilation, and subjugation.

Mana Wahine provides a voice for wāhine narratives to re-assert their positions within society (Mikaere, 2011; Simmonds, 2011).

Employing an overarching lens of Mana Wahine to this research methodology aims to prioritise and empower the narratives and interpretations of wāhine Māori in relation to physical activity behaviours. Employing this lens also inherently declares a level of bias in this proposed research. It declares this bias via my positioning as the researcher and by purposely prioritising the voices of wāhine Māori as sources of mātauranga, and ensuring their stories, values, practices and knowledge are celebrated, rather than marginalised as they previously have been under patriarchal colonial power (Pihama, 2001; Te Awēkotuku, 1991). This extends from interviews with wāhine Māori to the intentional prioritisation of wāhine Māori and Indigenous scholars' work.

The breadth of wāhine Māori (re)claiming space through Mana Wahine theory, practices, and being, provides a powerful vehicle for the (re)growth of mātauranga wāhine. From foundational works by Ngāhuia Te Awēkotuku, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Leonie Pihama, and others; to wāhine scholars like Naomi Simmonds, Ngāhuia Murphy, Jenny Lee-Morgan, and others who continue to provide a voice for wāhine that builds upon the whakapapa of Mana Wahine theory.

I was once asked a question by one of these women, during a presentation panel: where does mana wahine come from? The answer that I gave was not necessarily wrong, but it did not acknowledge what I now believe was the intent of her question. I replied that it was sourced from atua and our mana, mana wahine, was inherited through whakapapa from the mana of atua (or something along those lines). But what I missed was the opportunity to acknowledge the many wāhine, who contributed to what we now appreciate as Mana Wahine theory. Those women, whose courage and determination in (re)claiming space for wāhine, at least within academia, was at the time ground-breaking and foundational for those of us who now cite them in our works. I acknowledge some of their works here and throughout this thesis. Others may not feature but remain vital to the (re)building, (re)claiming, and restoration of mana wahine within te ao Māori, contemporary life, academia, and beyond. The need for Mana Wahine theory remains only because of the historical subjugation of wāhine Māori, and indeed atua wāhine, experienced as a result of the mechanisms of colonisation (Mikaere, 1994, 2003).

2.4.3 Whakapapa

As Mana Wahine provides a lens to focus the gaze of this research, whakapapa provides the framework. Whakapapa has many iterations, and most connect to the methodology and consequent methods employed in this research. Commonly known as genealogy or lineage, whakapapa also describes the act of laying one upon another or placing in layers (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021). Whakapapa (as a methodology) depicts a cognitive genealogical framework that contains spiritual, spatial, temporal and biophysical information to help makes sense of the world (Roberts, 2012). The essence of whakapapa is based on the recognition that all things are connected or related through a common ancestry to primal parents (Roberts et al., 2004; Royal, 1998). In pre-literate Aotearoa, whakapapa provided a template for an oral society, where mental maps created multi-layered cosmological landscapes describing origins and relationships. These mental maps describe both linear (descent) and lateral (kinship) relationships, not only between humans, but between all features of the environment, animate and inanimate (I. Heke, 2017; Roberts et al., 2004). Through whakapapa, Māori are inextricably connected to the natural world. Places, landscapes and environmental features serve as storehouses for Māori knowledge systems and are considered ultimate ancestors, tuakana, or whānau (Marsden & Royal, 2003; Roberts, 2012). In this way, whakapapa can help interpret why we are the way we are or why we engage in certain behaviours, through understanding where or who we have come from.

Charles Te Ahukaramū Royal describes whakapapa as both an analytic tool and a causality tool. Through analysis, whakapapa helps us understand the nature and origin of phenomena; their connection to and relationship between each other; locating and displaying trends; and extrapolating and predicting future phenomena (1998).

Although, as a framework whakapapa provides an organising system for the theoretical and practical concepts of mātauranga Māori, it is not itself knowledge nor is it the creator of that knowledge. Within this context, whakapapa is the vehicle that allows the exploration and realisation of mātauranga Māori. The ability for whakapapa and its organic methods to draw research out into a wider field is in contrast to the deductive methods of many popular western approaches. Of even further contrast, whakapapa has the flexibility for relational and reiterative knowledge to exist. Ever-changing and re-balancing relationships mean that knowledge is not static, but able to adopt and adapt existing understandings to meet the challenges of survival or sustainability (Roberts, 2012; Roberts et al., 2004). Herein lies one of the motivating reasons for applying this

methodology (and method) in this proposed research, especially alongside Mana Wahine theory.

The environments that traditional Māori have been able to adapt to in the past were immensely challenging, and part of the success in their surviving and thriving was their connection with those environments through the dynamics of whakapapa (Durie, 1994; Marsden & Royal, 2003). Contemporary Māori, even more so wāhine Māori, experience new challenging environments where a connection through the dynamics of whakapapa has the capacity to integrate and synthesize with other knowledge systems to contribute to future surviving and thriving.

With an understanding of the interrelated nature of mātauranga Māori, it is important to approach the extent of the research questions from a holistic perspective and with an acknowledgement of the dynamic systems involved. The methodology, methods, and findings of this research are in no way fixed, rather they are in a way beginning the conversation about wāhine who are physically active, and their connection through whakapapa to atua wāhine. By employing the construct of whakapapa, it provides the tools to define those connections of interest and enables the potential for explaining the expression that we see in contemporary Māori. In this case, whakapapa can help us understand how mana wahine (in the context of physical activity) connects to various environments (social and natural) and thus are themselves an expression of atua [wāhine].

Ihirangi Heke, in his own work in the physical activity space, uses whakapapa to describe relationships to certain environments either through physical engagement with it, or through a tribal affiliation to it. In his application of the Atua Matua Māori Health Framework, he describes the many levels at which a practitioner can approach an understanding of an environment they are engaging in. He gives a couple of examples to outline how whakapapa to environments can be manifested in individuals, and also how they can be fostered:

...to come from a mountainous area may be to be recognised as having the traits of wisdom, patience and fortitude whereas to come from a river dominated environment might mean that an individual exhibits the traits of a dynamic personality, that shows perseverance in the face of barriers through taking other pathways but is also willing to have others contribute to a mutual movement forward. The individual may therefore research, evaluate and define what the attributes that they have ancestral connections to, determine the atua

that are dominant in that area, and, through either regular visits to that environment or deliberate training in the lifeskills learning opportunities provided, make lifestyle choices based on ancestral ties rather than for the sake of health or physical activity (Heke, 2014, p. 9).

This, and the many other applications of Atua Matua, allow for physical activity to be understood within the structures of whakapapa – as a framework for organising mātauranga. In theory, Atua Matua allows for practitioners to engage in tribal specific knowledge systems and apply them to their own health and physical activity programmes. Entry points indeed depend on access to that knowledge, which may create some barriers if knowledge remains exclusively held. What is promising is the fact that the use of whakapapa as a framework for understanding environmental spaces, individuals, and communities, means that there is scope to apply whakapapa broadly.

Whakapapa has been used in traditional forms to store and transmit knowledge, arguably for its systematic and logical structures. These structures are seen to express the way that Māori understand and formulate ideas (Royal, 1998), they demonstrate ways of thinking, storing knowledge, and then evaluating that knowledge (Smith, 1999). In a contemporary sense, whakapapa is applicable in the translation of Māori concepts in an ethical and culturally appropriate research setting. As a means for describing the relationships between people and the world around them, whakapapa also provides the means for the gathering and interpreting of data. And in these contemporary settings, data can consist of statistical information, experiences, attitudes, stories, physical activity preferences, and countless other data sources (Smith et al., 2016). James Graham contends that whakapapa, as a research methodology “is a means and way to acquiring new knowledge; it is the all-important link between the past, present and future” (2005, p. 94).

Research in areas that span genetics (Hudson et al., 2007; Roberts et al., 2004), cultural identity (Forster, 2019; Te Rito, 2007), Indigenous knowledge (Smith et al., 2016), education (Rameka, 2012), and further, have used applications of whakapapa as outlined above. Whether exercising tikanga in spaces often dominated by non-Māori research perspectives, or providing foundations for Māori-led research, modern-day Māori researchers are performing modern-day research based on, and validated by, whakapapa (Graham, 2005).

An enviro-genomics research programme involving researchers at the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR) developed a study to identify combinations of genetic and environmental factors contributing to the health status of a particular iwi. They utilised whakapapa, in the form of genealogical information to explore patterns of unique genetic variation, correlating them with potential disease or ill health (Hudson et al., 2007). Whakapapa has also been utilised in research exploring whānau engagement with water, through their perceptions and understanding of swimming. Swimming was seen as a taonga, handed down through generations, through whakapapa, and as a way to embody and physically connect with their whakapapa with local waterways (Raureti, 2019). Margaret Forster (2019) recently deployed a feminist genealogy critique of environmental governance which paralleled concepts of a whakapapa approach. Her explorations of Indigenous knowledge and aspirations of the environment trace the influence of feminine atua to the practice of kaitiakitanga and argues that the reclamation of rebalance can promote “enduring, reciprocal and life sustaining” interactions with the environment (p. 9). By presenting the whakapapa of atua wāhine, in particular, these narratives provide more than just a list of names in genealogical order, they represent a rich body of knowledge that connects to a particular environmental domain and aides in the further understanding of that domain and its relevance to us (Forster, 2019).

Among the growing reclamation of contemporary whakapapa applications in the research setting, Māori researchers are implementing this traditional research tool to both retain existing Māori knowledge and grow new knowledge. As a multi-purpose tool of cultural preservation and as a facilitator of new knowledge growth, whakapapa is well-placed to meet the needs of contemporary Māori, both present and future.

2.4.4 Pūrākau

The relevance of pūrākau sits closely to that of whakapapa. Also described recently as an Indigenous research method and methodology (Lee, 2009), pūrākau or storytelling, provides the opportunity for the (re)telling of narratives as a process of decolonisation. Pūrākau and the narrative they present are like whakapapa, dynamic, subjective, and adaptable for contemporary times. They can be used to (re)tell well-known stories in a way that departs from popular translations to reaffirm the power and position of wāhine (Te Awekotuku, 2003). The subjective and contextual nature of pūrākau allows (re)interpretation and (re)assessment of meaning that incorporates positionality. So

pūrākau allow both the storyteller and those receiving it to interpret it as is relevant to their position in the world (Lee, 2009).

Pūrākau present a unique way of contextualising knowledge transmission. Although commonly referred to as Māori myths and legends, Jenny Lee-Morgan suggests that pūrākau need not be “relegated to the category of fiction and fable of the past” (Lee, 2009, p. 1). It is suggested that they hold relevance today as a way to construct new ways of understanding our experiences of teaching, learning, and developing a cultural identity. The value of pūrākau and the mātauranga they contain, was highly valued in traditional Māori society, and they continue to hold value in contemporary times (Lee, 2009). The mana of whānau, hapū, and iwi relies on protection of knowledge. Pūrākau offers a way to protect its development and the way it is practised without making it exclusive and difficult for whānau to access. Just like the concept of Ako, which was about co-operation, inclusivity, reciprocity, and the obligation to transmit knowledge (Lee, 2005), pūrākau can also be used as a tool to teach, learn, and share. Within that sharing process are stories that are contextualised within certain physical, societal, or familial environments, that grounds mātauranga and connects it to both the storyteller and their audience (Lee, 2009; Marsden & Royal, 2003).

Also used in a recent article addressing Māori women’s leadership, pūrākau “reveal the often-silenced realities of Māori women’s leadership and challenge dominant leadership discourse” (Forster et al., 2016, p. 324). Through these collective and individual pūrākau, Māori women’s leadership styles were illustrated, and personal attributes shared. The authors’ attempts to represent the plurality and diversity of Māori women’s leadership by connecting contemporary leadership with traditional archetypical positions mirrors the intentions of this current research (Forster et al., 2016). The importance of giving voice to lesser-heard and previously diminished narratives is an essential aspect of this research. It is described as adding ‘flesh’ (knowledge) to the ‘bones’ of the framework (Roberts, 2012). In this case whakapapa is the framework and the narratives, stories or pūrākau sought from wāhine give it shape and structure.

Within the context of this research, the application of pūrākau is relevant in both the context of the stories shared by wāhine and the interpretation of pūrākau about atua wāhine. An understanding of the contextual nature of pūrākau allows for wāhine stories and the taonga within them to be contextualised in a similar way. Similarly, a Mana Wahine lens applied to pūrākau of atua wāhine – whose stories have often been

deconstructed and decontextualised – can bring new meaning or renewed meaning in contemporary applications.

2.4.5 Developing and Conceptualising a Method(ology)

As I continued to develop the concept of multiple lenses within this methodological framework, I came to understand how the nature of dynamic, flexible, and intersecting approaches is about using what works when it works. This means that some aspects of an approach or perspective are not utilised or are left out. Our tūpuna too, had to adapt their knowledge and its application when they encountered new challenges in new environments. They would have discarded practices that no longer served them in their new homes and adapted or created new practices that fit the time.

I had a picture in my mind about how I could conceptualise or illustrate this idea, and it always had a connection to rāranga, or the idea of creating something new by weaving together ideas. Eventually, I would picture a triangular shaped kupenga (net). The triangular shape was inspired by a contemporary representation of the whare tangata. The concept of the kupenga brings with it an appropriate metaphor for this methodological approach and ties in the connection to weaving. Each corner of the kupenga would represent an approach or the previously mentioned lens. The kupenga is described as a type of woven net that takes many forms and has a range of uses – usually related to fishing or gathering kai. The whenu, or strands of the kupenga are purposefully woven with gaps to allow for dirt, silt, or water to pass through, and to allow the kai to remain within the net/basket. The kupenga is known to be durable, flexible, and also to some degree mendable (Pendergrast, 2003; Puketapu-Hetet, 1999).

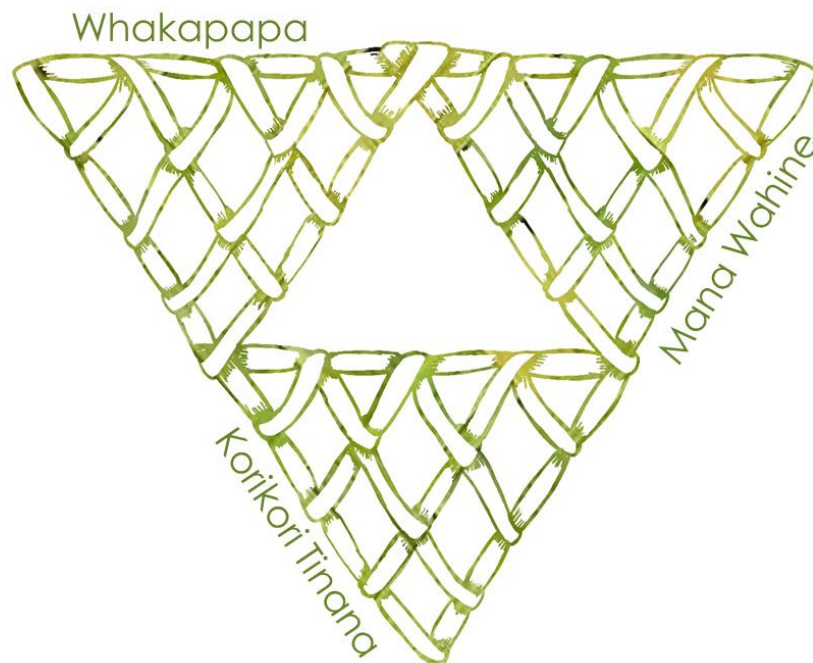
These characteristics all relate to their application to this methodological approach. By weaving the characteristics of whakapapa, Mana Wahine theory, with the application to physical activity, the kupenga is strengthened and reinforced, and creates a mechanism for gathering all that is needed within this research context, while leaving behind that which is not applicable or useful.

The illustration below depicts the methodological approach in an image that resonates as Māori in a practical and theoretical way. It also applies to the methods used within this research, which are outlined in the following chapter, from recruitment to data collection to analysis and dissemination. As the kupenga was constructed and put to use it illustrates how research can be shaped to determine which taonga or kai will be gathered and utilised, while others are filtered out. The strands determine, in this case,

whose stories are harvested and consumed. Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa, in this research, is designed and shaped to gather the physical activity stories of wāhine Māori in a way that represents a whakapapa of their mana to the mana of atua, ancestors, from which our feminine power descends. Within its construction is the inherent dimension of seeking knowledge, especially as it pertains to humanity, wāhine, and ways of being. In this sense, within Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa retains a space for storing and displaying the knowledge it gathers. This is illustrated as a triangular space at the centre representing Aronui, an acknowledgement of the third basket of knowledge retrieved by Tāne (Kāretu, 2008).

Figure 4

Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa – Methodology



The initial stages of conception, my methods, methodologies, and philosophies came together to form intersecting lenses that provided a view of the world, each unique and with shared qualities. Those intersecting philosophies represent a worldview that sits at the interface. The interface of ancient knowledges arranged and transmitted through oral histories, natural environments, and living beings. The interface of what it means to be Māori and what it means to be wahine, in a contemporary time built on systems that did not value either sufficiently. The interface of being an active being in a world that does not always facilitate that activity. These spaces that intersect to bring unique and merging perspectives allow a way to view the world that acknowledges past,

present, and future. By taking what learnings that were passed on from tūpuna, adapting them to our own contemporary need, and ultimately providing a way forward for our own descendants, we are enacting and perpetuating whakapapa, mana wahine, and in the context of this kaupapa – physical activity.

It should be acknowledged that although the combined methodological approach of this research is not new or lacking validity, its use in this way and within academia or contemporary research fields is limited. Several Māori academics refer to the use of whakapapa as a methodological framework in a range of disciplines from physical activity (Heke, 2014), ecology (Haami & Roberts, 2002), genetic technology (Hudson et al., 2007), teaching (Paipa, 2010; Paki & Peters, 2015), and research (Graham, 2005). In 1998, Royal presented an “embryonic theory concerning mātauranga Māori”, and proposed Te Ao Mārama as a research paradigm, within which whakapapa serves as the framework for understanding all that it contains. The picture that whakapapa creates of the phenomenal world, he terms: Te Ao Mārama. Existing as complementing forms, Te Ao Mārama (the world of light and reality where humans dwell) and Te Pō (the celestial realm of ngā atua) evolved from Te Kore (the realm of potential being). In this sense, Te Ao Mārama is the physical, metaphysical and theoretical space that exists between the ultimate ancestors, Ranginui and Papatūānuku (1998). In this space, the application of whakapapa to recollect the past, establish pathways for the present, and have applications and use to plan for the future offers great potential for future research (Graham, 2005).

2.5 Conclusion

In this research, whakapapa allows for an understanding of connection. Connection from an individual to activity, to environment, to tūpuna. This connection is not a lineal connection, as can be exhibited in some iterations of whakapapa. The use of whakapapa and its many iterations, broadens its potential and potential of this research. What also broadens the potential of this research is its aspiration to give voice to wāhine. Their contribution, as participants, advisors, mentors, or academic sources was overwhelming and inspiring. The purpose of Mana Wahine theory, in this research, is to acknowledge and whakamana the many voices of wāhine whose message can benefit the many others. Mātauranga wahine is mātauranga that should contribute to the empowerment and enlightenment of wāhine, but also of wider Māori. It is the hope of this research, that through the means of intersecting lenses, interwoven whenu, and the interface of knowledge systems, that empowerment and enlightenment can be achieved.

Chapter 3 Tikanga – Methods

3.1 Introduction

The design of this research aims to connect themes aligned with the feminine aspects of mātauranga Māori with attributes of the wāhine who declared themselves to be physically active. The aim was to achieve this by conducting a uniquely styled interview with a range of Māori women over the age of 18 years who self-identified as physically active. The themes extracted from those interviews then formed the strands that were eventually woven into a (re)view and (re)interpretation of relevant aspects of mātauranga Māori, pertaining to atua wāhine with relevance to those traits demonstrated and discussed in kōrero with wāhine.

3.2 Ethics

An ethics application was submitted to the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee and ethics approval (AUTEC 18/391) was received on 5 November 2018 and 26 March 2019.

3.3 Recruitment

The interview stage of the research began in 2019 with the recruitment of a group of wāhine Māori who self-identified as physically active. Participants were recruited via an extended whanaungatanga, through mainly online advertisements along with word-of-mouth or direct invitations. The initial intention was to utilise whanaungatanga, or existing connections with relevant organisations, such as Toi Tangata, sports organisations, and other social and professional networks to assist in the recruitment process, but the success of the initial recruitment phase meant this was not necessary. Jones et al. (2006) points to the significance of whakawhanaungatanga in negotiating access to relevant research communities, and others have acknowledged its importance to the recruitment process in Kaupapa Māori research (Wilson et al., 2019). The invitation to participate was posted publicly to social media pages (Facebook and Twitter) with contact information attached. These posts were shared and re-shared widely, with several personal and professional contacts “tagging” potentially interested parties to widen the response. This initial phase also garnered interest from parties who chose to forward the invitation to wider professional networks, via email. It is unclear how far and wide the invitation was shared but several participants and potential participants noted they were alerted to the invitation via means that I was not able to

directly trace. The Twitter post alone was ‘retweeted’ 62 times, with over 31,000 ‘impressions’, and a total of 553 engagements with the post. This response was encouraging (based on the limited use of my Twitter account previously), but I could only track one actual respondent, who contacted me directly to be involved. All other respondents were garnered from Facebook or email correspondence.

Over seventy wāhine contacted me with interest to participate, as a result of the recruitment invitation. Each of these respondents was sent further information about the study and offered the opportunity to ask questions, contribute, and/or participate in the research. The researcher outlined the research process and aims and provided a comprehensive information package to each interested party. Eventually, of the initial seventy respondents, twenty-four women agreed to participate within the allocated response time. Participants confirmed their inclusion to the study by completing and returning an informed consent form. One woman withdrew due to her community responsibilities associated with the Christchurch Mosque killings, another withdrew due to personal scheduling conflicts, another withdrew due to a death in her family, two others were unable to arrange suitable times to meet within the time provided, and one further interview was cancelled last-minute by the researcher due to pregnancy related illness. The resulting nineteen participants, aged from 18 years to over 70 years old, met and completed all necessary aspects for participant inclusion.

Participants were given the option of keeping their identity private or being identifiable in the research outputs, through a separate clause within the consent form. The rationale for offering the option to be named in the research is based on the intention to celebrate, showcase, and enhance the mana of wāhine Māori who are successful in maintaining a physically active lifestyle and to acknowledge their contribution to this research. It is believed that identifying participants by name, iwi, or specialty can empower them and inspire others, as has been shown in similarly themed publications (Brown, 1994; Forster et al., 2016; Te Awekotuku, 1991; Wirihana, 2012). All participants agreed to remain identifiable and did not want their identities hidden in dissemination. Therefore, although conventional privacy may have been waived, participants were protected with respect for their mana, an appreciation for their involvement, and protocols that valued their cultural beliefs (tikanga), alongside ‘conventional’ ethical processes (Hudson, 2010).

McClintock et al. (2012) outlined a similar approach to Māori mental health research based on the pōwhiri process. Including four essential aspects of a pōwhiri, the approach mirrors many of the processes involved in this current research. Inherent in this type of approach is the shift in the power dynamic towards the research participant (*tangata whenua*) and away from the researcher (*manuhiri*). Beginning with the *karanga*, which initiates a right of entry via a physical invitation. This phase is indicative of recruitment invitation through to consent form signing (as is outlined above). Next is the *mihimihi*, which allows a time to make connections and acknowledge the kaupapa. Inherent in this process is whanaungatanga, where the parties acknowledge whakapapa, along with that of the topic being researched. The *mihimihi* would encompass all the communication prior to meeting along with the initial introduction period during the face-to-face meeting. In the next phase, there is a space for “respectful listening, in-depth focussed discussion and the collection of information” (p. 97). This *whaikōrero* phase would then include aspects of prior discussions outlining the specifics of the research but would also include the interview process, both *korikori* and *kōrero* (outlined in the following section). Finally, the element of *koha* represents a physical demonstration of appreciation in the form of compensation (McClintock et al., 2012). In this research the *koha* would consist of a small, uniquely handcrafted, framed korowai/kākahu taonga that was presented to each of the wāhine after their *kōrero*. Each of these phases acknowledges the mana of wāhine and facilitates a space where they, as research participants, experts in their own kaupapa, or tangata whenua can exert their own rangatiratanga.

Participants

Those wāhine who contributed to this research through interview and/or physical activity sessions are listed below, with tribal affiliations (where known), the location where the interview(s) took place, and a brief description of the activity shared. Further descriptions will be provided in a discussion of reflection journaling also utilised. Those activities marked with (o) indicated activities that I observed rather than participated in.

Table 1*Participant Information*

Wāhine name	Interview location	Shared activity	Other/specialty activities	Iwi affiliations
Alison	Ormiston Activity Centre, Auckland	Dance fitness class (U-Jam)	Dance	Ngāpuhi
Carnation	West Wave Rec Centre, Auckland	Dance fitness class and yoga	Dance, Netball	Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu
Summer-Love	West Wave Rec Centre, Auckland	Dance fitness class and yoga	Dance	Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu
Alyx	Mount Roskill Hockey Turf, Auckland	Hockey practice (o)	Hockey, Swimming, Horse riding	Ngāti Whātua, Te Rarawa
Emerald	Snap Fitness Albany, Auckland	Powerlifting gym session	Powerlifting	Whakatōhea
Nikora	Te Atatū, Auckland	Home group fitness workout	Touch rugby, netball, waka ama, mau rākau	Ngāpuhi, Tainui
Mana	Christchurch	Group Spin class	Qi Gong, Tai Chi, Spin, Box-fitness, gym work	Ngai Tāhu, Whanganui
Teresa	Selwyn Strength CrossFit, Christchurch	CrossFit (o)	CrossFit, Rugby League, Cycling, maunga	Ngāti Porou, Ngai Tāhu
Vania	Te Putahitanga o te Waipounamu, Christchurch	N/A	Rugby League, Outdoor pursuits	Ngai Tāhu, Te Whānau Apanui

Wāhine name	Interview location	Shared activity	Other/specialty activities	Iwi affiliations
Sherilee	Cass Bay, Christchurch	Stand-up Paddle board (SUP)	Rugby League, Salsa dancing, SUP	Waikato, Ngāti Ngawaero, Ngāti Kiriwai, Ngāti Reko Ngāti Tamainupo
Holly	Brooklyn Hill, Wellington	Walk – Brooklyn Turbine Track	Dance	Ngai Tāhu
Celia	Whāngarei Harbour	Waka ama	Dragon Boating, Waka ama, maunga / outdoor pursuits	Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa
Knisha	Redwood Forest, Rotorua	Walking track	Triathlon, Rugby League	Te Arawa
Ellen	Taupo	Suburban walk	Iron Māori, Swimming, gym work	Ngāti Whātua, Waikato
Lillian	Te Mata Peak	Walk up Te Mata Peak	Basketball	Ngāti Tūwharetoa
Crystal	Te Mata Peak	Kōrero at Te Mata Peak	Rugby League, Kapahaka, community fitness	Ngāti Kahunungu, Ngāti Whara, Ngāti Tāne, Ngāti Kaukura
Christina	Todd Energy Aquatic Centre, New Plymouth	Swimming	Swimming, walking	Kai Tāhu
Angelina	Lindvart Courts, Kaikohe	Netball (o)	Netball, running, walking, gym	Ngāpuhi
Apikera	Kaitaia Strength Base, Kaitaia	Powerlifting (o)	Powerlifting	Ngāti Kahu

3.4 Data Collection – Korikori Kōrero – Activity Sessions

The whakapapa of using activity sessions as part of the research design can be traced back to two main sources. The first being my own history with physical activity and sport as a means of engaging with the world. And the second is an experience that was described earlier when I was engaged in an internship with Toi Tangata and participated in what is termed a “mobile wānanga” with Dr Ihirangi Heke. My background with sport and physical activity goes back to my childhood and is still an important aspect of my life and career. As an “active-person” myself with a background playing competitive basketball and other social sports, alongside 10 years as a Personal Trainer, I knew that it would be an enjoyable process of sharing kōrero while being active. I also assumed that it would be a useful tool for data collection. The “mobile wānanga” that Ihirangi Heke is known for, gave me a personal experience of sharing kōrero and knowledge through activity that was meaningful and enabled that knowledge to be grounded in the experience. Incorporating my own version of this activity-based learning, meant that I could take what I learned, when I experienced a mātauranga lesson with that first highspeed hongī, and apply it in a research setting.

The participant-led activity sessions were also included as a means to build rapport and contribute to a power-sharing relationship where the participant was able to take the role of expert or leader. The inclusion of this aspect of the research design provided the opportunity for the researcher and wahine to engage directly with the physical and/or natural environments relevant to each participants’ chosen activity. The intent was that the opportunity to be physically active together would both inform the researcher’s experience, interpretation, and analysis of the data and allow an additional dimension for the participant to express themselves.

These activity sessions were flexible and would be guided by the wāhine rather than my own parameters – apart from those related to my pregnancy at the time. The only activity that I asked to substitute was downhill mountain-biking in the Redwoods (while 6 months pregnant) – other observed activities were decided by participants (CrossFit, netball, and hockey). Instead, Knisha and I walked the Redwoods. Some activity sessions were observed, others were engaged in. But each allowed me to see and experience, these wāhine in a space that kōrero alone might not have displayed.

Data collection by applying an active component has been utilised in other areas of research also. Ethnographical research has a long history of literally and figuratively

‘walking alongside’ those people they were observing. Their ability to engage within the communities they were studying, meant that they could observe and experience an everyday practice and make sense of it from within (Clark & Emmel, 2010; Jones et al., 2008). The ‘walking interview’ or ‘walk and talk’ method has been used in education (Lynch & Mannion, 2016) and social science research (Clark & Emmel, 2010) to include an aspect of place-responsive methodology and to understand how participants conceptualise themselves within places, spaces, and their communities. Naomi Simmonds has also implemented a similar approach as a way to retrace ancestral pathways, and how they can affirm what it means to be a Raukawa wahine in contemporary Aotearoa. Naomi and a group of seven wāhine retraced the 400-kilometre journey that her ancestress, Māhinaarangi made, while pregnant, to be with her husband. Simmonds rationalised the use of the hikoi (walk) as a way of retracing and discovering “all the tikanga and mātauranga that is imbedded in all the places she walked” (Simmonds, 2020).

An interest in this type of research method appears to have gained interest in the past 20 years, especially within the social sciences, despite the long history of ethnography and anthropological fieldwork. There is the acknowledgement that by moving the research process out of a fixed or controlled environment, there are additional issues to consider (Jones et al., 2008). Many of those additional issues, for this research, were addressed as part of the ethics approval process. Managing safety, of both researcher and participant was considered in the development of a Research Safety Protocol (see Appendix B). Issues around power relations were addressed in the design of the activity sessions, where the participant represented the ‘expert’ in the activity and the researcher often was engaging in the activity for the first time. The participants also chose the environment where the activity session would take place, so they could be comfortable with the space and had the opportunity to speak openly, without any potential issues of uneven power dynamics.

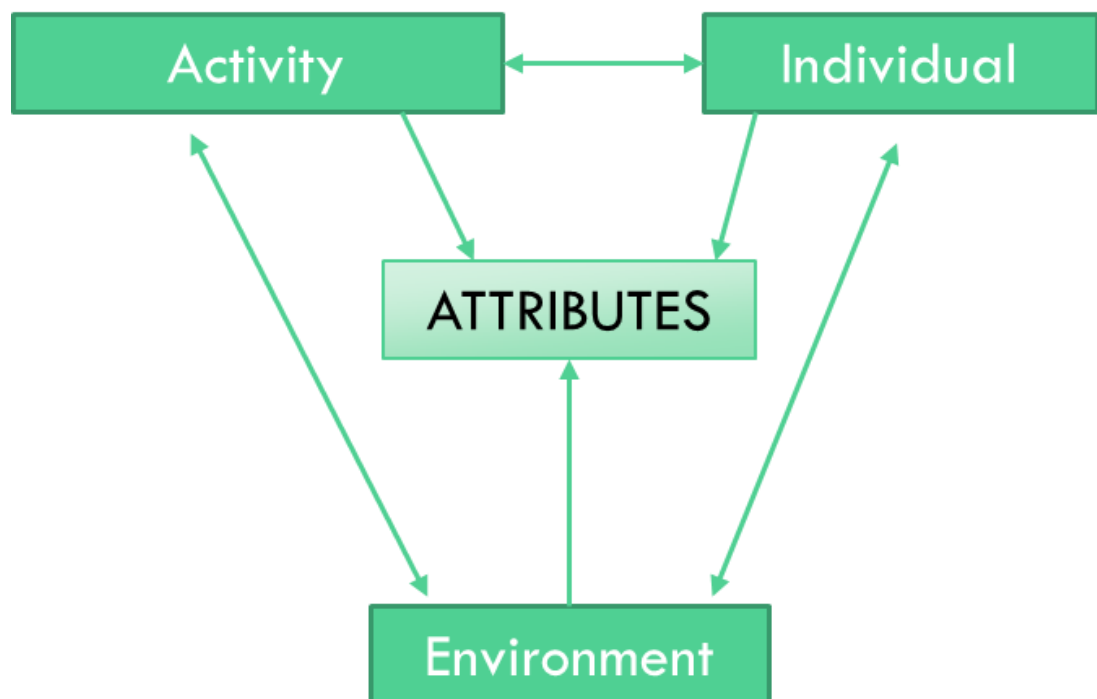
In this research, one of the key intentions in using the active research method was to observe or examine the participant ‘being’ active. However, like other research utilising active methods, although the movement was “under scrutiny” it was the movement or activity that served as “a tool for exploring the activities those movements permit and the spaces in which these take place” (Jones et al., 2008, p. 3). In other words, physical activity sessions served as the vehicle for examining wāhine in a certain environment or displaying certain ways of being (personality or physicality, for example). I have not

come across the use of an active method like this, in any other research. Though, just as Naomi Simmonds (2020) recently used an active research method to retrace and discover imbedded tikanga and mātauranga, my intent was to trace whakapapa and discover mātauranga wahine in the active engagement of wāhine with place and physicality.

The difference between this research and that of some using so-called ‘walking interviews’ was that the method for this research, was not concerned with spatial relationships with places through a mobile method (Jones et al., 2008). The use of activity as a method, was more about the interconnected relationships that wāhine had with the activity, with the environment, and those that the environment had with the activity. In this context, each is an influence on each other, and each of those influences are of interest. The participant is not at the centre of the dynamic but is an element within the dynamic. The activity session allowed the observation of each element and the influences between them. The diagram below illustrates the dynamic and the proposed contributions to wāhine attributes that were of most interest.

Figure 5

Contributions to wāhine attributes



3.5 Data Collection – Tā Whakaaroaro – Reflective Journal

At the end of each activity session, I would make a short reflective journal entry to highlight any relevant or significant observations. These insights were used in collaboration with interview data and were included in the data analysis process.

Sometimes the entries were made as I was observing an activity, others were made later on, after some reflection. For each of the wāhine, I chose a few words that reflected, to me, aspects of what I observed when they were displaying their active self. The words I chose in the reflections may relate to findings that are presented later in this thesis, or they may stand alone as mere observations of a wāhine at the time of their writing.

Transcriptions of each journal entry are included below along with images of the actual journal entries with my initial observations of wāhine. The use of this reflective journal allowed for an immediate record of the experience that was had with each of the wāhine. It would serve as an additional feature of the data collection process, a subjective feature, but one that acknowledged the role of the researcher and the position occupied in the research dynamic. The initial record of each journal entry would also serve as a memory aid when re-reading, re-watching, or analysing data.

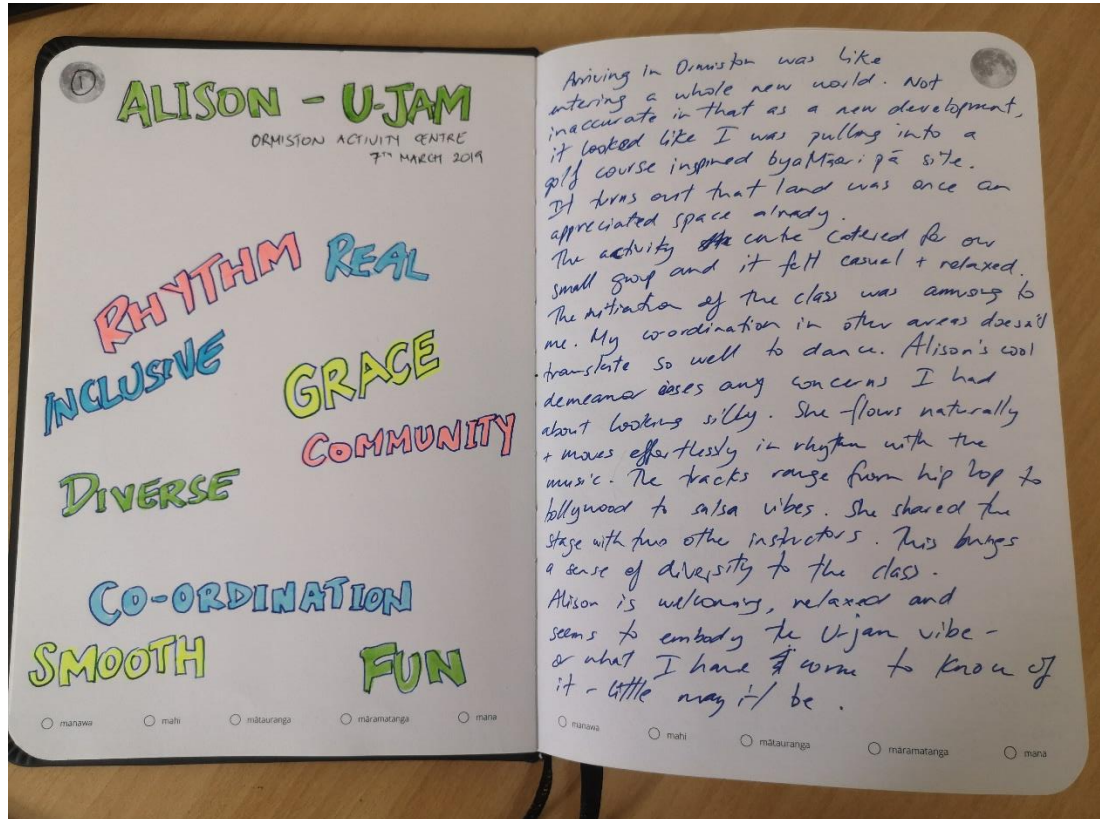
Each transcript is a glimpse into the way I observed wāhine moving physically and displaying their physicality and personality. These observations are just my perspective and by no means based on any assessment criteria or preconceived framework. The reflective journal was a way of recording the moment before I had the chance to analyse it too much. This may mean that the observations are crude, but they are my genuine record of the moments I shared with these wāhine, from my perspective. I begin with Alison in Ormiston, 7 March 2019, and conclude with Apikera in Kaitaia, 27 May 2019.

3.5.1 Journal Entries

Alison Heremaia

Figure 6

Alison – Ormiston Activity Centre 7 March 2019

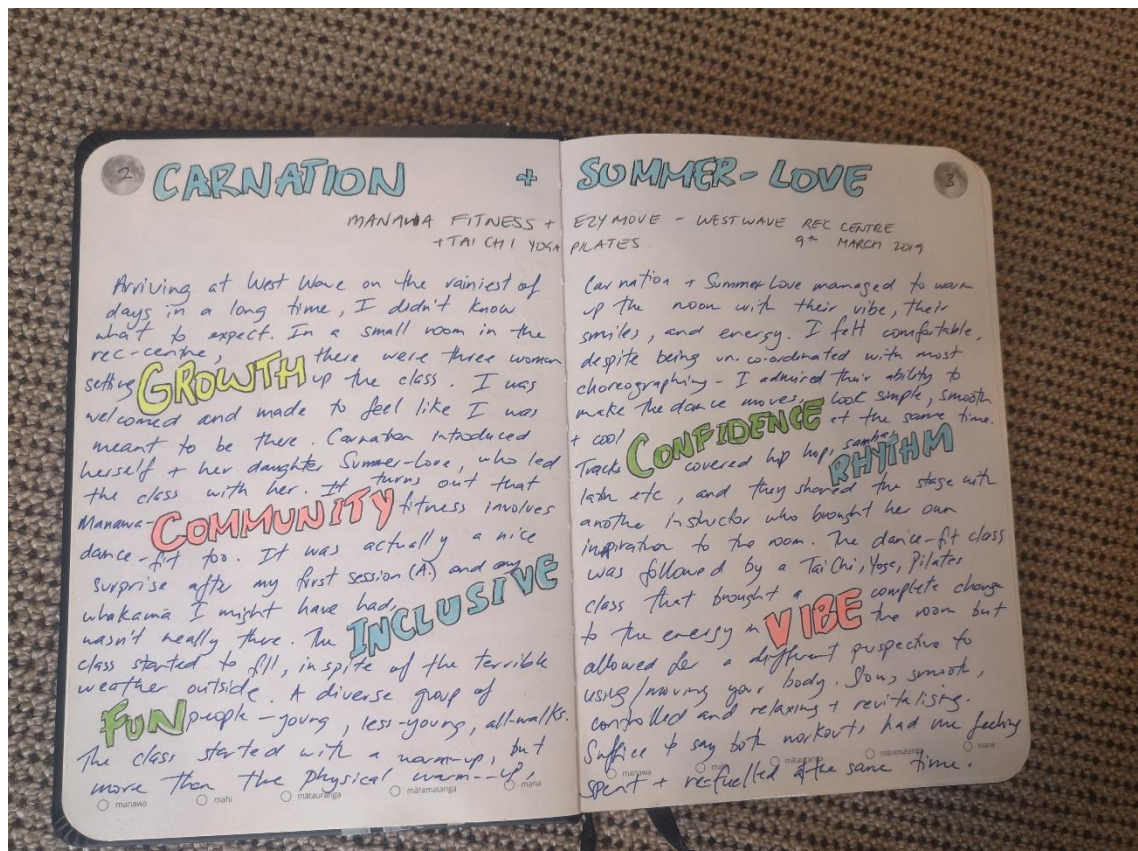


Arriving in Ormiston was like entering a whole new world. Not that inaccurate in that it's a new development. It looked like a golf course inspired by a Māori pā site. It turns out that land was once an appreciated space already. The activity centre catered for our small group, and it felt casual and relaxed. The initiation to the class was amusing to me. My coordination in other areas (of activity) doesn't translate so well to dance. Alison's cool demeanour eases away any concerns I had about looking silly. She flows naturally and moves effortlessly in rhythm with the music. The tracks range from hip hop to Bollywood to salsa vibes. She shared the stage with two other instructors. This brings a sense of diversity to the class. Alison is welcoming, relaxed and seems to embody the U-Jam vibe - or what I have come to know of it - little may it be.

Carnation and Summer-Love Hetaraka- Shelford

Figure 7

Carnation and Summer-Love – West Wave Rec Centre 9 March 2019



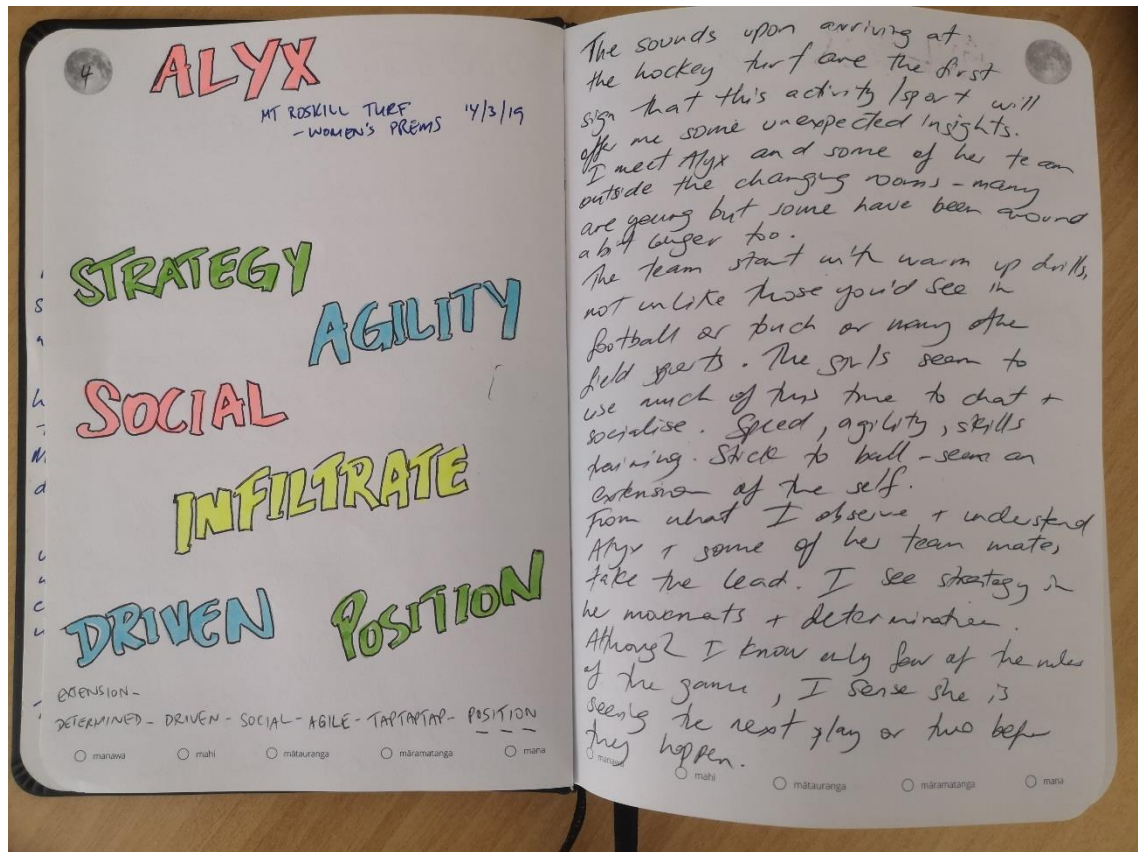
Arriving at West Wave on the rainiest of days in a long time, I didn't know what to expect. In a small room in the rec centre, there were three women setting up the class. I was welcomed and made to feel like I was meant to be there. Carnation introduced herself and her daughter Summer-Love, who led the class with her. It turns out that Manawa Fitness involves dance fitness too. It was actually a nice surprise after my first session with Alison. Any whakamā I might have had, wasn't really there. The class started to fill, in spite of the terrible weather outside. A diverse group of people – young, less-young, all walks. The class started with a warmup, but more than a physical warm up. Carnation and Summer-Love managed to warm up the room with their vibe, their smiles, and energy. I felt comfortable, despite being uncoordinated with most of the choreography. I admired their ability to make the dance moves look simple, smooth, and cool at the same time. Tracks covered hip hop, samba, Latin, etc, and they shared the stage with another instructor who brought her own inspiration to the room. The dance-fit class was followed by a Tai Chi Yoga Pilates class that brought a complete change to the energy in the room but allowed for a different perspective to using/moving your body. Slow, smooth, controlled and relaxing + revitalising. Suffice to say both workouts had me feeling spent + refuelled at the same time.

using/moving your body. Slow, smooth, controlled, and relaxing and revitalising. Suffice to say, both workouts had me feeling spent and re-fuelled at the same time.

Alyx Pivac

Figure 8

Alyx – Mount Roskill Turf 14 March 2019

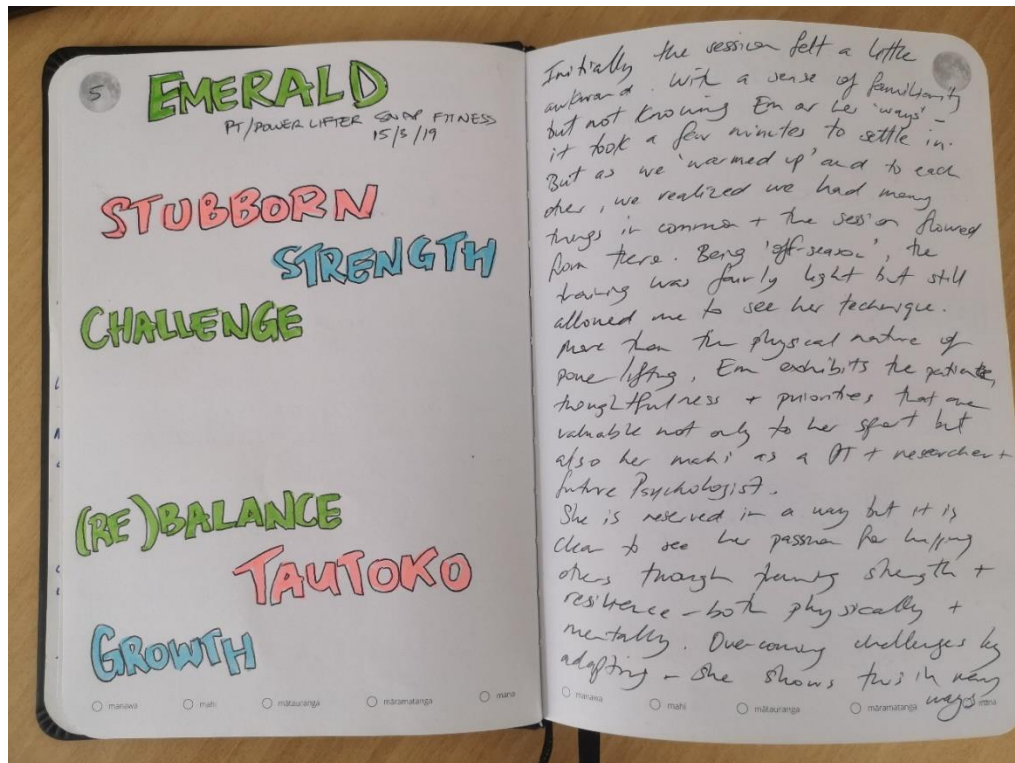


The sounds upon arriving at the hockey turf are the first signs that this activity/sport will offer me some unexpected insights. I meet Alyx and some of her teammates outside the changing rooms – many are young but some have been around a bit longer too. The team start with warm up drills not unlike those you'd see in football or touch or many other field sports. The girls seem to use this time to chat and socialise. Speed, agility, skills training. Stick to ball – seems an extension of the self. From what I observe and understand, Alyx (and some of her teammates) take the lead. I see strategy in her movements and determination. Although I know only a few of the rules of the game, I sense she is seeing the next play or two before they happen.

Emerald Muriwai

Figure 9

Emerald – Snap Fitness Albany 15 March 2019



The date of this entry is significant. After jotting the following reflection down in the car after talking to Emerald, on the drive home I was to hear of the news of the Christchurch Mosque attack. I want to acknowledge that moment for the horrific event that occurred that day and the loss experienced by our Muslim brothers and sisters in Christchurch. As-Salam Alaikum. I do not include this to detract from the observations made with Emerald but to recognise she too would've left our kōrero to hear the same news. I enjoyed our kōrero and getting to know Emerald. It made me feel optimistic. But on that drive home hearing the news, I felt a deep grief.

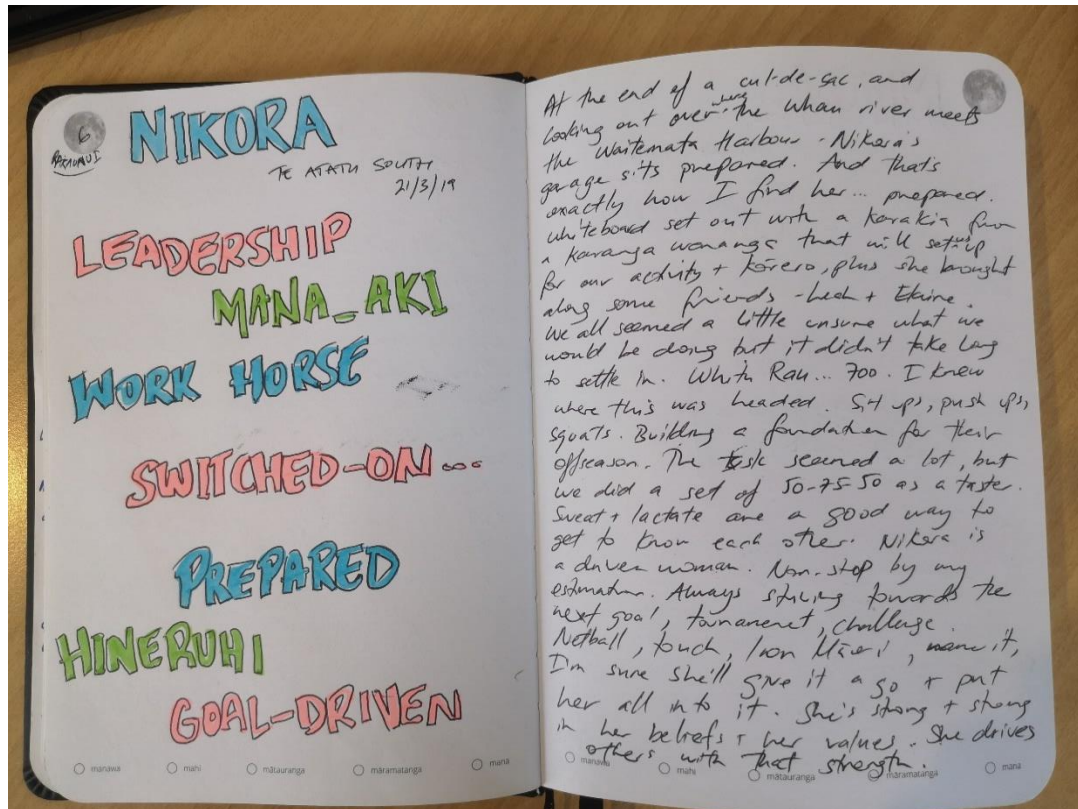
Initially, the session felt a little awkward. With a sense of familiarity (because I knew the gym) but not knowing Em or her 'ways' – it took a few minutes to settle in. But as we 'warmed up' and to each other, we realised we had many things in common and the session flowed from there. Being 'off-season', the training was fairly light but still allowed me to see her technique. More than the physical nature of power lifting, Em exhibits the patience and thoughtfulness and priorities that are valuable not only to her sport but also her mahi as a PT, researcher, and future psychologist. She is reserved in a way, but it is clear to see her passion for helping others through training strength and

resilience – both physically and mentally. Overcoming challenges by adapting she shows this in many ways.

Nikora Irimana

Figure 10

Nikora – Te Atatu 21 March 2019

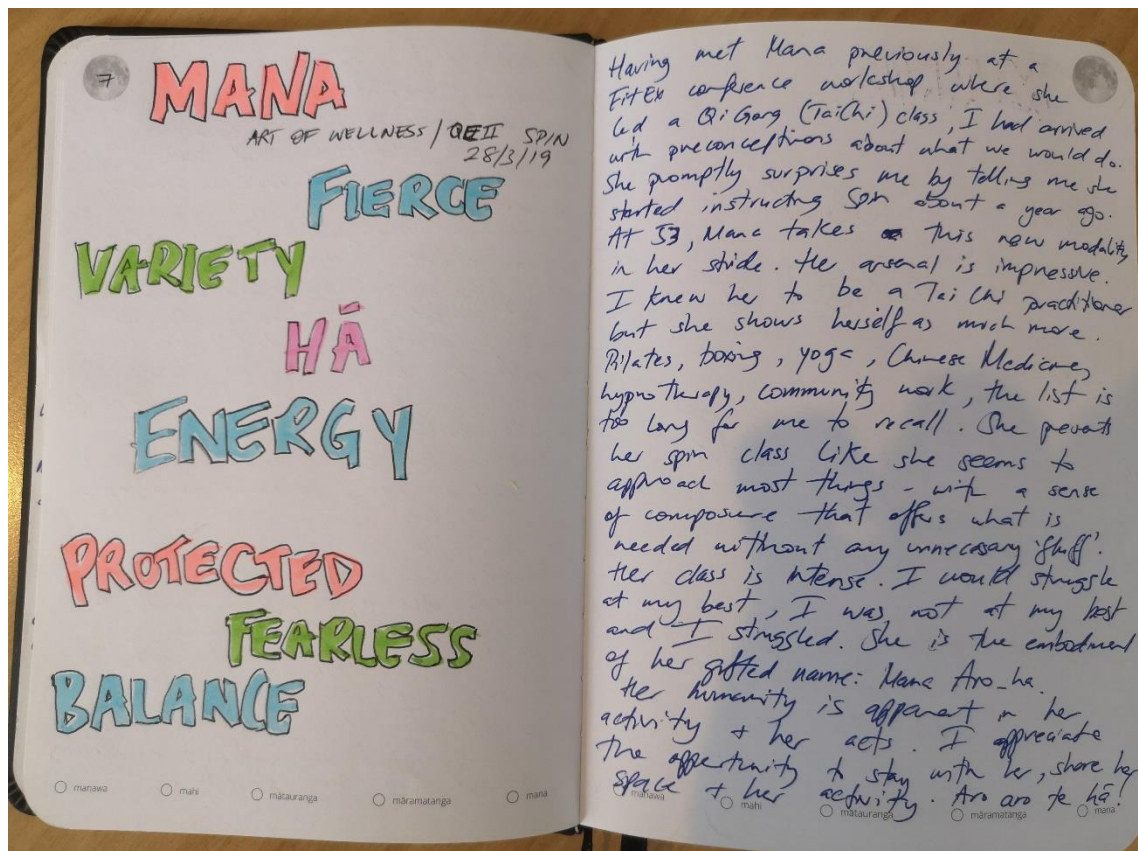


At the end of a cul-de-sac and looking out over where the Whau river meets the Waitemata harbour – Nikora's garage sits prepared. And that's exactly how I find her... prepared. Whiteboard set out with a karakia from a karanga wānanga that will set us up for our activity and kōrero, plus she has brought along some friends – Leah and Elaine. We all seemed a little unsure what we would be doing but it didn't take long to settle in. Whitu Rau... 700. I knew where this was headed. Sit ups, push ups, squats. Building a foundation for their off-season. The task seemed a lot, but we did a set of 50-75-50 as a taster. Sweat and lactate are a good way to get to know each other. Nikora is a driven woman. Non-stop by my estimation. Always striving towards the next goal, tournament, challenge. Netball, touch, iron Māori, you name it. I'm sure she'll give it a go and put her all into it. She's strong and strong in her beliefs and values. She drives others with that strength.

Mana Fleming

Figure 11

Mana – QE-II Arena 28 March 2019

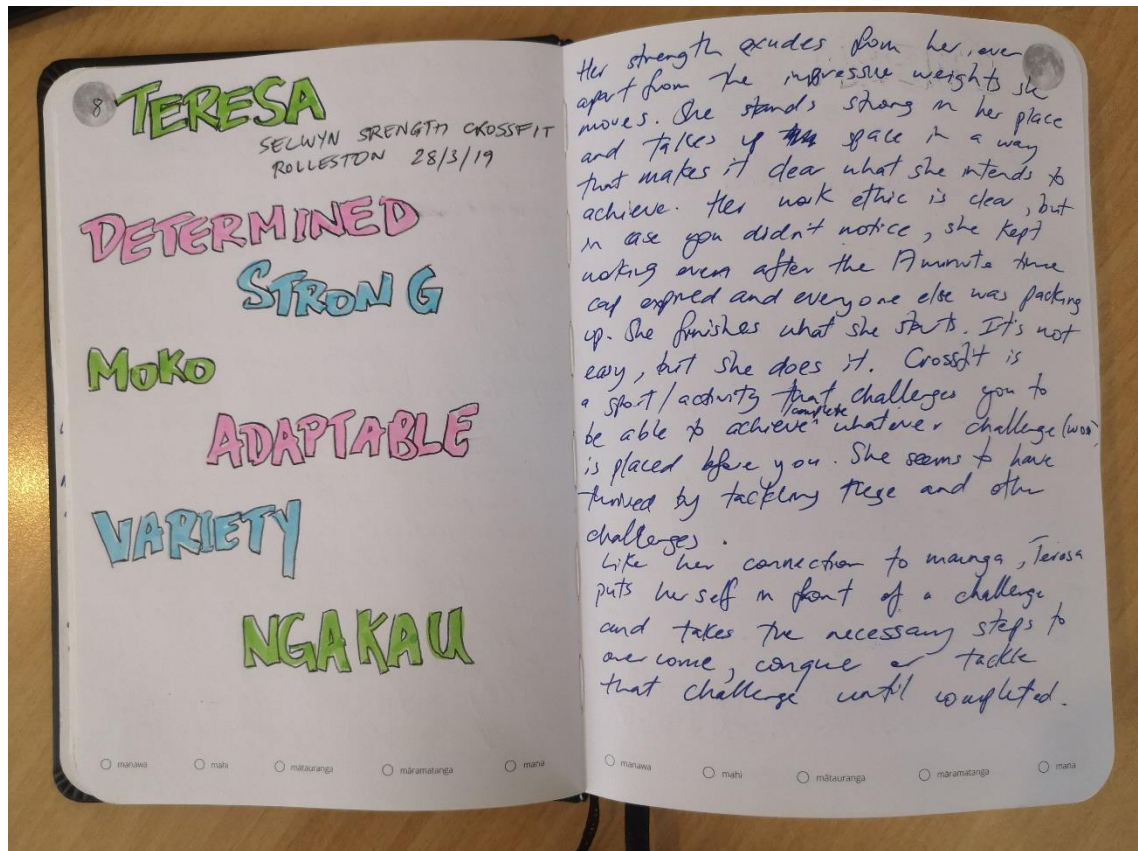


Having met Mana previously at a Fit-Ex conference workshop, where she led a Qi Gong (Tai Chi) class, I had arrived with preconceptions about what we would do. She promptly surprises me by telling me she started instructing Spin about a year ago. At 53, Mana takes this new modality in her stride. Her arsenal is impressive. I knew her to be a Tai Chi practitioner, but she shows herself as much more. Pilates, boxing, yoga, Chinese Medicine, hypnotherapy, community work, the list is too long for me to recall. She presents her spin class like she seems to approach most things – with a sense of composure that offers what is needed without any unnecessary fluff. Her class is intense. I would struggle at my best. I was not at my best and I struggled. She is the embodiment of her gifted name – Mana Aro-ha. Her humanity is apparent in her activity and her acts. I appreciate the opportunity to share her in her space and her activity. Aro aro te hā!

Teresa Butler

Figure 12

Teresa – Selwyn Strength CrossFit Rolleston 28 March 2019

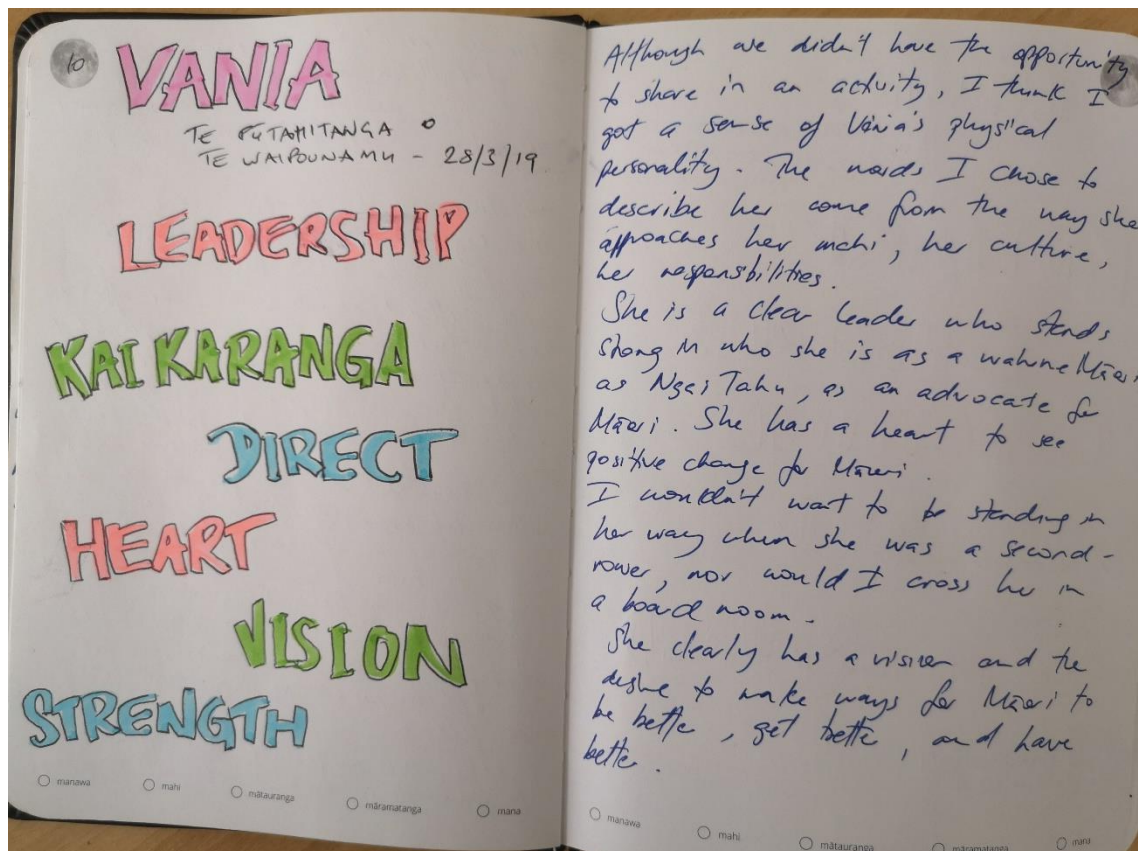


Her strength exudes from her, even apart from the impressive weights she moves. She stands strong in her space in a way that makes it clear what she intends to achieve. Her work ethic is clear, but in case you didn't notice, she kept working even after the 17-minute time cap expired and everyone else was packing up. She finishes what she starts. It's not easy, but she does it. CrossFit is a sport/activity that challenges you to be able to achieve or complete whatever challenge (WOD) that's placed in front of you. She seems to have thrived by tackling these and other challenges. Like her connection to maunga, Teresa puts herself in front of a challenge and takes the necessary steps to overcome, conquer or tackle that challenge until complete.

Vania Pirini

Figure 13

Vania – Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu 28 March 2019

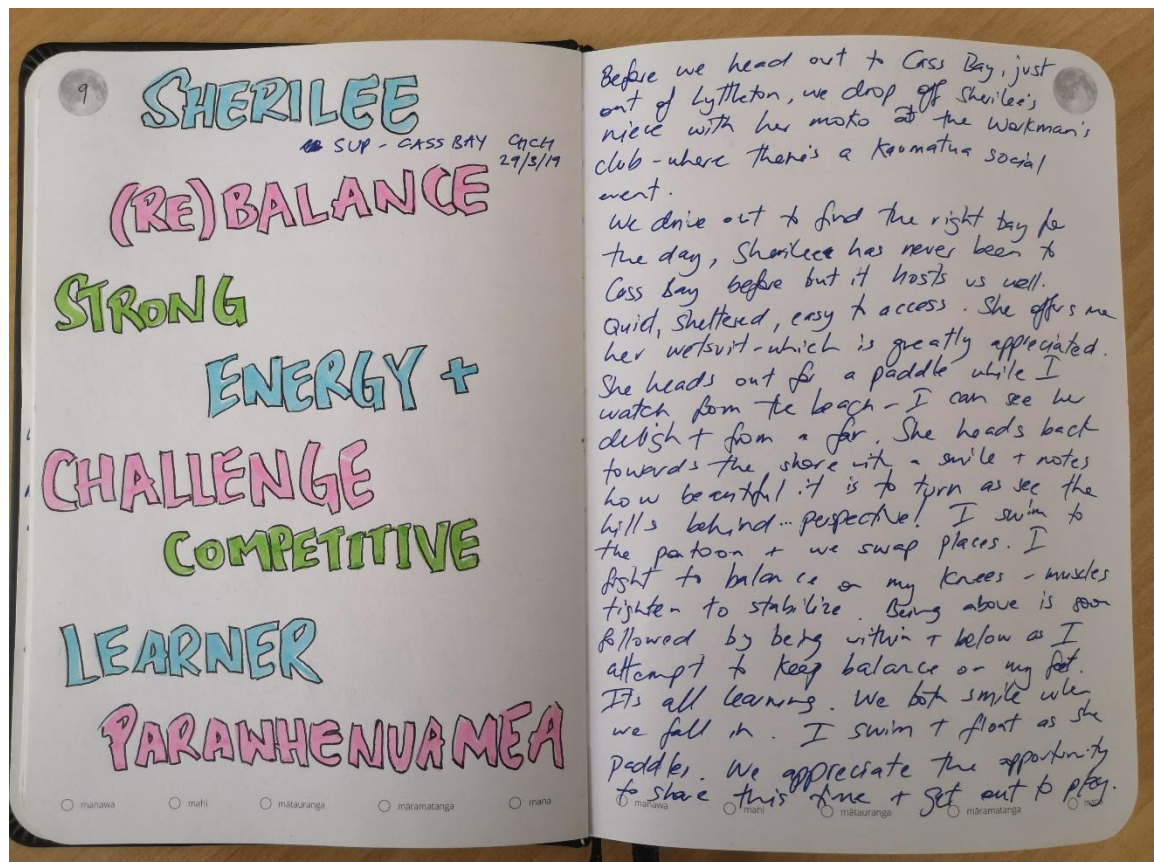


Although we didn't have the opportunity to share in an activity, I think I get a sense of Vania's physical personality anyway. The words I chose to describe her come from the way she approaches her mahi, her culture, her responsibilities. She is a clear leader who stands strong in who she is as a wahine Māori. As Ngai Tāhu, as an advocate for Māori. She has a heart to see positive change for Māori. I wouldn't want to be standing in her way when she was a second-rower, nor would I cross her in a board room. She clearly has a vision and the desire to make ways for Māori to be better, get better, and have better.

Sherilee Herangi-Harrison

Figure 14

Sherilee – Cass Bay 29 March 2019

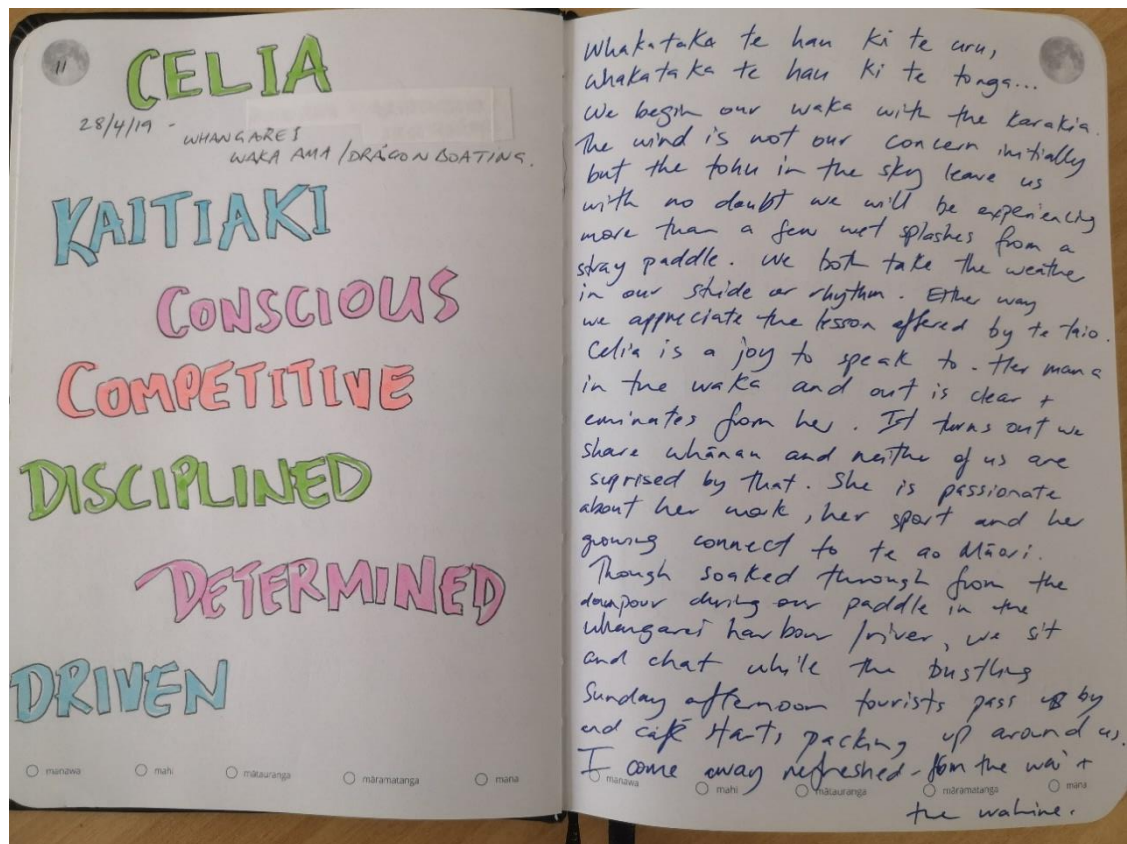


Before we head out to Cass Bay, just out of Lyttleton, we drop off Sherilee's niece with her koro at the Workman's club where there's a kaumatua social event. We drive out to find the right bay for the day, Sherilee has never been to Cass Bay before, but it hosts us well. Quiet, sheltered, easy to access. She offers me her wetsuit – which is greatly appreciated. She heads out for a paddle while I watch from the beach – I can see her delight from afar. She heads back towards the shore with a smile and notes how beautiful it is to turn and see the hills behind...perspective! I swim to the pontoon, and we swap places. I fight to balance on my knees – muscles tighten to stabilize. Being above is soon followed by being within and below as I attempt to keep balance on my feet. It's all learning. We both smile when we fall in. I swim and float as she paddles again. We appreciate the opportunity to share this time to get out and play.

Celia Witehira

Figure 15

Celia – Whāngarei Harbour 28 April 2019



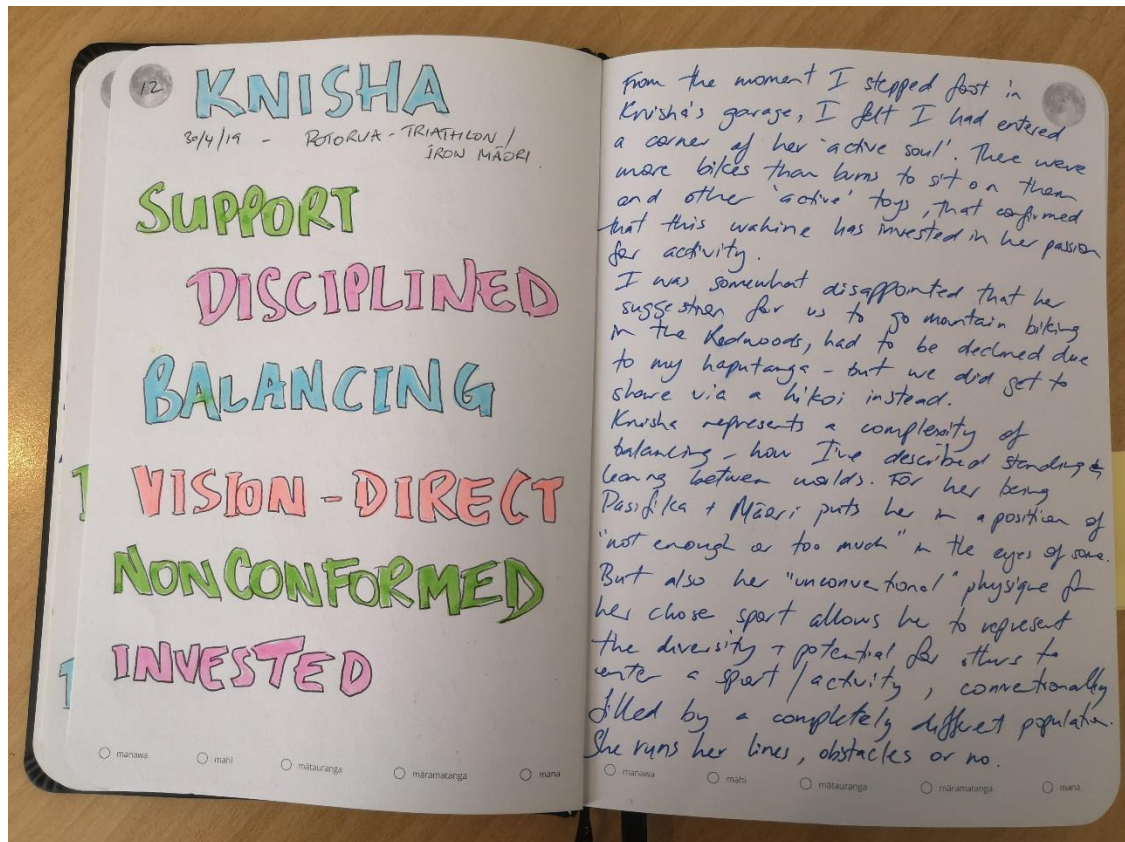
Whakataka te hau ki te uru, whakataka te hau ki te tonga⁴... We begin our waka with a karakia. The wind is not our concern initially but the tohu in the sky leave us with no doubt that we will be experiencing more than a few splashes from a stray paddle. We both take the weather in our stride or rhythm. Either way, we appreciate the lesson offered by te taiao. Celia is a joy to speak to. Her mana in the waka and out of it is clear, it emanates from her. It turns out we share whānau and neither of us are surprised by that. She is passionate about her work, her sport, and her growing connection to te ao Māori. Though we're soaked through from the downpour during our paddle in the Whāngarei harbour, we sit and chat while the bustling Sunday afternoon tourists pass us by and café staffs packing up around us. I come away refreshed – from the wai and the wahine.

⁴ Whakataka te hau ki te uru, whakataka te hau ki te tonga – these are the opening lines of a karakia / encantation or prayer that translate to: Cease the winds from the west, cease the winds from the south.

Knisha Ruland

Figure 16

Knisha – Redwood Forest 30 April 2019

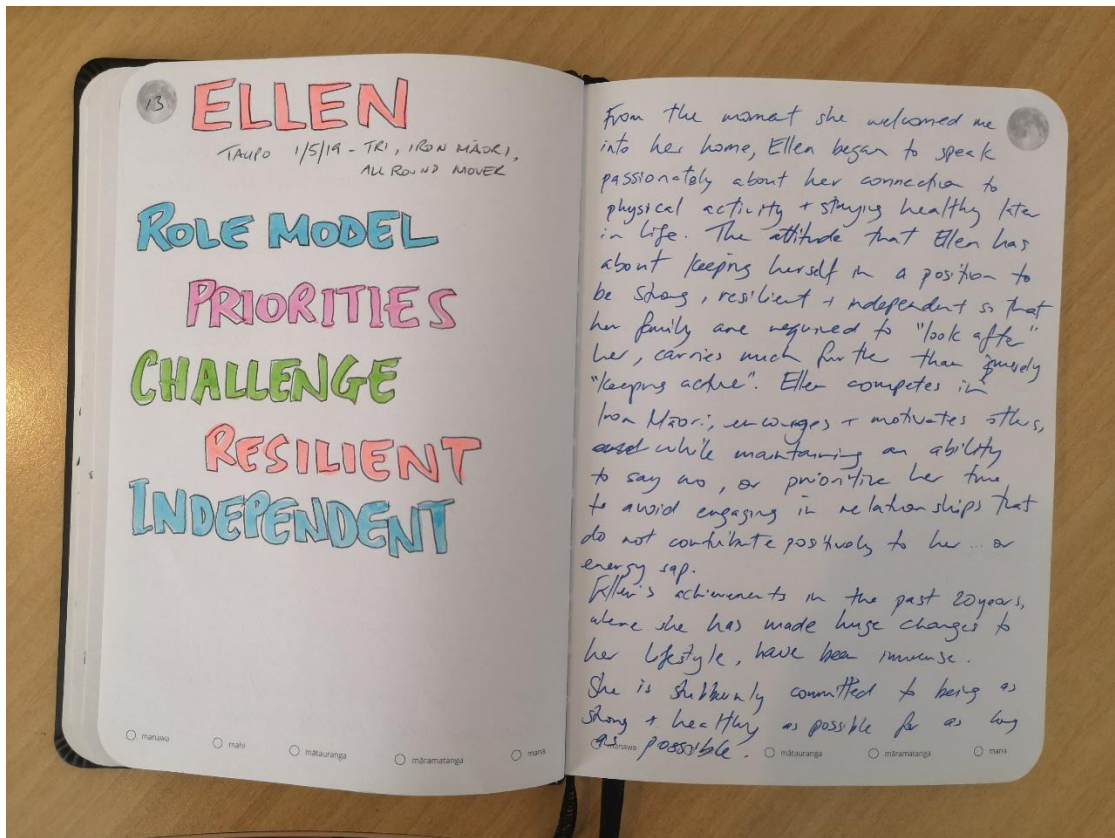


From the moment I stepped foot in Knisha's garage, I felt I had entered a corner of her 'active soul'. There were more bikes than bums to sit on them and other 'active toys', that confirmed that this wahine had invested in her passion for activity. I was disappointed that her suggestion for us to go mountain biking in the Redwoods had to be declined due to my haputanga (pregnancy) – but we did get to share via a hikoi instead. Knisha represents a complexity of balancing – how I've described standing and leaning between worlds. For her being Pasifika and Māori, puts her in a position of "not enough or too much" in the eyes of some. But also, her "unconventional" physique for her chosen sport/activity, conventionally filled by a completely different population. She runs her lines, obstacles or not.

Ellen Kinred

Figure 17

Ellen – Suburban Taupo 1 May 2019

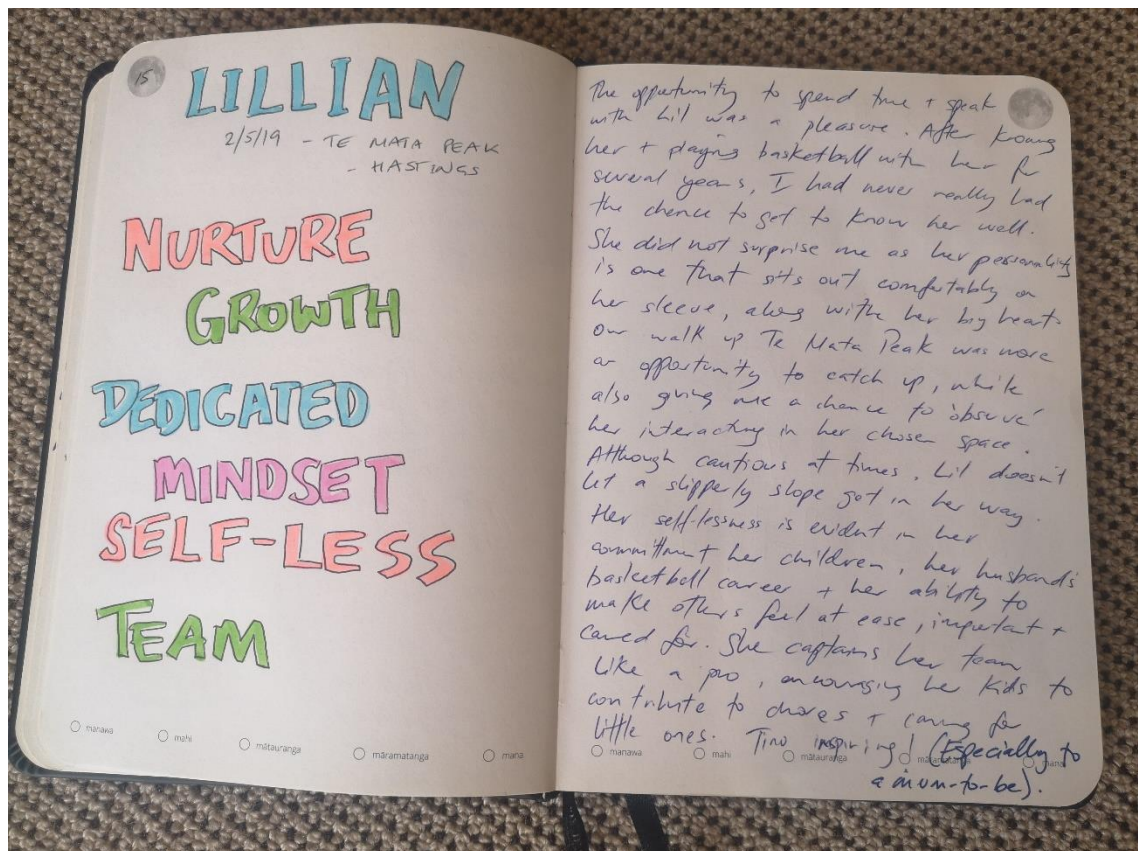


From the moment she welcomed me into her home, Ellen began to speak passionately about her connection to physical activity and staying healthy later in life. The attitude that Ellen has about keeping herself in a position to be strong, resilient, and independent is so that her family aren't required to "look after" her – it carries much further than merely "keeping active". Ellen competes in Iron Māori, encourages and motivates others, while maintaining an ability to say no, or prioritise her time to avoid engaging in relationships that do not contribute positively to her... or energy sap. Ellen's achievements in the past 20 years, where she has made huge changes to her lifestyle, have been immense. She is stubbornly committed to being as strong and healthy as possible, for as long as possible. Tu meke!

Lillian Bartlett

Figure 18

Lillian – Te Mata Peak 2 May 2019

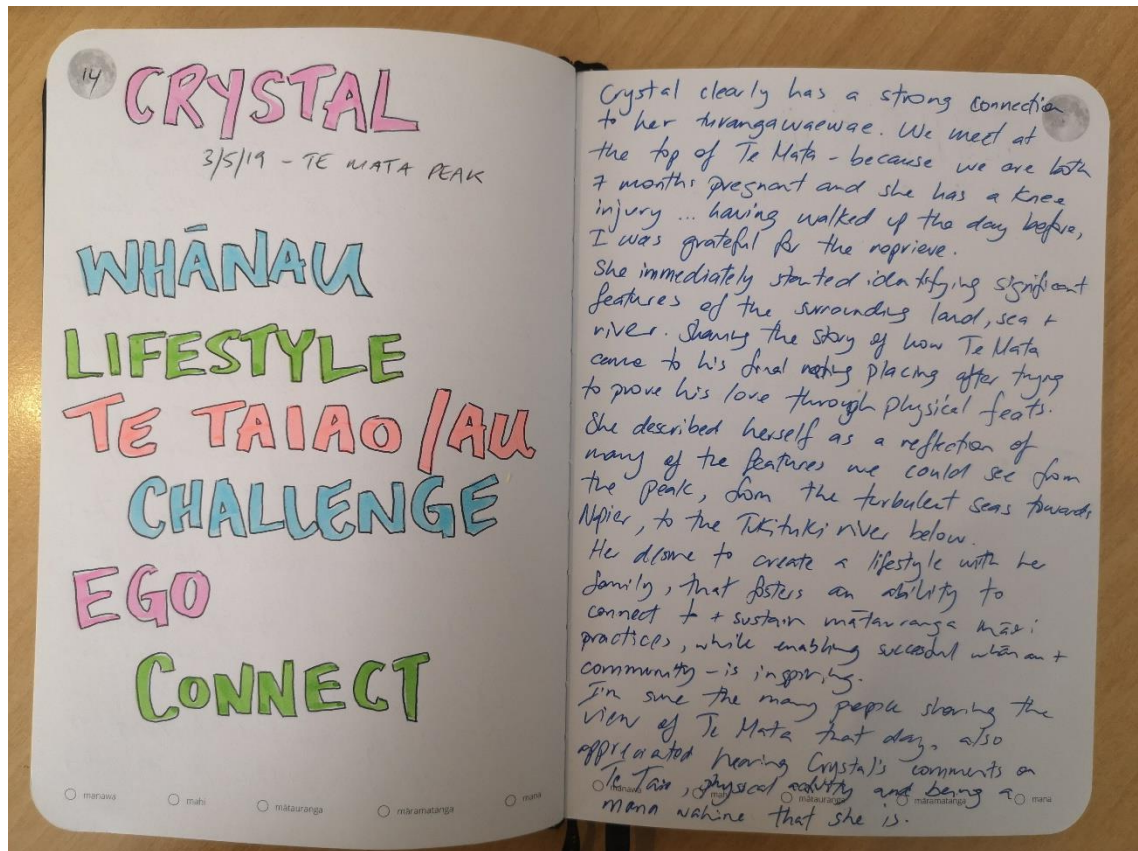


The opportunity to spend time and speak with Lil was a pleasure. After knowing her and playing basketball with her for several years, I had never really had the chance to get to know her well. She did not surprise me, as her personality is one that sits comfortably out on her sleeve, along with her big heart. Our walk up to Te Mata peak was more of an opportunity to catch up, while also giving me a chance to observe her interacting in her chosen space. Although cautious at times, Lil doesn't let a slippery slope get in her way. Her selflessness is evident in her commitment to her children, her husband's basketball career, and her ability to make others feel at ease, important, and cared for. She captains her 'team' like a pro, encouraging her kids to contribute to chores and caring for little ones. Tino inspiring! (Especially to a mum-to-be).

Crystal Pekapo

Figure 19

Crystal – Te Mata Peak 3 May 2019

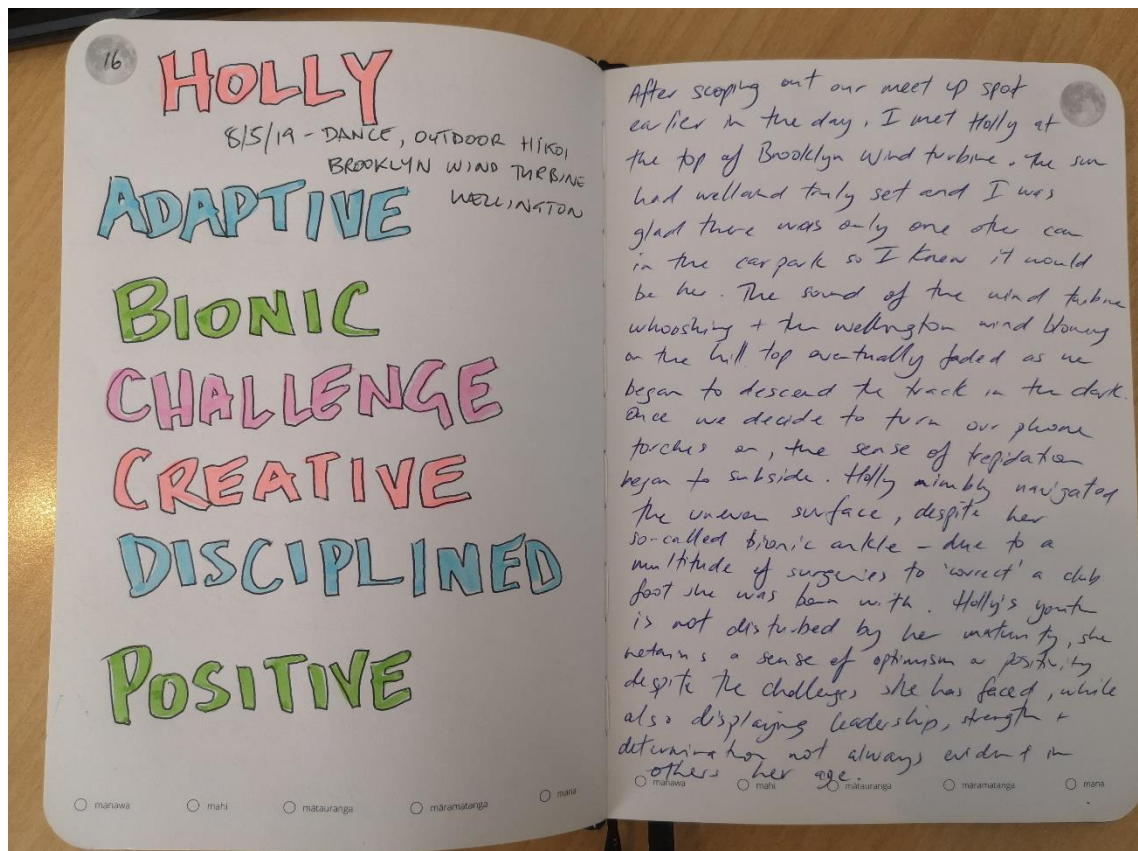


Crystal clearly has a strong connection to her turangawaewae. We meet at the top of Te Mata peak – because we are both 7 months pregnant and she has a knee injury... having walked up there the day before, I was grateful for the reprieve. She immediately started identifying significant features of the surrounding land, sea, and river. Sharing the story of how Te Mata came to his final resting place, after trying to prove his love through physical feats. She described herself as a reflection of the many features we could see from the peak, from the turbulent seas towards Napier, to the Tukituki River below. Her desire to create a lifestyle with her family, that fosters an ability to connect to and sustain mātauranga Māori practices, while enabling successful whānau and community, is inspiring. I'm sure the many people sharing the view from Te Mata that day, also appreciate hearing Crystal's comments on te taiao, physical activity, and being a mana wahine that she is.

Holly Diepraam

Figure 20

Holly – Brooklyn Wind Turbine Track 8 May 2019

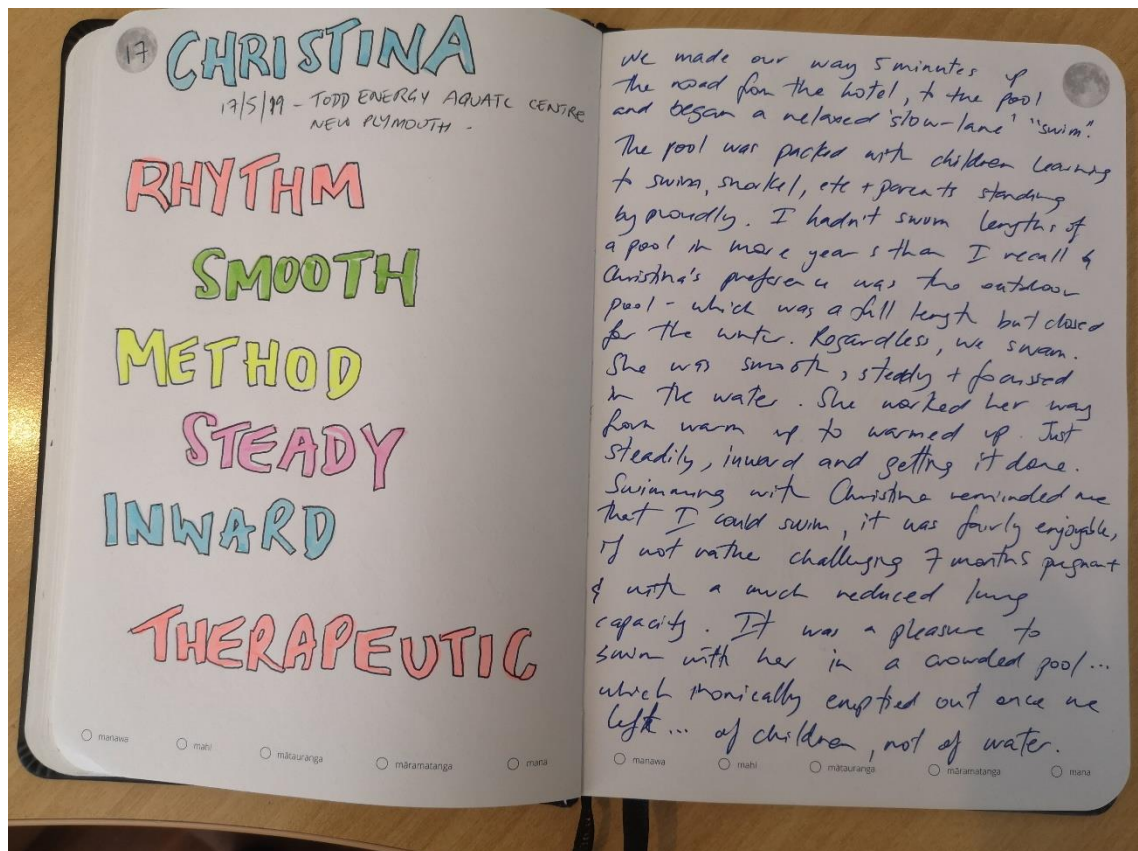


After scoping out our meet up spot earlier in the day, I met Holly at the top of Brooklyn Wind Turbine. The sun had well and truly set, and I was glad there was only one car in the car park so I knew it would be her. The sound of the wind turbine whooshing and the Wellington wind blowing on the hilltop eventually faded as we began to descend the track in the dark. Once we decide to turn our phone torches on, the sense of trepidation began to subside. Holly nimbly navigated the uneven surface, despite her so-called 'bionic ankle' – due to a multitude of surgeries to 'correct' a club foot she was born with. Holly's youthfulness is not disturbed by her maturity, she retains a sense of optimism or positivity despite the challenges she faces, while also displaying leadership, strength, and determination – not always evident in others her age.

Christina Scott

Figure 21

Christina – Todd Energy Aquatic Centre 17 May 2019

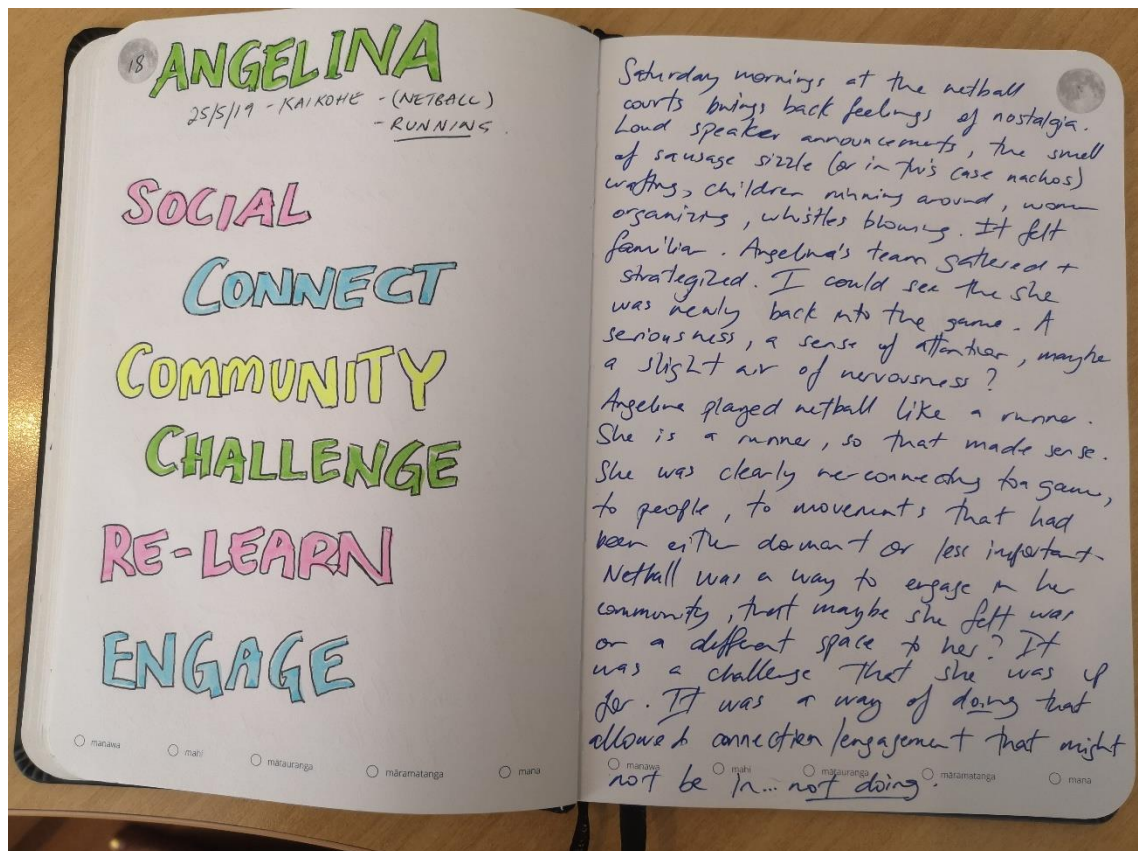


We made our way 5 minutes up the road from my hotel to the pool and began a relaxed 'slow-lane' swim. The pool was packed with children learning to swim, snorkel, etc, and parents standing by proudly. I hadn't swum lengths of a pool in more years than I recall, and Christina's preference was the outdoor pool – which was a full-length pool but closed for the winter. Regardless, we swam. She was smooth, steady, and focussed in the water. She worked her way from warm up, to warmed up. Just steadily inward and getting it done. Swimming with Christina reminded me that I could swim, it was fairly enjoyable, if not rather challenging being 7 months pregnant and with much reduced lung capacity. It was a pleasure to swim with her in a crowded pool...which ironically emptied out once we left... of children, not of water.

Angelina Goodhew

Figure 22

Angelina – Lindvart Netball Courts 25 May 2019

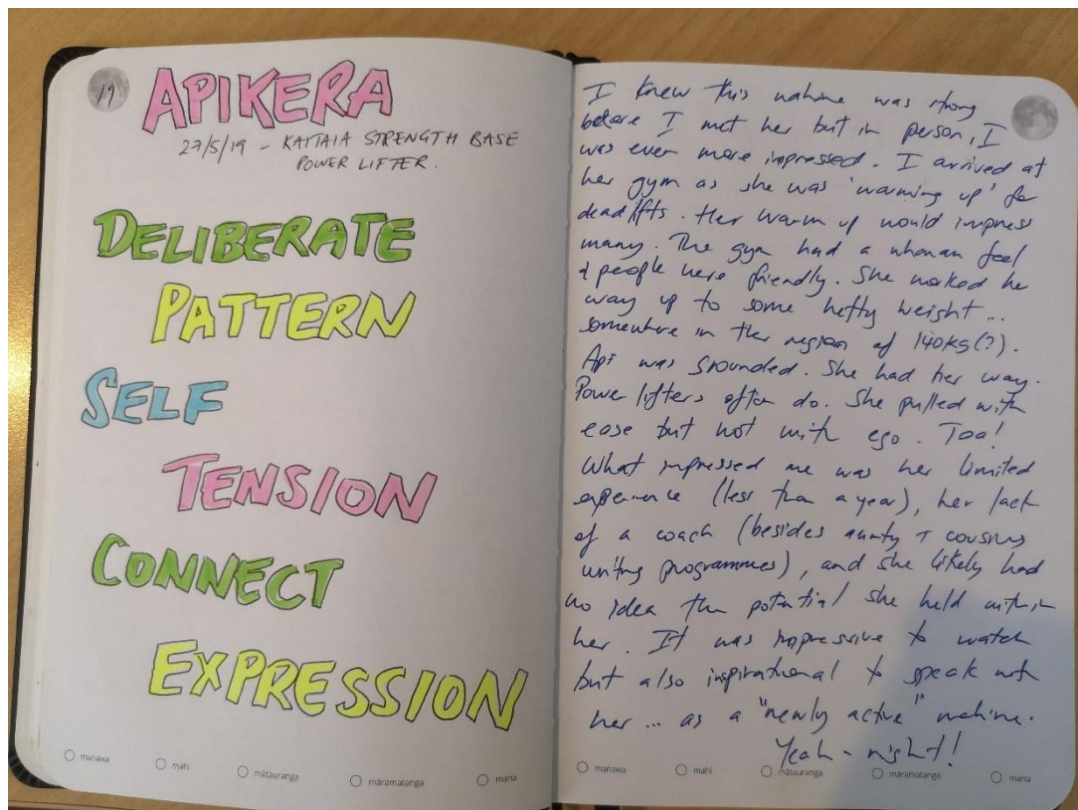


Saturday mornings at the netball courts brings back feelings of nostalgia. Loudspeaker announcements, the smell of sausage sizzle wafting (or in this case nachos), children running around, women organising, whistles blowing. It felt familiar. Angelina's team gathered and strategized. I could see she was newly back into the game. A seriousness, a sense of attention, maybe a slight air of nervousness? Angelina played netball like a runner. She is a runner, so that made sense. She was clearly re-connecting to a game, to people, to movements that had either been dormant or less important before. Netball was a way to engage in her community, that maybe she felt was a different space for her? It was a challenge that she was up for. It was a way of doing that allowed connection/engagement that might not be in ...not doing.

Apikera Thomas

Figure 23

Apikera – Kaitaia Strength Base 27 May 2019



I knew this wahine was strong before I met her but in person, I was even more impressed. I arrived at her gym as she was 'warming up' for deadlifts. Her warmup would impress many. The gym had a whānau feel and people were friendly. She worked her way up to some hefty weight, somewhere in the region of 140kg (?). Api was grounded. She had her way. Power lifters often do. She pulled with ease but not with ego. Toa! What impressed me was her limited experience (less than a year), her lack of a coach (besides an aunty and cousin helping with her programmes), and she likely had no idea of the potential she held within her. It was impressive to watch but also inspirational to speak with her ... as a "newly active" wahine.

3.6 Data Collection – Kōrero – Interview

Participant interviews were usually conducted after activity sessions, and the general interview structure is described below.

Mihi – Introduction

An introduction usually occurred at an initial meeting or via email or phone and included whakawhanaungatanga, where the researcher and participant shared their whakapapa or pepeha in an informal way. The details of the activity and interview sessions would then be discussed and decided. The majority of participants were not previously known to the researcher, so it was important to allow for an informal period where both parties could settle into the research relationship. Whakawhanaungatanga is an important way of situating yourself in a new situation or relationship, it allows for both parties to share freely who they are, where they are from, and to identify any shared connections (Huriwai et al., 2001; McClintock et al., 2012). The nature of the initial meetings meant that the researcher would be required to travel either across town, or across the country. This meant that the, mostly email, communication would begin the introduction and whakawhanaungatanga process.

Whakawhanaungatanga – Rapport building

Rapport building began with whakawhanaungatanga, though not always face-to-face. This continued through to the activity sessions, which were designed to ensure the participant felt comfortable with the researcher and shared a physical activity experience. Engaging in a shared experience, in this case physical activity, allowed for both the researcher and the participant to become acquainted in a way that was a shared interest. Some activity sessions were only observed by the researcher, this was where the participant invited the researcher to a training session to watch. Although, they were different to a directly shared activity, they still provided an opportunity to view each wahine in an active environment, and to provide a different level of rapport building.

Kōrero – Interview structure

The interview was designed to be informal enough to help the participant feel at ease to share but structured enough to cover the necessary areas of interest. The structure included questions about the participant's (and whānau) history with physical activity; social support systems and social engagement; challenges faced and/or overcome; connection with cultural/ancestral practices, pūrākau, whakataukī etc; preferences for

certain environments – social, physical, natural; preference for certain types of activity; perceived personality traits – self- or third-person perceptions; engagement in other healthy or risky behaviours; identification or connection with atua [wahine] if known (see Appendix E).

The questions were informed by the initial literature review and hoped to discover a range of characteristics based on their responses. The structure of interviews did evolve after the first few interviews, allowing a more natural conversation and for the participants to freely tell their story. Later interviews were also informed by content derived from initial interviews. The researcher would then follow up with any additional questions as required in subsequent interviews.

Audio recordings of interviews were made with permission from participants. Some activity sessions were video/photo recorded if permitted by participants and if appropriate. Some wāhine were also video recorded introducing themselves and their connection to this kaupapa. These recordings were used to transcribe interviews (audio), and to provide opportunities to reflect on the experience during data analysis. Some photographic images were also used in later presentations to give face to the research and to acknowledge those who participated.

Poroporoaki – Closing

Each participant was thanked for their time and the worth of their contribution was acknowledged. They were reminded that, once transcribed, they would be given the opportunity to review their responses and edit if necessary. As part of closing the interaction, each wahine was gifted with a handmade framed korowai taonga. Each taonga was unique and signified the unique contribution that the recipient offered to this kaupapa and the consequent weaving together of each kōrero to create the important outcome.

3.7 Aro Atua – (Re)view

Initially, the review process was planned to occur first and would involve the identification of key atua wāhine themes interpreted as relevant to physical activity. However, due to the nature of the data collection process, and the stage of hapūtangā (pregnancy) for the researcher, it was decided that the interviews would precede the mātauranga review. Although, initially out of convenience, the decision resulted in the ability to allow the interview data to be unencumbered by any potential influence from

the (re)view, and for that interview data to eventually inform the (re)view process. It also meant that data was collected before any interruptions caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic and any associated restrictions to gatherings or travel.

The (re)view stage essentially allowed for the (re)interpreting, (re)framing, and (re)telling of narratives of the feminine aspect within mātauranga Māori (Lee, 2009), as it related to the research questions. The direction of the review was ultimately guided by the kōrero had with wāhine, the consequent development of huahuatau (metaphorical trait categories), and relevant literature. The process included a targeted review of published works, stories, and narratives of atua wāhine interpreted to relate to the huahuatau developed or themes that were produced from kōrero and analysis. This process prioritised literature and works by wāhine authors; however, literature covered includes male and non-Māori authors also.

Although it was the initial intent of this research to limit the review process in terms of relevance to physical activity or traits associated, there was always an acknowledgement that the multitude of other atua wāhine and their stories also hold unique and significant positions of power within Māori cosmology worthy of mention. It was also encouraging to see a range of other contemporary theses and publications where atua wāhine are being explored and celebrated for their significant and unique roles within te ao Māori, te taiao, and mātauranga Māori (Forster, 2019; Murphy, 2011, 2019; Sharman, 2019; Simmonds, 2009, 2014).

It was decided that the order of the thesis would flow more naturally if the (re)view was actually presented as a type of discussion section, which stood on its own. In this thesis, I decided that to make sense of the findings or huahuatau aligned with translating it into a Māori way of knowing, being, and doing (Barlow, 1991; Jones et al., 2006; McLachlan et al., 2017). Therefore, this (re)view and (re)telling of atua wāhine stories as they relate to this research is presented in the *Aro Atua* chapter. *Aro Atua* is meant to convey a sense of giving attention to or focussing on atua, atua wāhine in this context (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021). *Aro Atua* is preceded by a chapter that discusses the findings in relation to both western and Māori worldviews and provides a more conventional discussion process but is presented as a *Whakamāori* chapter. *Whakamāori* means to translate something into Māori, but in that essence, it means to interpret something, or make sense of it (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021). This is the process that is undertaken in Chapter 9 – *Whakamāori*. In *Aro Atua*, several atua

wāhine emerge as being connected to the huahuatau, via the interpretations of their pūrākau, through a Mana Wahine lens. Their stories help to make sense of the findings of this research, by illustrating a whakapapa connection. The huahuatau are then woven into this review in order to create a final picture.

3.8 Akoako

Ako means to teach or to learn. The emphasis of repetition means that the process of akoako is a two-way consultation or transmission of knowledge (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021). As an important part of this research process – *akoako* – meant that I was able to utilise the many learning opportunities available through formal and informal means. Akoako, in this context, describes the process of having conversations and consultation with cultural advisors, experts, academics, colleagues, and other groups in or around this proposed research field. There was a priority placed on consultation, conversation, and learning from wāhine contributors, without ignoring the important contributions from tāne and others. This part of the process was an essential aspect that demonstrates an appreciation of the oral traditions of Māori, and the importance of collaborating, consulting, and having appropriate contributors involved in the research process (Mead, 2016; Smith et al., 2016). These conversations ranged from formal workshops, lectures, to informal talks, and online discussions.

3.9 Whakaāria – Data analysis

The process of data analysis was derived from reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) (Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2020) with a Māori lens based on an adaptation of hierarchical learning presented by Atua Matua Māori health framework (Heke, 2014). RTA is an analytic approach used to identify “patterns of meaning across a qualitative dataset” and one that offers a set of tools to aid in making sense of data (Braun et al., 2016, p. 1).

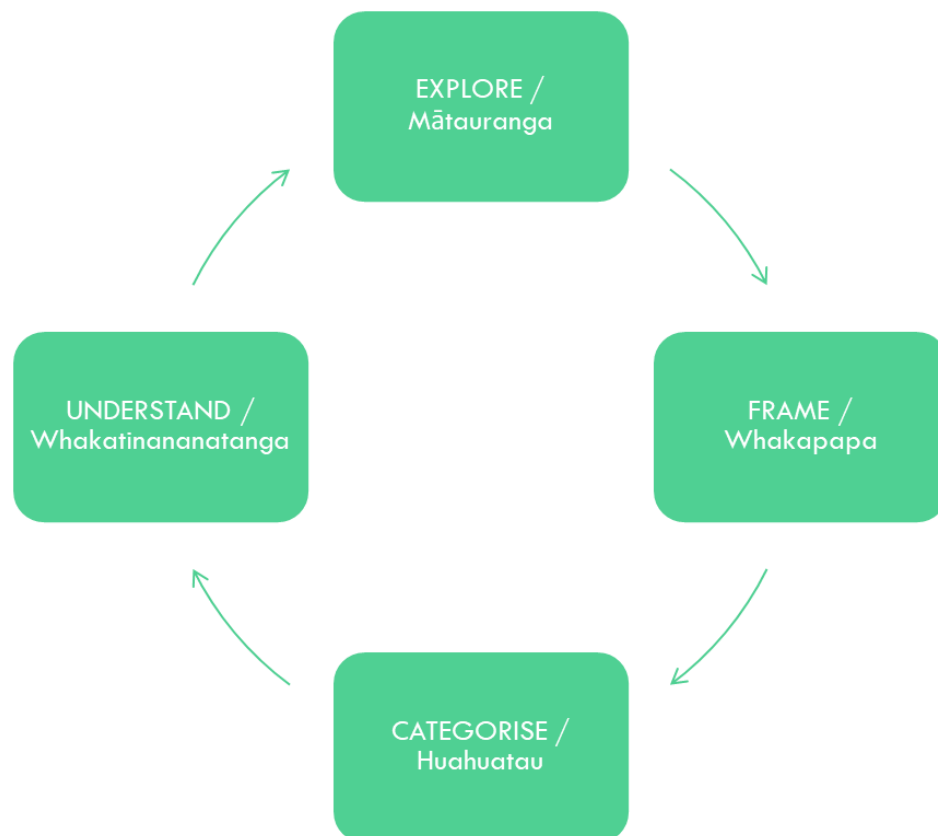
The nature of this type of thematic analysis allowed the flexibility to align with concepts of whakapapa and be pliable to a Māori worldview (Braun & Clarke, 2019). With that in mind, the conceptual tools of reflexive thematic analysis were employed just as tools, while the wider concepts of mātauranga, whakapapa, huahuatau, and whakatinanatanga informed and underpinned their use. Concepts of RTA were utilised, but their use was adapted to resonate more with a Māori way of viewing the world (and data). The processes of identifying patterns still involved rigorous data familiarisation, coding, theme development, and revision, but they were also aligned with the concepts

mentioned above. The diagram below illustrates the process, and a discussion of each step that follows.

I termed this process Whakaāria. The term was developed from a range of meanings and derives from *Tātari a-āria*, thematic analysis. But most importantly, it is a tribute and acknowledgement to my daughter – Āria – who I was pregnant with while collecting the data, first analysing the data, and initially coming up with concepts from the data. She grew and developed inside of me and then was born into the world, where she now proudly takes up her own self-determining space. Whakaāria translates loosely as: to make a likeness, concept, or theme. This process reflects each of these whakapapa. The process was about finding meaning and thematic concepts from the data. But it also is a reflection of me, as the researcher and my contribution to it.

Figure 24

Whakaāria – Adapted Reflexive Thematic Analysis process



Mātauranga – Exploration/Familiarisation

The familiarisation of data was concerned with both gathering necessary mātauranga from the data but was also informed by mātauranga, traditional Māori knowledge and emerging contemporary ideas. Familiarisation with the interview data included reading transcripts and excerpts from the reflective journal, listening back to interview recordings, and watching or (re)viewing visual recordings. This process allowed the reconciliation and reconceptualization of the experiences to the subsequent data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun et al., 2016). Because the interview process included an active element, either as a separate event or incorporated into the interview session, it was important to reflect on the experience as a part of the interview data analysis. The process of exploration and data familiarisation aligns with mātauranga in the way in which knowledge or information is viewed, understood, and made sense of.

Mātauranga can encompass both the knowledge or data, and the process of coming to know that data (Mead, 2016; Mercier, 2018). In this case, mātauranga is gained through familiarisation, through (re)reading, (re)watching/listening, and becoming immersed in the (re)experiencing the moments when they were shared, as well as how they were received.

Whakapapa – Framing/Coding

Following on from, and as a part of, the familiarisation phase, coding began. This phase connects with the wider concept of whakapapa. Where whakapapa is the framework within which mātauranga exists, the extracting and generating of codes is where the skeleton or foundation of wider themes began to form (Braun et al., 2016; Roberts, 2012). The initial plan was to employ a software programme to assist in the analysis of the data where all transcripts had been uploaded to. However, out of personal preference, I decided to manually identify and extract codes from the data. The manual nature and use of margin notation, post-it notes, colour coding, and mind mapping also reinforced the familiarisation with the data. This was because there was continuous shifting, changing, and rearranging of codes and potential quotes from transcripts to notes, to categories, to mind maps and so on. The process was time-consuming and repetitive but being physically engaged with the data allowed for more in depth understanding and insight.

The first phase of coding involved re-reading each transcript and making notes in the margins when potentially relevant codes appeared. Once all transcripts had margin

notes and had been read through a number of times, codes were transferred to post it notes. These notes had a reference to the participant, the page number where the code appeared, and a link to a corresponding quote (if necessary).

Post it notes were then grouped together with those with similarities to create the beginnings of a code book (see Figure 25). These grouped codes were also used to create mind maps where wider themes began to develop. Initial groupings and mind mapping developed six wider draft theme ideas (see Figure 26), which eventually became five after merging two similar groups. The mind mapping process allowed a number of (re)interpretations of developing themes and their wider meanings.

At this point, the quotes identified earlier were highlighted in the qualitative data analysis software, NVivo 12 (QSR International Ltd, 2020), where transcripts had originally been uploaded. Although not required for the identifying of codes, NVivo was used to store and access quotes more easily. This would aid in the recovery and use of quotes in the future write up phase.

Figure 25

Coding – post-it notes



Huahuatau – Categorising and Generating themes

As my relationship with the data continued to progress, the categorising of codes and generation of potential themes began to evolve. As noted in my research design and aims, the data would be analysed inductively, led by the data, and deductively, with the use of whakapapa and mātauranga as a frame for uncovering connections. Throughout the analysis there was a continuous acknowledgement that the initial literature review, earlier research project, and Māori lens through which the data was being viewed would influence the way in which this data would be examined, and the subsequent themes to be generated. With this in mind, the evolution of the theme development needed to occur gradually and in several stages.

The results of initial analysis and generation of themes mirrored many of the initial findings of the smaller research project that inspired this one, undertaken as a summer project for Toi Tangata in 2017. The wording also began to share similarities with some of the literature that I had reviewed as a preliminary to this work. The desire to develop and cultivate a piece of genuine Māori research that was more than a mere translation of terms that are already extensively reported in the literature, meant that I needed to continue to engage in developing the findings further.

With reference to the adapted analysis framework, the categorising of themes aligns with the Māori term huahuatau – metaphors. This assisted in the further generation of themes by allowing them to develop into a metaphor rather than remaining a mere descriptive categorising term. This broadened the scope to allow the findings to fit within a Māori worldview more appropriately and to work towards developing a more thorough and genuine narrative.

This process incorporated the generating, reviewing and initial naming of themes. As the metaphors or themes continued to develop, their relevance to the original research question(s) and the overall data set was reinforced. The process of defining each theme came through the exploration of each metaphor, the associated narrative, and ultimately how they connected to the data and the overall connection to te taiao and the expansive personas of atua wāhine.

Early versions of huahuatau were outlined in a number of handwritten mind maps as well as digital (more legible) copies.

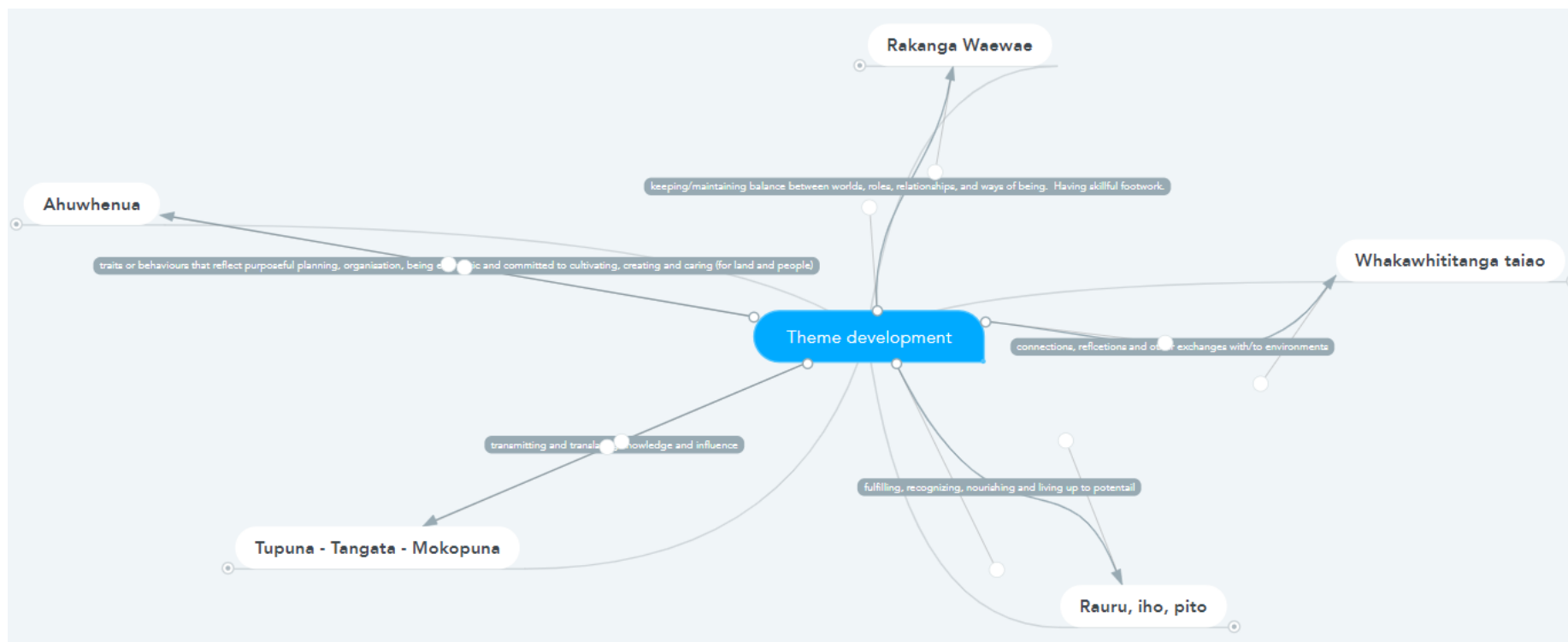
Figure 26*Mind mapping huahuatau / categories*

Figure 26 is an early interpretation of huahuatau – which was eventually sent, with individual summaries to advisors and a group of wāhine who participated in the research to comment on.

This consultation process influenced and contributed to the development and eventual confirmation of final themes. As described previously, this akoako process allowed the initial findings to be discussed with advisers and contributors to discuss the articulation of themes. Although not discussed in a group setting (initially due to the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic and associated restrictions), virtual Zoom hui (zui) and other online platforms were used to discuss how these findings would be defined, described, and eventually presented. The most significant contributions came from Hera Kinred, an mātauranga expert, advisor, and friend who was given an initial summary of the findings, proposed theme names, and then contributed her own ideas. These contributions were considered, as they related to the research and findings, and then I made final decisions after further reading and researching further around huahuatau meanings.

Although the particular names of huahuatau categories took longer to decide, their wider meanings and their relationship with the data were clear. This meant that I could begin the next stage and allow finalising of huahuatau to continue as I wrote.

Whakatinanatanga – Understanding/Writing up

The final phase, whakatinanatanga, involved the weaving and contextualising of data to existing findings and literature. Whakatinanatanga means to put into action, manifest or implement. In this context, this process involves writing up the findings and bringing them back together as a whole after several stages of breaking them down (coding). Pūrākau interpreted through a Mana Wahine lens and connected to the findings were part of this final process. This is present in Chapter 10, where huahuatau are woven into these pūrākau, along with relevant mātauranga and other knowledge sources in Chapter 9.

Whakatinanatanga also represents the concluding chapter of this thesis. This is where the research journey culminates, and its key messages are embodied. Whakatinanatanga is a term that refers to realisation, embodiment, and implementation. It is the physical expression or interpretation of the mātauranga, whakapapa, and huahuatau, and it represents action and the medium through which potential is realised (Heke, 2019). The

whakatinanatanga chapter brings this research to a close by gathering all that it developed with the intention of representing a way forward – summarising the journey of the research and proposing potential avenues for continued applications. This whole thesis also represents whakatinanatanga – it is the implementation and manifestation of the mātauranga, whakapapa, and huahuatau.

3.10 Justification

The design of this research had the aim to provide an empowering space to communicate with wāhine and then be able to communicate their stories in a way that resonates with what it means to be Māori, wahine, and physically active in these challenging contemporary times. The process naturally incorporated the values of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and rangatiratanga. From the recruitment stage to the final stages of writing, these values were embedded in the process, whether deliberate, incidental, or even unconsciously. Each wahine was connected to contributing to this research via degrees of whanaungatanga. Those who had direct connections with me then shared the kaupapa with others who were two or three degrees separated but always connected in some way.

Whakawhanaungatanga as a research strategy has been implemented by many Māori researchers but was outlined by Bishop and Glynn (1999) as a process that embodies three interconnected elements. These elements involve the fundamental nature of establishing and maintaining relationships, their influence in addressing power and control, and the researcher's acknowledged "somatic" involvement in the research process. Each of these elements is addressed to varying extents with the inclusion of the korikori kōrero aspect of the research design but also amongst other aspects of the research design, such as recruitment. Of particular significance is the so-called somatic involvement of the researcher. My acknowledged position as a wahine Māori who shared space with these wāhine through my physically active lifestyle and my desire to elevate their voices was part of this "somatic" aspect. Bishop and Glynn (1999) describe this as the researcher's physical, ethical, moral, and spiritual involvement in the research and can be further expressed in the language, use of metaphor, used in the recollection, analysis, and dissemination of the experience. It is also inherent in the application of the Mana Wahine lens over the entirety of the research.

Part of the process of recollecting and disseminating the experiences and stories of these wāhine was utilising an appropriate analysis framework. Just as my view of the world

sits at intersecting spaces (already outlined previously), so too does the analysis framework and the subsequent findings. The decision to utilise a sort of interfacing approach to data analysis was born out of engaging with the Atua Matua Māori health framework. Within this framework is the use of a hierarchy to aid in the understanding of certain concepts within mātauranga Māori. Mātauranga – Whakapapa – Huahuatau – Whakatinanatanga (Heke, 2014). These four elements provided a foundation for my own growing comprehension of mātauranga within the context of physical activity and have been integral to the basis of understanding mātauranga Māori for generations (Marsden & Henare, 1992; Mead, 2016), so it reasoned that they could be applied to an adapted data analysis method for this research also. These concepts were also considerably relevant to interface with the tools provided by reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Although this articulation of the data analysis process is unique, RTA is widely used in psychology, sport and exercise, and other research areas. RTA is deliberate about meaning making, and viewing that meaning as contextually bound, positioned, and situated. It recognises that qualitative data analysis is about telling the stories of data and that themes are interpreted and created by the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Braun et al., 2016). These characteristics meld well with aspects of a Māori worldview, including concepts of pūrākau and whakapapa, whereby structures of knowledge are explicated in contextual stories and personal connection (Lee, 2009; Roberts, 2012). (Re)purposing elements of Atua Matua and aligning them with the principles of RTA provides an analysis framework and tools, whose validity can be demonstrated in both Māori and western terms.

Whakapapa and the mātauranga that it carries, has been successfully stored, adapted, and transmitted throughout the history of its use. Ihirangi Heke describes the concepts of mātauranga, whakapapa, huahuatau, and whakatinanatanga within Atua Matua as the structure from which to engage in physical activity, and with atua. From this perspective, the focus is on mātauranga being the key to uncovering knowledge from the environment (Heke, 2019). Mātauranga in this sense, extends beyond a description of knowledge and incorporates the act of creating, understanding, and applying that knowledge. This describes the first step of analysis where “data” is explored and (re)familiarised via multiple interactions. Heke goes on to describe the relevance of whakapapa, as the next stage that provides a “methodology for interpreting connection” (Heke, 2019, p. 4). Whakapapa is an effective tool for understanding the connections

between phenomena and involves lateral, lineal, and dynamic interrelationships (Marsden & Royal, 2003; Royal, 1998). The process of coding and creating a framework for data, as proposed by RTA, allows for that data and the potential mātauranga it holds, to be constructed into a flexible scaffold for future themes. The flexible and organic approach to coding allowed a natural evolution of code development and the eventual creation of metaphorical categories. These metaphors (huahuatau) are represented as central organising concepts, consisting of patterns of shared meaning elicited from that coding evolution (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

The reason for developing metaphors instead of themes or particular trait definitions is a way of broadening meaning rather than reducing it, connecting the findings with a Māori world view. By broadening the interpretation of meaning, it requires a degree of critical thinking, imagination, and even the potential to co-construct meaning that can vary depending on the way you see the world. Metaphors provide a broad set of organising principles while also having the added potential to help shape the content into powerful reflective representations and expressions of wāhine contributions (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Marsden & Royal, 2003). The use of metaphors in the research process, Māori and Indigenous especially, has been applied in a range of ways. Whether providing a metaphorical foundation to the research design based on traditional Māori weaving practice or whatu taonga (Rameka, 2015), or likening an intersecting research approach to that of a braided river – he awa whiria (Martel et al., 2021), metaphors provide extensive opportunities to incorporate Māori worldview (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). For Rameka (2015), the use of metaphors provided a sense of coherency in the context of contrasting areas and ways of understanding. Similarly in this research, the use of metaphors allowed space for the potential for meaning making to be dynamic while also demonstrating a more Māori way of explaining the world.

3.11 Conclusion

This section has provided insight into the tikanga of this research. In this research, tikanga refers to its ways of doing, as informed by certain ways of knowing outlined in the previous chapter. By utilising aspects of both traditional and temporary 'tikanga', this section demonstrates how the interface of methodologies and philosophies can be translated into methods at the interface also. With a recruitment process that used contemporary social media platforms that spread like a kūmara vine, reaching out to spread the word of the kaupapa demonstrated the reach and whakawhanaungatanga of contemporary wāhine. Employing an active korikori kōrero approach to interviewing

where wāhine shared freely while moving freely. Data analysis gathered tools from whakapapa, Mana Wahine, physical activity and those in between. The tikanga of this research demonstrates flexibility, durability, and an ability to be mended if required. Te kūpenga o te kaupapa feeding into te kūpenga o te tikanga.

PART TWO – Ngā Hua(huatau)

The following chapters will present the findings or the fruits of this research – Ngā Hua. Each chapter represents a broad metaphorical category which was developed out of the previously outlined data analysis process. These metaphorical categories or *Huahuatau* were developed to provide a view of wāhine attributes in a creative and dynamic way. These huahuatau are broad categories made up of a number of sub-categories, sub-traits, or *āhuatanga*. They offer a description of wāhine ways of being and doing that allows and requires a degree of creative thinking, critical reflection, and the potential for a co-constructed meaning – depending on worldview. The huahuatau provide the broad structure while the āhuatanga add a degree of detail to understanding the ways of being and doing portrayed by wāhine in this research.

The first huahuatau to be explored represents the largest and possibly most significant category developed out of this research. *Ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au* explores the way wāhine described “environmental transactions”. These transactions refer to the connections to, reflections of, and the range of exchanges that wāhine experienced with different environments (both natural and otherwise). Considering that *te taiao* represents a physical, metaphorical, and metaphysical space where wāhine can share, reflect, and connect to *atua*, this chapter will introduce the way wāhine saw themselves in natural environments (and vice versa), and then how wāhine interacted in certain environments.

The following chapter, *Ahuwhenua*, describes a set of traits or behaviours reflective of purposeful planning, being creative and resourceful, and displaying a commitment to the cultivation and care of people, land, and self. In essence this huahuatau brings together a range of qualities that connect wāhine to *whenua* and back again. The āhuatanga that contribute to this category relate to cultivation, creating, and *kai*. In this context, *kai* refers to any successful outcome, and how wāhine accomplish these successful outcomes are represented as traits of *Ahuwhenua*. This chapter explores how wāhine demonstrate the ability to be resourceful, even when they are not necessarily full of resources.

The third huahuatau chapter explores *Ngā taonga tuku iho*. It represents the nature of heritage with particular emphasis on the transmission of knowledge and those people who were influential in the successes of wāhine. This chapter explores the diverse ways

that knowledge/mātauranga or influence can be interpreted, translated, and ultimately transmitted. The āhuatanga that contribute to *Ngā taonga tuku iho* acknowledge the process by which knowledge is shared and expressed – both within the learning/teaching relationship and in the physical/genetic or whakapapa transmission.

Rakanga Waewae and the āhuatanga that contribute to its wider interpretation are about the ability that wāhine display in balancing the many facets of themselves. The term *Rakanga Waewae*, offers a description that encompasses the physical nature and skill required to keep balance and display particularly skilful “footwork” upon changing and challenging terrain. Whether balancing roles and responsibilities, mood, or the physical demands of an active lifestyle, wāhine were able to navigate these challenges, stand in multiple worlds, and balance the needs of self and others – with varying degrees of effort.

The final huahuatau chapter was one that required a process of change, growth, and eventual fruition. *Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai* explores the way wāhine described their commitment to realising their potential. Wāhine acknowledged that in order to realise potential or have their seed bloom into a beautiful putiputi (flower), it required deliberate and purposeful nurturing. Within this huahuatau and the āhuatanga that it encompasses is an exploration of the latency with the metaphorical seed, as well as the blossom that is displayed at fruition. Wāhine were dedicated to nurturing that potential but also were able to articulate an appreciation for the product of that realisation – whatever it may be.

Each of the following five chapters will present an exploration of huahuatau that represent wāhine ways of being and doing. Each traces its whakapapa to the kōrero and korikori kōrero shared in 2019, when the interviews took place. Their kōrero and their korikori all contributed to the data that was eventually analysed to develop these metaphorical categories. Following on from individual huahuatau chapters will be a discussion of their relevance to what is already known in the area and then a connection to atua wāhine and the traits they also exhibit.

Chapter 4 Ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au – Environmental transactions

Taiao: (noun) world, Earth, natural world, environment, nature.

Au: (pronoun) I, me

Ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au: I am the environment, the environment is me.

This huahuatau refers to the connections to, reflections of, and other exchanges with different environments.

This is the most prominent and substantial category that contains some of the most important contributions from wāhine, especially in relation to their connections to te taiao. As a broad metaphorical category, *Ko au te taiao* describes the wider reference to exhibiting characteristics of certain environments or feeling deep connections with them. It discusses the way wāhine manage life stresses, how they feel the need to speak out or disrupt certain expected ways of being and illustrates how different [social] environments can influence behaviours. The metaphor of our exchange and connection with te taiao covers a wide scope, from the physical, spiritual, social to metaphysical domains. This category provides an opportunity to use what wāhine said about their relationships with certain environments to trace or envisage a ‘whakapapa’ to ngā atua and more specifically, atua wāhine.

The way wāhine spoke about their exchanges with their physical, social, and other environments were grouped into four key areas or metaphoric traits - āhuatanga. The whakapapa of each trait will be defined and outlined with discussion around wāhine contributions to each. The first metaphoric trait is coined *Pikitia ngā maunga*, a concept adopted from the mahi of Margaret Hinepo Williams’ doctoral thesis and describes the way wāhine spoke about overcoming obstacles and gaining perspective from challenges (Williams, 2014). The second āhuatanga, *Whakaataata te taiao*, offers an image of reflection. In this case, the way wāhine described their connections, reflections, and different exchanges with their environments. This includes not only their ‘taiao transactions’ but also the way their personality or physical traits reflect certain environments or are influenced by them. The third āhuatanga relates to the

numerous references to the whakataukī: *kāore te kūmara e korero mō tōna ake reka* – the kūmara does not speak of its own sweetness. The reference to this whakataukī symbolizes the respectful dissonance felt in the way it is widely interpreted to discourage the ‘ringing of one’s own bell’, so to speak. Broadly speaking, this trait describes the way wāhine found themselves disrupting narrow definitions of wahine, breaking the mould, and being advocates for adapting tikanga for changing times. The picture of a sweet singing kūmara mascots this trait. Finally, *Kitea to hapori*, describes social environments and the behaviours they foster. The act of finding one’s community, active communities in this case, was a catalyst for positive behavioural change for many wāhine participants. Besides the influence of whānau, hapu, and iwi, active/healthy communities were often credited with providing stable, supportive, and strong ongoing relationships.

4.1 Pikitia ngā maunga

“Climbing mountains”

- *Ways of overcoming obstacles.*
- *Lessons from te taiao and physical activity.*
- *Adapting to challenges.*
- *Gaining perspective.*

This āhuatanga illustrates the many ways wāhine described overcoming challenges in life, whether every day or significant events. The name of this āhuatanga was adopted from the findings of Te Rongoā Kākāriki: Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi, e pai ana? In her thesis, Margaret Hinepo Williams describes one of her five key themes from participant interviews as *Pikitia ngā maunga*: overcoming barriers (Williams, 2014). In my interviews, wāhine described the way they overcame obstacles, challenges, or adversity in a range of ways, but physical activity was a major contributor among them. Many described physical activity as an outlet for stress, or a way of gaining clarity in order to deal with difficult or challenging events. Alyx described not knowing life without physical activity:

... I mean you're learning life skills as well. And then it becomes, as I got older, sort of like a mental health outlet you know stress and management and all of that kind of stuff... Just because that's all I knew. And then it's turned into this whole little support network.

The protective and supportive qualities of physical activity in relation to coping with challenges were mentioned by wāhine in a few creative ways. Gaining clarity through physical activity was evidently a successful coping mechanism. Christina points out the simplicity of taking the opportunity to clear her head in troubling times: “if I get in a tizzy and I have negative shit go round, round, round, I go for a walk to clear my head and just get all that shit out. It's ridiculously easy.” Angelina agreed that decluttering her mind to solve problems could be as simple as clearing the dishes from her bench or going for a run.

Then once I can see like a clear path physically, I'm like right, okay - but that's where the actual running was quite good for me, because I used to like - man, I'd be out there for hours, and I'd solve so many problems. I'd solved all the world's problems by the time I'd come back.

She also describes the protective quality of physical activity and the value it holds for her:

I'm always kind of looking for the hit, I call it the next big hit, but I just find... it gives me a superpower too and having a bit more confidence and having a lot more knowledge as well, how to deal with situations.

Apikera also describes her experience with Powerlifting and the translation to everyday life benefits:

it's helped me not just in my strength and not just on the platform, but in a lot of things in my life. Yeah, 'cause the more I work towards being better, I guess the better I am or want to work towards being better in all the aspects of my life.

The benefit of having and prioritising physical activity was clearly an essential quality in these wāhine experiences, perspectives, and potential overcoming of challenges. Regardless of the extent of the problem faced, whether everyday challenges or significant life events, there often seemed to be a clear carry-over benefit brought by wāhine being physically active and having the supplementary skills associated with their chosen sport or activity.

Alongside the role of physical activity, there was a tendency for participants to describe themselves (directly or indirectly) as being quite systematic, pragmatic, and practical in the ways they overcome and adapt to challenges. Although often described in varying

ways, a common impression of how wāhine approached problem solving began to develop. Identifying what triggered a stressful or emotional response and then breaking it down to understand a way forward was a technique employed frequently. Emerald explains:

My typical approach is to share the burden or share the load with others that I trust and talk to them about what I perceive as stressful you know some of the injustices happening. Most of the time that is the thing that's stressing me out. It is just connecting with others. Because in the past that's not something I did. So, it took a long time to learn how... Also, for me picking it apart and if I have a very strong emotional response to something that's stressing me out, I have to think about where's that coming from. Why am I so triggered by it, or so upset by it?

Probably just thrashing it out. Whether it's writing down stuff. I like to sleep on things, if I have to make decisions, I'll be like, park it up and sleep on it. That might take a week, it might take a month, of sleeping on it. I pick things apart. But I'll do that through writing down, ok what is this problem, what are some solutions, just nutting through it that way. I've done project management, so it gives you a really good formula on how to pick things apart.

Sherilee describes her approach:

I'd analyse it to the n^{th} degree. Find a way through it, around it. I'm not going to let anything stop me. Although, recently I'm trying to be quite calm in my approach, as opposed to aggressive in my approach. I think as you get older, you might learn to remove the stresses a little bit differently or channel energy.

In each of these examples, the wāhine described how they implement previous learnings to aid in tackling current situations. Each also illustrates a degree of determination in conquering the problem, albeit in different ways.

Alison described another successful and creative tactic of putting on a “Pākehā voice” when communicating with council about dance class venue hire issues. I witnessed her successful navigation of a challenging situation when I attended her U-Jam dance fitness class and there appeared to be a clash in venue bookings. She calmly communicated with a security guard and the other group while her class was still underway and managed to avoid any escalation or further issue. Maybe a seemingly simple interaction, but she approached it and handled it with ease and composure.

I'm quite good with stress like if something doesn't go my way, I do have a little bit of... but then I just try and work out like okay, what can I do instead of just sitting here being this tangiweto, find a solution, an alternative but that's just how I think.

While the *maunga* in Alison's example may have been relatively small, others described much more significant challenges in life, and having successful strategies and resilience to conquer them. Holly, a dancer, described an ongoing challenge in her life as being born with Talipes Equinovarus (club foot) and having multiple corrective surgeries throughout her childhood and over her lifetime. Despite the challenges that come with such a condition, Holly continues to display a strength and resilience that allows her a pragmatic perspective that many of us would not imagine.

I mean it's funny because I walk with a limp. I have funny sounding footsteps if that makes sense, but I guess it's just because it's something that I've had since I was born that it's just a challenge that I've had forever and yeah, it's not strange to me... being quite dramatic and arty like I was, this is my whole life is in ruins. But no, it's - I don't know, I feel like it definitely made me stronger and having to adapt to things and putting things out of my brain and dealing with one thing at a time as well.

Ironically, the physical activity that Holly and I shared was a hikoi down and then back up the hills that house the Brooklyn Wind Turbine in Wellington. Our walk began as evening set in so part of what guided me through our walk in the dark was Holly's so-called "funny sounding footsteps". Holly's resilient nature and her pragmatic approach to overcoming adversity to remain physically active is reinforced by another wahine describing her response to an imagined threat to her active lifestyle. Alyx counted herself lucky in that she had not experienced any major injuries or interruptions to her lifelong love of being physical. She continued on from not ever imagining life without activity with a similarly pragmatic attitude:

it's just it's my way of being, always has been. And I hope that always will be. I've never had a plan B or if I can no longer do it. And I guess we're lucky because there's lots of different levels and Paralympians and you know para sports that you could do it for some reason you became physically unable.

For her, there was no concept of not ever being physically active, even in the case of potential injury or disability. There seemed to always be an option of overcoming that barrier and adapting to what life throws at you. Several other wāhine shared the mind-set that prioritised physical activity even after injury interrupted their paths. Teresa

shared a story about being introduced to CrossFit while rehabilitating a broken foot, an injury from playing rugby league. She explained that she soon found it a personal challenge to complete as much of the WOD (workout of the day) as possible despite her injury. She would find alternatives to exercises that she couldn't do with a broken foot but most of the time she would just find a way of getting it done.

[S]o every day I went there at twelve thirty, for four months and it cut back my recovery within a bloody year. You know I was doing one legged skipping and one-legged handstand push ups and pull ups and I just got so infatuated with it that anything that they put in front of me I was gonna do. And I did it and my leg got better, and it wasn't even about my leg anymore, you know about just achieving the next thing I couldn't do.

Although I had just met Teresa, I was not at all surprised by her story. After witnessing her dogged determination to complete a gruelling morning workout, where she was the only person to complete the entire WOD (workout of the day) despite the time expiring, everyone else laying down recovering, and she was among the eldest of only a few women amongst a group of men in their twenties. It was clear that this wahine was not one to let a little adversity get in the way of her challenging herself to be better. Similarly, Sherilee, another former rugby league player who came away from the game with a chronic ankle injury, described the importance of still being active despite the injury. She knew her love for the game would make it difficult to remain around the league community so, as she puts it:

I pulled myself right out. I told myself that I would stop playing league and I'd go dance instead. Because I hated it, I knew that I couldn't not have any activity. That wasn't imaginable for me, so I thought, I'll go to dance.

She knew that what she needed to overcome her *maunga* was to do something else completely. She had a strategy to get through the challenge and she committed to it.

I couldn't even go and watch because I would get itchy feet. I would get anxious, and I'd be wanting to get out here. And I would feel sad. And a little bit angry. And every Sunday when game time would roll around, I would make sure I was as far away from Women's Rugby League as I could get.

Sherilee's account describes a common thread amongst other wāhine, about having developed a perspective or knowledge of oneself – so called weaknesses and strengths – that helped to construct successful coping strategies when facing adversity or stress. It

seems that the process of understanding oneself, weaknesses, and strengths is emboldened by the attributes and virtues of sport or physical activity. The transferrable skills of sport are described in an example by Vania, again another former league player:

there's a lot of talking...you communicate...communication is big. You've got to connect with your whānau, with your sport colleagues, and that connection is forever. Connecting, communicating. What's the next move if you don't communicate well, you're going to drop the ball and look like idiots...

The analogy may not have been intentional, but it offers a simple illustration of the way team sport, in this case, provides a set of skills that benefit not only the player and the team but beyond the game and to the lifelong wider whānau connection and advancement. The team sport analogy extends beyond communication and allows a simple illustration of working towards the shared goals and using one's skills to benefit that goal. It is all well and good for wāhine to use sport and physical activity to learn about themselves and advance their own coping mechanisms, but within this team sport analogy, even individual pursuits and coaching, the wider benefit to team, whānau, community survival and prosperity appears paramount at times.

Although the importance of collective success was widely noted, wāhine also described individual experiences that aligned personally with *Pikitia ngā maunga*. Whether cultivated or innate, wāhine would talk about the importance of conquering maunga both literal and metaphorical in nature. When talking about her Powerlifting again, Apikera describes *herself* as the metaphorical maunga:

...it's like conquering myself you know? I'm trying to conquer myself and when I forget to do that, that's when I'm just defeating myself. It's like I might as well not be here, 'cause I'm just like letting my surroundings win and that's when I know, ooh, I've just stuffed it up, stuffed myself over.

The metaphorical maunga could also encompass the challenge of not being inactive, rather than merely *being* active. Being seen as lazy or inactive was often a label that was unacceptable and was to be avoided. Often times other people would present a challenge or present as the challenge themselves, both in encouraging or discouraging ways, as Carnation explains:

you always met with activity with all the challenges of being inactive. So, it's not about the doing something, it's about the doing more. I

always knew inside my puku that I had a capability. And I had a lot of people try and knock that out of me through the years.

I didn't find success through being successful, I found it through my failures I really did.

Quite often wāhine acknowledged that overcoming or learning from failures was one of the most powerful tools they had when dealing with future challenges. The process of adapting one's way of being and doing or coping after a challenging event was evident. In terms of wāhine relationships with physical activity there were a range of ways adaptation was facilitated. Sometimes the process was slow, gradual, and supported by others. On other occasions a decision was made in an instant and in isolation. Mana, a Qi Gong practitioner, and Spin instructor, describes a time where she just decided to live, and to live to her fullest potential. With another example of pragmatism and practicality in problem solving, Mana likely fits into both the gradual and instant categories.

... I deliberately set out the exercise because I've found well nearly 20 years ago that at about five thirty at night all I wanted to do was eat. Okay to get me away from the table, I've got to move.

The image of maunga was not always metaphorical though, with literal mountains and hills offering wāhine a physical and mental challenge that resulted in an often, lifelong transformation. The challenge of conquering the climb was evident with wāhine who had reached a turning point, often related to physical inactivity, motherhood, and/or weight gain. Emerald, no Whakatōhea ia, described her decision to make an immediate change to her lifestyle with one simple, daily goal to conquer an urban maunga.

I'd gained quite a lot of weight and I was like very stressed and quite mentally unhealthy. Yeah, just like partying. Sort of that student lifestyle. And I was like, I don't want to be like this. So, it just started real simple. I had to walk up a hill to get to uni cos I lived in town at that time. And every time I walked up it, I was so puffed after, I was so red, I was like this is embarrassing. This is not good. So, I decided, this whole time I'd maintained a gym membership. I was just not connecting with it and not getting anything useful out of it. So, I decided to start sprinting up Parnell Rise. So, I just did that, I just did that for ages and decided that that was the start. Yeah. So, I can be a bit over, like go to the extreme stubborn sort of person so Whakatōhea means "to be stubborn".

The openness of wāhine to *Pikitia ngā maunga* and gain a sense of perspective on a given situation/challenge, included taking small steps, seeing the bigger picture, and

being able to take important lessons from those situations. Sometimes the *maunga* were ones that participants chose to climb and sometimes they were obstacles that life put in their path. Either way, a common thread among participants was that these maunga, real or metaphorical, would be an important lesson, perspective, or opportunity to progress, improve or understand their ever-adapting place within te taiao. Crystal sums it up when talking about teaching and learning from her children.

*And so, when we talk about the interpretation of the whakataukī - whaia te iti Kahurangi ... ki te tuohu koe, me he maunga teitei... It's coming into these spaces to kind of really humble you... **You know, you can never really conquer a mountain without it fucking you up eh...without it fucking your head up, fucking you up physically, but** it's how do you overcome that and it's about humility. So, when you talk about seek for your highest aspirations and if you shall tumble, you know, bow, let it be to a lofty mountain and what it is, it's okay to be humble. It's okay to feel defeated sometimes. It's okay to fail. But you must continue to get up and rise again and so that's something that we talk to our children a lot.*

4.2 Whakaataata te taiao

“Reflecting and being reflected”

- *Reflecting and [dis]connecting with certain environments.*
- *Understanding self and personality traits.*

Whakaataata describes reflecting, shadowing or mirroring. It can also describe to act, simulate, or to exhibit something (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021). In this sense, the environments that we connect to, either through whakapapa or through physical activity, often reflect what we need from them or indeed something about us. The environment can mirror us, or parts of us or we can mirror the environment. Participants spoke about different types of reflections. Some saw themselves directly in the environments around them, saying that their characteristics are the same as those environments. Others connected with how different environments made them feel; feeling calmed, or invigorated, or refreshed in different spaces. Others didn't directly mention seeing themselves or personality traits in particular environments but described themselves and their actions in ways that I came to interpret as reflections of particular environments.

Some of the more direct reflections described by wāhine were related to wai (bodies of water) and maunga (mountains). When asked specifically about their connections to

environments, the majority of wāhine who favoured wai, did so vehemently. Those who spoke of their love of the water, whether it was the moana (ocean), awa (rivers), or otherwise, had clear and pronounced justifications for their connection. A healthy fear or respect was a recurring discussion, especially around the oceanic domain. Sherilee describes her perspective.

I like the way that when I hit the water everything else just disappears. I like the fact that it's not my world. I feel like a guest in it. Its Tangaroa's, it's not mine. It doesn't belong to me and every time I go near the water or go with the kids, we always have a little bit of a ritual that we do, that's what my dad taught me. So, I teach them. I always say to them, remember this is not your world, you're just a visitor, you're just a guest here and you have to be very aware that this is where his children are, and this is where food is.

Sherilee's account illustrates a perspective of respect through appreciation and preparation, not uncommon with accounts from other wāhine. A ritual that has been shared through no less than three generations, ensures she is prepared mentally as well as physically, to enter a domain outside of her own. In this case, Sherilee maintains a healthy fear and respect as the basis for future encounters with Tangaroa. Knowing the dangers and experiencing them first-hand allows yet another opportunity to learn from her environment, and her relationship to it.

The moana, despite its challenges and dangers gave rise to wāhine being able to muster strength and perspective, often translatable to other future endeavours.

I like the water. And it's my weakness. I see it as a weakness. I did an Iron Māori, and my swimming bit was the hardest. I nearly died twice. Yeah, I figured out you can't cry when you are swimming in the ocean. You just can't cry because your face is all moist. Being near the water, for me is being a goal to get out there in the morning and try to train – Nikora.

When I'm out paddling, especially when we're doing long distance because you've got time. You could be on the water for like two hours, two and a half hours sometimes. Yeah, and I always just do that, come on Tangaroa help me along. I'm dying here. I promise I'll give back to you. Even when I'm out fishing and diving, it's all in my head, but it's still an acknowledgement. I always make sure my hands are in the water when I'm doing it, or I'm in the water when I'm doing it somehow – Celia.

Not only drawing strength from her experience with Tangaroa, but Celia also reciprocates respect and a sense of kaitiakitanga. Establishing a physical and spiritual

connection with Tangaroa, in this case, she commits to a positive exchange and reciprocal relationship. Not only illustrated in this quote, but in her mahi and chosen sport, Celia prioritises a relationship with her natural environment that is mutually beneficial.

Unlike wāhine who described being able to see themselves in certain aspects of their environments there were others who identified places or spaces where they felt disconnected from or out of place in. One of the starkest examples of being mismatched with an environment was Mana's description of an experience in an area just out of Hanmer, in the South Island of Aotearoa. She recalled a physical reaction so profound that she could never return to that area again.

Due to the nature of me, there are quite a lot of places I cannot go and Hanmer is one of them. Although I like going to Hanmer the town, there are places out the back up in the bush where there's energetic frequency changes, where I get exceptionally ill, and I was walking up there once and basically my life got sucked out of me. I was walking along and next thing I was friggin sweating, I couldn't even lift my legs, I had to lie down, and I mean I'm going to die if we stay here any longer because I'm losing the ability to live and so I had to back track.

She would later learn from her Matakite (Māori clairvoyant) that the area was significant in its relation to the changes in energy, and that very few people were sensitive to it. Mana's sensitivity to the changes in energy or frequencies of certain areas or situations is an amplified example of several other wāhine descriptions of negative environmental experiences.

There was a surprising number of participants who mentioned a particular sense of disconnect when talking about living in or moving to Auckland. This was initially coded as the "Auckland-effect", which described how many participants saw Auckland as a place that can be difficult to connect with being themselves or with being Māori. Each person who spoke about a disconnect with Auckland, described it differently but the sentiment appeared similar. Whether feeling an enhanced sense of colonisation by moving to Auckland, or feeling an inability to connect with nature, feeling disorientated or losing the connection they had with "home". Although Auckland was mentioned several times, the underlying feeling was that there can sometimes be a sense of loss or disconnect in places that do not facilitate or feed those positive behaviours, relationships, or environments. Sometimes this led to wāhine finding a connection

through a means that held familiarity, such as physical activity. Carnation describes her experiences.

So, going between Auckland and my marae, that was my colonisation really. My mum had her experience. And I didn't want to relive my mother's experience because that's traumatic. And if I pretend to relive that then that would mean that I would pass it on to my children.

When I came to Auckland, when you settle into Auckland you get used to a way of life that is not you. And so, I lived that way for a long time and the only catalyst that I found that was closest to, what I felt because everything I had in my childhood, was around activity.

For others, the disconnect with 'Auckland' meant connecting to physical activity was more difficult, and thus added to the sense of disconnection. Often this was remedied by moving home or making a purposeful decision to completely change lifestyles (and sometimes locations). For Carnation, she found solace in sport and physical activity. Her connection to physical activity in Auckland allowed her to connect to a feeling she associated with being home. For all the change and sense of disconnection that was felt by moving to Auckland, Carnation was able to re-establish a sense of self and home through the familiarity and benefits of physical activity.

The other way this category was interpreted was with regard to understanding of self and personality traits. The metaphor of reflection aligns with how we see ourselves, understand how we are, and how we may reflect traits that hold similarities with our surrounding environments. By knowing ourselves and how we operate within certain situations we can be better equipped to deal with them. Several wāhine spoke about knowing parts of themselves, what they need to survive or thrive, and how certain environments (natural or social) can have an impact. A simple admission of familial stubbornness when it came to facing gender or racial stereotypes in her industry, Alison states: "I'm really head strong when it comes to stuff that I think will work. Probably my [like] mum".

Knowing yourself and the source of certain attributes can indeed aid in being more aware of what activities or environments you're more suited to. Angelina explains how she uses her connection to activity and aspects of te taiao to improve her mood and physical wellbeing,

I'm always attracted to maungas and wanting to climb them... The other thing too is it shifted my mood. Like if I was at work and I was like oh, it was cold and your body wasn't warming up or you just humbug, yeah, you just go up there and you come back down and you're like oh, I'm so glad I did this. Yeah, this has just given me a - injected - it was like having an injection, it really was, an injection of body positivity.

Similarly, mother and daughter dance duo Carnation and Summer Love, talked about the need to find stillness in a high energy and demanding lifestyle. Summer Love mentioned: "Talking about swimming. Orewa. Me and mum, we go there all the time because it feels like home to us". While Carnation explains the sentiment even further:

I think the wairuatanga is just coming away from all that giving. So, we need to be able to go into our environment where we feel at home. Where it's not hard to be. Where it's quiet. The beach can be packed and it's still quiet there. Our head rests and our heart rests. We can feel our heartbeat. We sink into papa. We do sync to papa... I always do reflections around; these are the times of turi tangata.

The influence of te taiao and its ability to calm, soothe, refresh, or invigorate can also be coupled with the activity wāhine are drawn to. Inherent in the way we engage in natural environments, physical activity, be it purposeful, incidental, or linked with sport, provides a valuable vehicle in which to experience what te taiao has to offer. Articulated in Celia's reflection of both waka sport and leisure activity alike,

...but the thing with waka and dragon boating for me is that I'm outside, I'm in the environment and I'm doing it. And it's also about that connection for me. I feel connected, even if I'm going for a walk up the maunga. I might be walking up the mountain or going for a run but I'm in the environment and that is actually the part that helps soothe me or relax me.

I feel amazing when I go in there, doing that one, over this one (Parihaka). And you've just got this amazing stunning view of open ocean and the harbour, and you can see all the way back into Whangarei. It's an old remnant Kauri Forest... and you're walking through these massive, big, beautiful trees and big, massive rocks and its very raw and natural. You feel small and insignificant.

In each of these examples, wāhine have developed an understanding of their self, the demands of their life(style), and what is needed to fulfil, nourish, or complement them. These wāhine have found natural environments and familiar places that provide those taonga. Many other wāhine noted similar fulfilment from natural or social environments alike. Maunga, wai, and other spaces often provide a sense of perspective

that allows these wāhine to see themselves better, know themselves better, and understand their place in te taiao, te ao Māori, and the contemporary world.

In three separate reflections, Christina illustrates three distinct insights into her ‘self’, that range from knowing but not always understanding, expecting more of herself but having the perspective to appreciate her ‘self’, and comparing herself and her journey directly to her local tūpuna.

I kinda describe how my brain works as, there's a front bit that's active and going but the back that is where the grunt is and I have no idea actually, how to make it work. I just know when it's doing too much. It's definitely not conscious.

...seasonality, you know I feel like this is my season, I'm coming into my season...which is weird because I'm so old, I'm nearly sixty. Two years away from being sixty but I don't feel like it... I look at other young people and go, you're amazing, I wonder what I could've done if I'd been like you at that age. Nah, then I wouldn't be me...

...I needed to be smoothed and cracked and sharpened and dulled... I needed to be worked like pounamu, like Aotea. I was a bit too rough...

4.3 Te tangi o te kūmara

“The singing kūmara”

- *Rejecting or challenging expected “norms”.*
- *Adapting to changing times.*
- *Speaking up and speaking out.*

Te tangi o te kūmara – roughly translates to mean the cry or song of the kūmara. This category is a bit of an inside joke with some of the participants, or popular topic of discussion at least. *Te tangi o te kūmara* describes the respectful dissonance with the way the popular whakataukī - *kāore te kūmara e korero mō tōna ake reka*, has often been interpreted or misinterpreted to tell us that because the kūmara does not speak of its own sweetness, we shouldn't talk ourselves up too much either. The broad adherence to the idea that we should be humble and not whakahīhi/boastful may have contributed to the idea that we should not speak about our successes. The problem that many of the wāhine in this research described, was that if we do not talk about or promote our successes, we will only ever hear about our failings – which are already

widely discussed. In contrast, many wāhine argued that one of the pathways for our success as Māori should include hearing about that success. Many wāhine mentioned that they believed we needed to be able to “ring our own bell” so to speak, so that the sound of our success resonates in the ears of our people. *Te tangi o te kūmara* is a light-hearted way of illustrating the flip side of humility, which was still highly valued by these wāhine. Instead of feeling boastful or whakahīhī, the idea is that the sweet sound of success should resonate and inspire others. In short, this trait describes the way wāhine found themselves disrupting narrow definitions of wahine, breaking the mould, and being advocates for adapting tikanga in changing times.

Mana expressively describes the need for the success of wāhine to be heard,

...they ought to be allowed to ring their bell. We are energy. Energy, and energy is also sound. We actually have a note that we resonate to, and people are compressing it. It's like we ought to be allowed to ring. That's not whakahīhī. It's actually tika. It's actually tika. Look what I fucking did!

She represents the sentiment of this category succinctly and describes what she has witnessed from many people who come through her exercise classes, Chinese medicine practice, and previous work within social services. If, as she describes, our energy as wāhine is a sound that is often compressed or silenced, then by singing it or allowing it to ring can be an act of liberation and celebration.

Not only does this section illustrate the desire to speak about successes, but also speaking up about other sometimes narrowly defined areas. Speaking your success connects also to speaking up for change, when needed. There was a need to balance the interpretations of tikanga, ways of doing and being, and roles that wāhine have in challenging these ways. Emerald describes when she learned of her tipuna Muriwai going against tikanga and taking control of waka when there were no men to paddle. She then draws parallels with her own identity.

I found out about our tipuna Muriwai. And she is famous for when they brought the Mataatua waka. And she said, she noticed the waka was going to get ruined. And she said – I need to be like a man. To take on that role. Saving the waka. Anyway, so that's when I learned that story, when I was developing my feminist identity just like that sort of stuff. I was like oh this is so cool. That's the legacy I come from on that side. So, I think that would definitely parallel with going into industry where it's male dominated going into a sport where it's male dominated. And you know I'm not there to be like a man, I'm there to

be a woman. Yeah. You know to be strong. But still vulnerable when you need to be and stuff like that.

Emerald's reference to Muriwai taking on the role that was usually reserved for men and stating "Me whakatāne au i ahau! (I must act like a man!)", gives us a direct example of the need to challenge tikanga especially in challenging times. Further discussion around questioning contemporary applications of tikanga included standing up against the assumption that how things have been done in the past are the best ways to do things now, and in the future. Celia talks about the way we as Māori have adapted to changing environments: "we've always adapted to the environment we are in at the time and it's time and place. But some people don't like that korero cos its confronting".

Celia goes on to reflect on how our ability to adapt is visible in the way our tūpuna behaved. But that there is the risk that we are holding onto ways of doing and being that have become outdated and no longer reflect the current environment.

... we've been really good at, and you can see from our tūpuna and what they've done, adapted, adapted. When you look at where we are as Indigenous people, internationally, we are this far ahead in certain places because we adapted, extremely quickly. And we fought, we adapted, and we fought. But I think we've come to a place where we've sort of stopped a little bit, adapting. Because people have been trying to hold so strongly on to our culture that it's not letting it evolve the way it should.

Her sentiment reflects the idea that holding on to cultural practices for the sake of holding on to culture, may be counterproductive. Rather, we can hold true to tikanga at its core values, while adapting our practices to better suit the environment that we are currently situated in. This idea will be discussed further at the end of this chapter.

Many of the wāhine described themselves in a way that breaks the mould of what is conventionally expected or challenges norms. They see themselves and other wāhine as having more to offer than some of the narrow definition of Māori, wahine, or both. Several descriptions of stereotypes were motivations to step beyond those expectations and prove them wrong. Carnation described her desire to be active and successful as a product of her response to stereotyping.

I felt like I was going against statistics. What society thought of Māori people. They're all dole-bludging beneficiaries, humping people it's just like and they only had kids. Māori women are only good for having kids. Māori women, be careful there's something wrong with her. She's single for so long. If she gets selected for the team, is she

gonna show up or is she going to go to a party? All those beliefs and all those friggin, those norms and what people felt, they were things I felt. That people said about Māori people. I couldn't stand the way people viewed Māori people and women too.

Whereas Sherilee describes a rather different way she challenges perceptions in relation to her identity within her chosen sports.

It's a challenge. I think what I like about dance is getting my body to do that. Whereas in league it's a little bit sadistic. Can you smash me? How hard can you smash me and bitch I will get up and play the ball. ... But dance is pretty. Dance is hot.

Sherilee offers an illustration of the way we as wāhine Māori need not be confined to narrow definitions. Whether that is within sport, activity or more generally as wāhine. We have the ability and should feel free to take up space in a range of roles, whether with rugby balls or handbags. This point also connects to another broader metaphor to be discussed later, *Rakanga Waewae*, whereby wāhine display their ability to balance roles, move between different spaces, and stand in multiple worlds.

Whether describing an interest in initiating political discussions, infiltrating corporate systems, or questioning the way things are done on marae, wāhine were clear that they were active participants in shaking things up. Alison attributed her “stirring” to being “related to Uncle Winnie” (referring to Winston Peters, a well-known New Zealand politician). Alyx described the way she was challenging her executive team to be better treaty partners, stating “I'm actually trying to infiltrate the system”. As she describes her journey through a career dedicated to environmental sustainability, she notes an important skill required to instigate change in the corporate world.

We could be doing more. But understanding that we're living this is the world, we live in corporate, the corporate world. We're here now, we have governments we have all this stuff, like I'm all for decolonisation, but we've still got to work cleverly within the constructs of what we have been given.

By no means diminishing decolonising work in all areas, there is value in the idea of using your role and particular skills to occupy non-Māori spaces as Māori to instigate change from within. Alyx may be introducing the idea of indigenizing corporate spaces as opposed to decolonising them.

The other way wāhine spoke of challenging perceptions was in relation to their perceived identity as Māori. Many wāhine noted that their pale skin or features meant they would be perceived as Pākehā. Passing as Pākehā may bring with it some perceived benefits, but also some struggles when trying to carve out one's identity as Māori. Emerald, who also has Irish ancestry, described her experience as it pertains to her journey with powerlifting.

I mean I perceived the gym once I got over the initial culture shock as somewhere where I was just accepted and not having to fight for my identity because I'm perceived as Pākehā because of the way I look. Yeah. So, I guess so that just went hand-in-hand that I was feeling a bit better about what my body could do and then it was helping me settle this process of constantly fighting about my identity.

For some wāhine from earlier generations, their Māori-ness was hidden from them for much of their lives. Ellen is in her seventies and described an experience which probably mirrors that of many from her generation, where it was deemed more important to assimilate into being Pākehā rather than *being* Māori. She described it as being just how things were for her, “We just is who we is”. For those who presented as or were perceived as being Pākehā, sometimes did so because of the shame associated with being Māori in their time. Their parents or grandparents connected their Māori ancestry with shame and therefore kept their Māori-ness a secret. Christina, who has whakapapa to Kai Tahu – a tribe in the South Island but describes her physical features as resembling her European ancestry, only found out she was Māori when her family filled in a census. “My dad never really spoke much about it because my mum has my colouring and looked like me and very Scottish and European and my grandparents hated Māoris. So, he never actually talked about being Māori”.

Mana was always drawn to working with and for Māori and eventually had to discover her whakapapa herself after her grandmother revealed their Māori ancestry as a result of “bit of a tutu across the neighbourhood”. Her whakapapa was described to her as being “purely English with a few Māoris thrown in”. Mana explains being the only one in her family to be told she was Māori, because her grandmother had seen “what's in your genetics that makes you do the work you do”. Mana admits not looking “Māori enough but I am. And the only people that don't believe it are the white people. Not gonna prove myself to you guys”. Mana and indeed many wāhine live truly and genuinely as themselves, despite the perceptions and preconceptions of others.

The mana and strength that lies within these wāhine to challenge and change perceptions, norms, and the practice of tikanga itself contributes to the foundations that make them successful in their own fields. Speaking up when speaking up is needed. Challenging ways when those ways do not fit the times or situation. Adapting to changing environments. And showing up in roles that had previously not allowed them in. These are the many ways that wāhine displayed traits of the singing kūmara.

4.4 Kitea to hapori

“Finding your community”

- To find one’s social supports.
- Social relationships and behaviour.

The environments that have the potential to influence wāhine and their physical activity behaviours extend beyond the natural environments outlined previously. Social environments and the people in those social groups are also highly influential. Whānau, hapu, and iwi describe the widening factions of our familial connections, but with modern life the connection we have with social groups can be just as significant. *Kitea to hapori* categorises the social connections that wāhine described and how those relationships influenced different behaviours.

Sport and active pursuits were often described as conduits to significant and lifelong relationships, as Vania explains.

You know you grow those relationships and those networks over the years as well... We don't have to see each other, and we can see each other and reconnect. Even though they could be 10,12, 20 years of a gap and just like get straight back from where we left off.

These relationships and the spoken or unspoken expectations that come with them were mentioned in a range of ways. Some found the mechanisms of activity a replacement for something they once had in earlier life. Carnation describes the way her sport reconnected her to a type of family collective that she had as a child.

So that became my whāngai. My whāngai of my childhood. And it became my saviour actually. So, sport became my catalyst to survive. In the concrete jungle. Because I was so out of kilter. As soon as I came to Auckland, I felt lonely. Because I was so used to being in that collective.

The shared love of certain activities was often the way wāhine found social and lifelong connections. Sherilee and others who always had sport in their lives and found their way through life through their sport would often translate these relationships into whānau.

Sport has always been a massive part of my life. Huge. I've never not played sport. And at high school there was just more sport... And while everybody else was doing Haka, I was at sport. That was my feed. It was what made me feel good for me and how I liked to spend my time and I got to do things with my friends.

You just find people that I like. And now I have my gym whānau. I got my league whānau. Got my whānau whānau.

Many others mentioned a sense of camaraderie or connection when finding like-minded social relationships within activity. The rewards of such relationships would extend beyond the benefits of physical activity and even the act of socialising. Knisha found camaraderie within the triathlon community, Celia with those who valued being “in tune with their natural environment”, and Angelina with runners and those wanting to go hunting and just “connecting with getting our kai”. Beyond the mere similarities in the preferences for certain activities, wāhine were aware of the positive influences that certain social groups would have on their behaviours. As well as like-minded people, wāhine would describe trying to find or being drawn to positive people or people who influenced them positively. Ellen, who has a large family, describes a pragmatic approach to active social relationships.

I found that I was drawn to those sorts of people. Now that sounds like a good idea and yeah, before you know, you've been around the lake x amount of times because you just set that and then you got excited and you met exciting people.

...if I don't get a pound of flesh in a relationship, I don't waste my energy you know, because every day is one day less that I'm going to have on this earth. So, I don't see why I should invest when there's no return...

Ellen's no non-sense approach to social relationships was connected to her life-stage. She often spoke of the fact that she was making the most of her life and what she was now able to do. The fact that she viewed social relationships as a cautious investment reflected what could be described as her pragmatic nature. Ellen's approach is similar to those other wāhine who noticed a need to change their social behaviours in order to

(re)align with healthier lifestyles. Some wāhine described moving from one way of being to another because of the people that they chose to be in their lives. Knisha describes her process: “Yeah, so my way out was okay, right, start new things, let's do new things. You've got to find a purpose, surround yourself with good people, find the positive people, yeah”.

Unhealthy lifestyles, partying, and disconnection transitioned to more active lifestyles, different priorities, and improved perspectives on health. For Angelina, it was the realisation that one aspect of her current active lifestyle was not something she wanted to maintain.

I mean this club we were with a staunch rugby club and now it's league but there was always at the end of every game there was the drinking and the partying and the smoking and that. Then we moved to Whangārei, and I think I just woke up one day and I thought God, I'm just so sick of this. I'm sick of smoking and I wasn't really a heavy drinker anyway.

For some it was a wake-up call after a stint of physical inactivity and finding a person or a group of people who introduced, prioritised, facilitated, and/or supported active lifestyles. For others it was finding the motivation to work harder and perform better in their chosen area. Carnation was clear that her inspiration was a group of high performing netballers.

*I got selected for regional and local reps for 25 years and then I went and played regionals and I went and played nationals, played up against my idols, Rita, the Margies, they just ran rings around us. I think I was just too star struck. And then Louisa Wall and playing around Sandra Edge, Anna Noovao... and just getting your butt kicked. My ego was in such good shape that I didn't give two hoots. And I just learnt so much and I just you know. **And I remember the little seeds of people. That they plant in you,** even if they don't talk with you directly or spend time with you. You were still part of something. And I remembered a habit. A habit of, they had dreams and goals, so I remember their habits of practicing that goal, two hundred goals a week, a day, left hand, right hand. So, I learned about how to be really vigorous and rigorous.*

Carnation relays the way she learned to create training habits from her sporting idols and similarly Ellen alludes to the way her sport and the people she connects with through can become an unconscious habit.

...when you have enough courage to step out of your comfort zone and meet different people, their input is amazing. And sometimes, like

when I was cycling, I had this friend, she cycled and so I followed on behind and before I knew where we were 10 years had passed.

The passing of time with people who have a positive influence brings with it a range of benefits that stretch well beyond the physical. The fostering of healthy, safe, and supportive environments was fundamental in the relationships mentioned here. Finding the community that helps you maintain a successfully active lifestyle or inspires your (re)engagement in activity, can also build strong foundational relationships that continue well after the end of a rugby league career or time spent at a gym. Often these relationships influence subsequent generations and create positive health behaviours that can change the direction of someone's life. For those who talked about *kitea to hapori* the inherent value was clear, as Sherilee recounts.

And you look at what you attached to it, the things that you've achieved and the people you've met. I think it's still that values-based thing...what you value... You spend seasons. Remember that season. Remember that tournament, remember that road trip? All of those things that being part of a group a whānau, gives you.

4.5 Conclusion

Each aspect of the huahuatau: *Ko au te taiao, te taiao ko au* brings a better understanding of the way these wāhine described and lived their transactions with the natural environment (and other environments). Their direct descriptions and the combined meanings from this huahuatau and the associated āhuatanga provided the initial picture of this important trait/behaviour. This section began to make sense of these taonga in relation to the stories that wāhine shared. As outlined earlier in this chapter, this huahuatau was the largest, and arguably most significant and relevant to answering the research questions. Te taiao represents a physical, metaphorical, and metaphysical space where wāhine can share, reflect, and connect to atua, and this section intended to expand that connection. This chapter provided an introduction to the way wāhine saw themselves in natural environments (and vice versa), and consequently how wāhine interacted in certain environments.

Chapter 5 Ahuwhenua – Resourceful cultivation

Ahu: (verb) to tend, foster, nurture, or fashion, to heap up, to move or point in a certain direction, face towards. (noun) heap, mound, orientation.

Whenua: (noun) land, ground, territory, domain, placenta, afterbirth.

Ahuwhenua: (verb) to be industrious, busy, conscientious, energetic, diligent. (modifier) cultivated, harvested, agricultural. (noun) agriculture, land development.

Ahuwhenua refers to traits or behaviours that reflect purposeful and forward planning, being resourceful, organised, energetic and committed to the cultivation and care of people, land, and self.

As an overarching metaphorical category, *Ahuwhenua* brings together the qualities of wāhine that contribute to the resourceful cultivation of success. Using the concept of cultivation, the metaphor of *Ahuwhenua* represents aspects of planning, cultivating, nurturing, and harvesting. It translates to the way these wāhine have dedicated time, energy, and resources to create an active lifestyle that nourishes themselves but also contributes to their wider communities. The ability of these wāhine to be resourceful, when they are not necessarily full of resources represents a highly valuable skill and is one that many wāhine would attribute to their ancestors. It requires creativity, often an eye for detail, and the ability to forward plan. These women would often describe themselves and the way they lived their lives in a way that reflects this concept of *Ahuwhenua*. Wāhine were organised, analytical, reflective, and diligent. If considering tauwi Big Five personality terms – these wāhine were the conscientious types. This metaphorical category contains a range of traits that span from being tactical planners, to achieving success in a way that reflects tending to a māra (garden). The traits that wāhine described and portrayed in relation to *Ahuwhenua* were both physical and psychological, and each is discussed below.

Those āhuatanga related to tending the land or harvesting kai do so to acknowledge the connectedness of wāhine and whenua. Although some of the wāhine were literally

engaged with the whenua, whether through their mahi or otherwise, the connection was more to do with the way they could harvest something great (kai or other successful outcomes) with skills that are also related to keeping a successful garden. Preparing the soil and nurturing it. Knowing when and what to do. Cultivating success by laying the groundwork and then putting in the hard work. These wāhine were not all avid gardeners, but they did exhibit skills and behaviours that their avid gardener ancestors may have also exhibited. *Ahuwhenua* is a metaphor that connects wāhine to the earth, grounding us, and exhibiting the skills and behaviours that are connected to it.

The whakataukī: *He kai kei aku ringa*, underpins this huahuatau. The skills and behaviours of wāhine demonstrate just how success can be produced by what they have at hand. Whether it is a little creativity, or a set of skills acquired over time, the ability to manifest successful outcomes out of limited resources was inherent in the kōrero and actions of these wāhine.

5.1 Tātai[hia]

“Tactician”

- *To plan, recite, have purpose or be tactical.*
- *Relates to the concept of conscientiousness.*

In the first few interviews, I started to hear a common theme related to the way wāhine planned, thought, and conducted themselves – at times quite methodically. They mentioned that they planned, were very organised, and often quite systematic. Some mentioned the importance of being prepared or having a plan in place in order to make progress or avoid difficulties. This āhuatanga seems to have connections to the concept of conscientiousness which is referred to within personality psychology. Just like conscientiousness, *tātaihia* is made up of a range of related traits and behaviours that manifest in these wāhine prioritising well-constructed plans, being methodical or tactical, and/or being able to execute smaller steps to achieve greater goals. Alison was the first wāhine I interviewed, and she commented, “I plan everything”. She was the first among many following her to describe the importance they place on being organised. Knowing what to expect allowed these wāhine to prepare themselves appropriately and ultimately contributed to the success they experienced in their mahi, personal lives, and/or activity pursuits. Knisha, like many of the other wāhine described

herself as analytical, "...I break it all down, quite analytical. Yeah, and I think that's what helps me in everything I do". Thinking things through, reflecting, having a clear understanding of their thought processes, were the different ways wāhine related to this theme. Vania drew comparisons between being systematic and her chosen sport:

I'm quite systematic kind of person, structured and planning for me...

...as a second rower, you'd have to have a skilled strength, and strength looking outside you. So, there'd be the framework, and then the plan. But gelling that together. And that's when you have those skills around strength and muscle.

She explains that the skills required of her sport, specifically the position she played, required a particular skill of seeing what was required, having a system or a plan to implement it, and also translating all of that into a physical action.

The connection that being tactical has to a sport or physical activity was also clearly relayed by Nikora, who explained the importance of having a plan for training through the off-season as well as during the playing season.

...like if you don't have a goal, it's difficult for you to train. Obviously, a sense of purpose. If you don't have anything to wake up to, anything to train for. So, for me, we have to have a tournament, or we have done something to actually work towards. Something that's going to get you out of bed...

I think the most important part is having a goal, if you don't have a goal there's no sense of purpose in a lot of things. You won't set your alarm clock, you won't get your gears ready and therefore you won't get up to do the run...it's about making it your life though, your lifestyle has to encompass movement in some way, shape or form.

Clearly, she has developed a routine to be physically active, but she also admits that she needs a goal to work towards and is prepared to meet those goals. Without those preparations it is possible to fall out of the routine.

Ellen described her perspective on being prepared, creating routines, and having plans when it comes to family and physical activity alike.

You know, it's a daily routine, because you need the daily routine because the motivation shifts, so it's the daily routine that instils the discipline and then it becomes your lifestyle.

...little steps, little chunks. I also think one of my secrets is that I plan.

Referring to organising her children, she states:

...they've all got to be marching the same way, because it's the only way that I could cope. You know, I couldn't have them doing the haka, so they were brought up with my way or the highway sort of thing.

Ellen explained that her family's background in the military had an influence on her keeping her large family organised (and not fussing around – “doing the haka”) but that she slowly learned the significance of being flexible and that the flexibility allowed her a sense of resilience in times where rigid enforcement may not have worked.

Although wāhine had their own unique ways of expressing their inner tactician, each knew the value of being prepared for what lay ahead. The learnings through trial and error, personal experience, or thanks to the mahi done by nannies, māmā, or others before them, was invaluable. Wāhine used that prior knowledge to ensure they could achieve their next goal, plan, or major achievement by being purposeful and conscientious planners.

5.2 Mahi māra / Māra kai

“Resourceful creativity”

- *Resourceful and creative in cultivating, nourishing, harvesting successful outcomes.*
- *Refers to gardening and producing “kai”*

This āhutatanga encompasses the characteristics of working or toiling a garden in order to cultivate and harvest kai. This metaphor offers a broad view of the range of ways that wāhine described how they creatively cultivated success. Included in these actions are aspects of being resourceful or creative with limited resources or making the most of what was available. The kai aspect of the māra kai metaphor represents whatever it is that wāhine aimed to accomplish, an outcome, an achievement, the physical activity they performed, or the type of lifestyle they wanted for themselves and their whānau. The mahi māra incorporates the behaviours or ways of being that wāhine exhibited in order to metaphorically tend, nurture, and harvest metaphorical “kai”.

Wāhine who described situations where they were resourceful despite not necessarily being full of resources ranged from using less than optimal sportswear or equipment to having an appreciation for the simple things in life and having them influence an active

lifestyle. Reflecting about how she got started into regular walking and running, Angelina made do with the sports gear she had on hand.

Then so we had this road down by us that was about - I think it was about 9kms in total and so I started walking with him and I didn't actually really own any gym gear at all. I think I had found some singlets. I cut some jeans off to make them shorts and I had this old pair of shoes.

Similarly, Knisha was unphased by what her fellow triathlon club members thought of her choice of equipment when she started riding with them. She would make use of the resources she had and upgrade later.

I remember turning up to bike club groups like the triathlon club here, or the Rotorua Cycling Club and they'd look at my bike, my hori bike, my \$100 bike and you know, they said you gonna ride that? All right then miss. Why, what's wrong with her?

Knisha admitted that her passion for the sport has grown substantially that she now has a range of bikes to choose from, but that first \$100 bike still got her over those initial hills.

Cultivating or making the most of your situation was also a common thread. Mana explained that she created an environment where it was easy for her to maintain an active lifestyle, by making it her job.

I get paid to fucking exercise. I'm really intelligent. You're not doing any. You need to work out how you're going to get paid for it. I get paid for my exercise. You pay to go to the gym. It's set up like that, I deliberately set out the exercise.

The sense of appreciation for a simple lifestyle was beautifully articulated by Carnation, who saw a richness and a sense of nourishment in her early life, even though many might have perceived her to be “poor”.

Because there was so many of us, growing up we had one meal a day, so we had a takakau and a bowl of pipis every day, that's us. But it was the sweetest kai. And we never felt pōhara. We always felt rich. We lived on a really beautiful 10-acre bit of land that we didn't take for granted ...fruit trees and we'd live off the fruit juice, everyday you'd see a Māori kid hanging from a fruit tree. With peaches and apples and pears and grapes and walnuts we had every like fruit and veggie tree...so kai whenua was really natural to us. So, we grew up with kai, it was plentiful.

My sense of activity in my deepest and my earliest memory was watching the hive at the marae. The kitchen, the pots. The men outside cutting wood. With the smell of cigarette. You know the can of beer. Fires burning, running out of water, trucks coming in from town. Hoses going into the river. Rabbits. Eeling. Possum hunting, with our papas, you know learning how to hold a rifle at the age of six.

Carnation's ability to see and appreciate that her upbringing, simple as it may have been, was not only a taonga or privilege but it also instilled in her a way of seeing the world that prioritised making do with what she had, and it normalised a physically active lifestyle.

Several other wāhine talked of the notion of wanting to have a better lifestyle and living in a way that connected them to the things that they valued. Moving away from the demands of city life or stressful jobs and towards a lifestyle closer to the whenua meant that wāhine were able to (re)connect with aspects of themselves that could further nourish them, and often resulted in their ability to influence others in the same way. Celia described her move from Auckland to Whangārei in that way,

...the stress that I once had, isn't there. It was stressful just trying to get to training, as well as about my work. And stressed about being able to travel internationally to compete because I wasn't sure if I'd get leave to do it. Just being in such a tight organisation that just controlled decision making, and any ability for me to be flexible, it was tough for me to live the lifestyle I wanted. And having to choose between work and something that you do for fun. Something that nourishes you. Because paddling nourishes me. I'm out in the environment, it makes me feel good. It connects me to my te ao Māori world as well because I'm doing a sport that's a traditional sport.

I think it was part of that whole lifestyle change. Now I've changed my whole, I can allow those things to come out again. And because I used to tell myself that I wasn't creative, that I didn't have a creative bone in me, and yet I used to like painting and drawing. And I stopped doing all those things. I used to like to try and make things out of whatever I could find. But now I'm getting back into that, and it's been really cool.

Celia's purposeful decision to create and cultivate a lifestyle that better fit her values ultimately meant that she could make room for a sense of creativity that her previous lifestyle had suppressed. Celia continued talking about her newly revived creativity and how it was supported by her strengthened connection to the whenua. She would collect a range of natural raw materials on her walks up maunga and on her other journeys, like feathers and other taonga. She delighted in the fact that she now was surrounded by the

environments, including people, that fostered her creativity. Laughing, she admitted: “you’ve got frikkin albatross wing bones in your freezer, why don’t you do something with them?”

Crystal, like Celia, had made the conscious decision with her whānau to move back home, to be closer to her whenua and closer to the ways of her ancestors. She described a range of ways that she and her whānau incorporated the aspects of mahi māra kai but below she directly addressed the learning and experience she garnered from tending to her first kūmara harvest.

Yeah, and like you have to tend to it and even if it's hot you know you kind of have to put yourself in the position of kai and think you know, they need this. So yeah, it was a ... experience. Kūmara harvesting was very hard, yeah. So, we were thinking of how we can replicate some of the old instruments that our tūpuna used, just to see what that was like because it was a really good experience for us around growing and so we used the maramataka ... growing our kai and just observed how we felt when we would tend to the garden.

Whether it was to cultivate kai, relationships, better ways of living, or creating new things out of old, wāhine had a knack of being resourceful, regardless of the type or number of resources they had. They would find a way of making things work in their favour or to the benefit of their whānau, or communities. Whether it was an old pair of shoes for running, a pakaru (*broken down*) bike for triathlon meets, or the appreciation of the taonga (great or small) that they had been bestowed, these wāhine would cultivate and harvest successful outcomes, or “kai”. Embodying the whakataukī, He kai kei aku ringa, these wāhine exemplify how to use their resources and abilities to cultivate success, there is indeed “food” at the end of their hands.

Each of the next three metaphoric traits can be viewed as off-shoots or lower-level attributes also associated with [mah] māra kai. Pukumahi, Pūngao, and Kaitiakitanga are characteristics that can indeed be integral aspects of the “māra” process outlined above, but below I discuss them in a broader sense, as wāhine came to describe them.

5.3 Pukumahi

“Determined and diligent”

- Refers to putting in effort and working hard
- Being dedicated and involved at the grassroots.

There were a range of references made by wāhine that showed them to be extremely determined. This sense of determination would manifest in both their diligence in getting things accomplished, but also their hands-on approach to achieving these accomplishments. *Pukumahi* is a term used to describe hard workers but breaking down the word gives us an understanding of how this relates here. The term *Pukumahi* contains two familiar words, puku and mahi. Puku is commonly known as the stomach but used as a verb can mean to swell or be clenched. It can also be used to intensify a word if placed before or after it. Mahi relates to the action of work but also refers to an abundance or having lots of. *Pukumahi* in this sense, describes the āhuatanga of someone who puts a lot of effort into their endeavours (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021). This trait may be something that becomes instilled like it was in Carnation’s case, where laziness was not an option and being actively busy was often the norm growing up.

I felt like I was in a privileged space to observe what I was privileged to but would never understand until I became an adult. So, it always felt like wairuatanga to me anyway. Just the way everyone chipped in. If you were caught standing and you were called lazy and you don't want to be called lazy, don't want to be called useless, koretake or anything. You know get a tea towel. If somebody was standing, you'd be thrown a tea towel, and you'd be carrying a teapot. Hoping you'll be servicing the line with the hot boy in it. Physical activity was like that, I grew up with my maramatanga and that's how I am.

The benefits of chipping in and working hard could well be rewarded with a wink from a good-looking boy at the whare kai or something even more significant. Carnation went on to describe how she learnt to be “really rigorous and vigorous” through getting her “butt kicked” by elite netball players such as Anna Noovao and Sandra Edge but took that opportunity to work harder to keep up and improve her own skills.

Carnation attributes her learning to be rigorous and vigorous to playing netball with elite players who challenged her. This type of sentiment was also voiced by others

whose diligence and determination were influenced by whānau. Nikora was surrounded by whānau who reinforced the importance of being self-sufficient and independent.

My dad's toughness and roughness helped me to be a little bit more... And having my older sisters as well to be a little bit more...get up and go. Not rest on your laurels. My mother's upbringing was also that they needed to be independent, if you wanted to smoke, you better have your own smokes. If you want to go places you got to have your own car. So, we were brought up pretty tough like that, if you wanted anything... So as a kid I had paper runs and bought my own sports shoes... From my grandmother, my grandmother was like that, my mother taught us to be like that.

Teresa exemplified the essence of what it means to be *Pukumahi* or exhibit that characteristic. Besides the story I told in an earlier chapter about her dogged determination to complete a workout beyond the end of the workout time and training around injuries, she pushed the boundaries of what many of her peers thought to be acceptable when pregnant. Teresa kept training throughout her pregnancy, riding up the Port Hills, doing CrossFit workouts, and documenting it all along the way. She talked about receiving disparaging comments from people who did not agree with what she was doing and believed she was being irresponsible. She sought comfort and advice from her mother who aptly reminded her:

the only person you answer to is me. You tell him I used to be on the farm every day and be milking and you know your grandmother was the hardest working person and she gave birth on the land and then got up and milked the cows again. And our tūpuna, you're right, our tūpuna were so active. They walk miles to get water because their mind and their body were connected to one and to the whenua and they knew what made them safe and if they were tired, they had rest, if they're hungry they'd eat.

This trait, of *Pukumahi* was also linked to the active pursuits or sports that wāhine were connected to. Some activities are known for their strict training regimes and instilling athletes with a strong sense of dedication to their sport. Swimmers can be known to have this characteristic because of the way they are required to train. Early mornings, repetition, dedication. Celia described how her background as a swimmer translated and transferred over to her ability to commit to the demanding training of Dragon Boating and Waka Ama.

And so that's what I grew up with, a very strict training regime and mentality around physical activity. Which has been really great for me coming into paddling. Because there were some people who were

a little uncertain, especially when I got asked to join the club worlds team last year. Some people didn't know who I was, and they were uncertain about my commitment. They were like, but she's one of those...she seems real flaky and she just goes with the wind and would she actually commit to it. And there was a lot of fear about my commitment. But when I commit to something, especially physical activity, and training at that level, I know what it takes.

Whether instilled in them as children, passed down by tūpuna, or acquired over a lifetime of learning, wāhine who talked about hard-work and determination did so in the most practical of ways. Ellen was pragmatic about her age and her abilities, not needing to win the race but always wanting to try her hardest, she explains “if I do something, I really put my heart and soul into it”. Holly overcame many obstacles in part due to what she describes as “this weird inbuilt sense of pressure that I have to be productive”. While Knisha’s practical advice, although referring to the bike leg of an Iron Māori race, can indeed be sage advice in a range of contexts. She tells her friend who is new to the sport and struggling on an uphill climb, “don't get off the bike, don't stop”.

5.4 Pūngao

“Energy awareness”

- *Concerned with energy or having it in excess.*
- *Keeping busy or at a high intensity.*
- *Being aware of energy*

As a further extension of *Pukumahi*, *Pūngao* reflects the way wāhine frequently expressed the concept of energy, having excess, needing to expend it, or thriving off it. The relationship that energy and physical activity had was articulated in a seemingly reciprocal manner. Some would use physical activity as a way to expend the feeling of having an excess of energy. Alison described the way that she decided to redirect the way she expended her energy.

I always feel active but just at first, I don't actually know what to do with all the energy that I had so back in the day it was like go drinking, dancing, clubs and I'm like oh no, because I don't want to feel like crap up after dancing. Especially like when I started Zumba. It was like a sober party. Like you could just be yourself, but you don't have to be drunk. So that's kind of where it started. Then I kind of got addicted to dance fitness.

In contrast to Alison's need to get rid of energy, other spoke of the way their activity would restore energy. Celia used her activity in te taiao to share and receive energy with nature,

I actually do that when I do my walk up Mt Manaia as well. I hug trees. I don't know why because I want to share my energy and I want to yeah because I know that it's an energy sharing thing. It's like kicking your shoes off and really cementing your feet in the soil, you know, being able to receive the energy in a pure way from Papatūānuku or whatever part of the environment you're with.

Ellen was able to describe the way the benefits of her own activity and an active lifestyle translated to her being more active with her whānau.

...it's like I get really rapt. We went into big waves and anything physical on the holidays, I could do that with confidence and with fun and I could really share all the things that were happening with the family.

Retrospectively, it might seem a logical assumption, that women who are regularly physically active would have a more acute sense of their own energy expenditure and be cognisant of it. My own experience with sport and physical activity over a lifetime has taught me to be more conscious of my own energy levels. However, throughout the interviewing process I found it interesting that wāhine would raise this idea unprompted. The way these wāhine expressed an understanding for their energy and its use, raised the idea that they may possess a sort of activated mechanism that regulates this process, while in others it may remain latent or unrealised. Mana is an example of someone where that mechanism was realised and active.

My body actually thrives in high intensity. So, for example if I'm working in an anaerobic high intensity thing and I'm doing 20 to 30 seconds in anaerobic as hard as I can. Most people the first one will be the highest and they'll drop down. I go the other way. And I get higher because that's how well trained, it's like make this one the hardest, work really hard on those ...and that last one has to be better than your first one. I can do that. You put me beside just about anybody else, they can't do it. And so that high intensity, my body thrives on it even though I'm well into my fifties.

Having an excess of energy was not always easily managed and wasn't always beneficial. For some it affected their sleep habits, for others it impacted relationships. But for most wāhine, their energetic dispositions eventually became something they were able to harness, activate, or utilise in their chosen physical activity.

5.5 Kaitiakitanga

“Care for [tangata] whenua”

- *Refers to a reciprocal nurturing or caring for people and the environment.*

“I reckon and we're in such a unique space right now as Māori and to try and create a positive pathway for us as a people moving forward”. Celia’s comment perfectly articulated the essence of what this trait means. Besides her mahi in the environmental and sustainability space, Celia’s connection (professional and personal) to *Kaitiakitanga* was genuine. Her commitment to nurturing and taking care of the environment, while enabling communities to do the same, is how this trait is illustrated. Alyx also described her connection to *Kaitiakitanga* through her mahi.

This probably stemmed from my love for the environment and water and the outdoors. And having these amazing spaces especially in Aotearoa that we can be active and live in. And feeling that we're not doing enough. We could be doing more.

Connecting to te taiao, developing a closer relationship with it, and ultimately having that influence the way you look after it was a priority for several wāhine. Other wāhine were more connected to kaitiaki of people. Their sense of sustainability was directed towards helping others thrive or overcome difficulties. This was exhibited through their work as physical activity ambassadors or trainers, or through their various other professions. Emerald described her background having a significant impact on her career choice and her desire to help others.

I'm so passionate about helping others and I knew how shit it felt to go through tough times. So, I was like, If I can help others not have to feel that shit then yeah, I want to help... I know the effect of looking after your wellbeing especially mental wellbeing. And I know how hard it is. That's just what I think about. That's what I can bring to help others.

The interpretation of *Kaitiakitanga* within this context also encompasses the concept of *manaakitanga*. As Carnation and Summer-Love explained, “...our attribute and our biggest behaviour is manaaki”. Vania also describes her role in manaaki-ing or supporting whānau to stay well and in turn be better parents to their tamariki. She describes it as “succession planning”, where a situation after the Christchurch

earthquakes initiated a way that whānau could take what resources they had to “build their wairua to both their wellbeing and their Hinengaro.” In that way, Vania was part of a programme that helped repair the damage of the earthquakes in whānau, which then would ensure their tamariki, their rangatahi were nurtured. The term, manaaki (*to care for*) could’ve have been used in place of kaitiaki; however, the wider metaphorical use of kaitiaki incorporates the sense that we as tangata are also of the whenua. Our *Kaitiakitanga* of our whenua, our taiao, our natural spaces, is intrinsically connected to our manaaki of each other. To take care of ourselves, we must also ensure we are taking care of our environments.

Crystal noted her concerns about the lack of respect and care for Papatūānuku, particularly in her rohe. She pointed to areas where intensive agriculture has had devastating effects on the local environment and recalls the recent issues in Havelock where water contamination resulted in many local people getting sick. She questions whether it's worthwhile being known as the “fruit bowl” and providing food for New Zealand and overseas if you aren’t reciprocating by replenishing the land.

Because the majority of the kai that's grown here, the practices are not really tika and so if you're going to be exhausting all our resources and taking off all our tūpuna, what are we doing to replenish that?

Crystal, like many of the other wāhine had an understanding of the importance of giving back to the taiao, the whenua, to Papatūānuku, and to people. With the understanding that the reciprocal nurturing relationship that we have with the environment, Crystal appreciates her move back “home” and the way it has allowed her to engage in conversations and raise consciousness about “having a conscience”.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the way wāhine described their ability to make the most out of the resources they had at hand. They were resourceful, creative, and made purposeful plans to achieve successful outcomes. Throughout this exploration of the concept of *Ahuwhenua*, wāhine demonstrated the many ways they cultivated success similar to their ancestors who read the stars, understood their environment, and utilised those skills to nurture success for themselves and others.

Chapter 6 Ngā taonga tuku iho – Knowledge Heritage

Taonga: (noun) treasure, anything that is prized or of value.

Tuku: (verb) to release, descend, to relinquish, gift, or offer – reflects the notion of transfer.

Iho: (particle) downward, from above, (noun) heart, essence, essential quality, middle of the umbilical cord.

Taonga tuku iho: (noun) heirloom, something handed down, heritage.

Relates to the importance of and participation in the transmission and translation of knowledge and influence.

This category relates to heritage, the heritage of knowledge and the heritage of influence. The passing on of knowledge was a key theme that women spoke about. They often felt the obligation to teach and share what they knew in order to help others. But they also acknowledged the taonga that was handed down to them, whether it was mātauranga or the inspiration to be and stay physically active. Wāhine shared their knowledge in different ways and demonstrated the many ways that knowledge or mātauranga can be interpreted, translated, and transmitted. They described the importance of taking knowledge and passing it on, and they did that via means that were as diverse as the means that our tūpuna used. Some were adept in the ways of our tūpuna and some used contemporary ways. Whether through waiata, karanga, oriori, or raranga, or whether it was over a cup of tea, articulated with a hoe through water, or via a hockey stick on turf, our tūpuna wāhine along with contemporary wāhine utilised resourceful ways to communicate knowledge.

This huahuatau consists of āhuetanga that represent both the heritage of knowledge and the heritage of influence. The interpreting, transmitting, and translating of knowledge is illustrated with two āhuetanga. *Toi Akoako* represents the art of learning, sharing, and teaching, and illustrates how wāhine take their roles as teachers and taura seriously. Often, wāhine felt an obligation to pass on knowledge as it was once passed on to them.

Ira – Tangata represents the physical or so-called genetic transmission, of knowledge or proficiency passed on by parents or tūpuna further back. Finally, *Wāhine influence[r]s* represents those other women that had an important part to play in the success of these wāhine. However, wāhine were themselves also influencers, despite not describing themselves in that way. This āhuatanga describes the process of being influenced by strong wāhine and then influencing others.

6.1 Interpreting, transmitting, and translating knowledge.

This category represents the discussion around the desire, obligation, and contribution to the passing of knowledge from ancestors (parents through to earlier tūpuna) to the next generation. As one of the clearest themes to develop, the transmission of knowledge appeared to manifest in both the desire to continue their own learning but also the desire to impart knowledge/mātauranga to their whānau, communities, and younger generations through their mahi or physical activity pursuits.

6.1.1 Toi Akoako

“The art of learning, teaching and sharing”

- *Learning lessons*
- *Teaching generations*
- *Sharing mātauranga*

Wāhine whose mahi involved a teaching aspect, either explicitly or incidentally, often acknowledged how important the role in transmitting knowledge was and that they didn’t take that role lightly. It was a responsibility that required them to ensure that the lesson, skill, or nugget of knowledge was passed on successfully to those who sought it. Many of the wāhine found themselves in positions or roles where teaching was an integral aspect. In these roles they used many of the skills described by other huahuatau categories to interpret, translate, and/or transmit knowledge in a way that was appropriate for those they were teaching.

Those whose mahi involved teaching or instructing in a physical domain, such as fitness, often required them to make assessments before delivering their instruction. Within this research there were wāhine who were dance fitness instructors, dance teachers, personal trainers, and more. All these roles required the ability to teach physical movements to a range of individuals who in turn had a range of individual

capabilities. Some could be natural movers, some may be less co-ordinated, some may have struggled with the basics of physical movements, while others may have been more advanced. Wāhine who were tasked with teaching in these environments would need to use a range of skills in assessing the capabilities or understanding of those they were teaching, and then translating their message (physical or otherwise) in a way that would result in those individuals gaining understanding and potentially gaining proficiency. Lillian spoke about her approach to coaching her own children in basketball. She noted the different approach she would have to take with one of her sons as compared to the other. She mentioned that one of her sons, who was extremely competitive and hard on himself, was “like a tortured academic.” This meant that her approach to helping him meant taking a different approach. She encouraged him: “you don’t have to be the best shooter; you have to look for what’s missing on the court and do that the best.” In this way Lillian was supporting her son to embrace his competitive nature but in a way that might help him succeed. Both mother and son were rewarded after a tournament and he admitted to her: “I make a difference to my team, I really do.”

Another example of creative teaching or knowledge translation was with Holly’s description of adapting her methods as a dance teacher. She explained that she had students who were young children and students who were much older, and that they both came with their own challenges. Her challenge to herself was to “think outside the box and be able to communicate in different ways.” When teaching toddlers or young children, she would consider:

What are you interested in - you know, what do you feel? Let's be butterflies, let's be frogs, let's be rocket ships. That was definitely my chance to be completely out of the box and I don't know, something about getting into the mindset of a two-year-old, whatever pops into your head goes. So that was always really fun, just doing silly, silly stuff but being able to use that as a teaching mechanism as well. It definitely makes you think about the role of play and the role of pretend...

I mean when you're bouncing around the room being a bunny rabbit with a two-year-old, you're not just being a bunny rabbit. You're teaching them how to jump, how to be coordinated, how to land on the ground with two feet, because for a two-year-old in their brain if they want to move forward, they move one foot at a time. So, if you ask a two-year-old to jump forward and land on two feet it's a real struggle for them; same thing with reaching across your body to the other side. If they're reaching from with their left hand towards the right their brain says use your right hand because that's closer but trying to get them to cross the midline is tricky for them. But yeah, the challenge

there for me is to think about how can I translate that into two-year-old language?

The transmission of knowledge from one place to another, or in this case one person to another, does not always fit into a simple template. Wāhine who were proficient in and took responsibility for transmitting knowledge did so using a range of skills. Often, it was clear that knowledge needed to be translated and transmitted in a way that considered whoever was receiving it.

Beyond those wāhine who found themselves in roles with an explicit teaching aspect, there were those who talked about generational knowledge transmission. Often related to teaching their own children or whānau, or allowing a space for them to learn, wāhine also identified utilising ways they had learnt from mothers, grandmothers, or other whānau. Angelina described the simple act of being prepared for unexpected guests or whānau popping in, to ensure manaakitanga.

And as long as we've got kai in the fridge and the fireplace is going and - it can be a bit like Grand Central Station in this place, but I love it because...that's how my grandmother was. She always used to have...kai on the pot.

Crystal was passionate about allowing a space for her children to learn important lessons about themselves. Te taiao would be the platform for learning in many cases, where exploration and adventures provided challenges for her tamariki to overcome. She described the humbling experience of seeing her kids explore, be challenged, and at times get a hit to the ego. She referred to their interpretation of the whakataukī:

Whaia te iti Kahurangi...ki te tuohu koe, me he maunga teitei... It's coming into these spaces to kind of really humble you...to ensure that your tamariki get the best possible learnings as they go on. But in saying that though, the best thing to do is also sit back and let them fuck up so they know.

In this expression, Crystal allows te taiao to transmit the necessary mātauranga. Her job is to facilitate an opportunity for her tamariki to assess a situation, potentially make their own mistakes, but in doing so gain an understanding of a particular environment or atua, and their ability to engage in it.

Carnation recalls her own experiences with her pāpā and the influence he had on her ways of being, and subsequent ways of relating with her own children. A sense of

generational knowledge transmission that is the essence of the concept – taonga tuku iho.

My earliest thought was how I used to watch my papas' processes... because it wasn't about get up at 7 o'clock and whakamoemiti, they were all about...they felt everything inside the puku, and that it travelled up to the heart and go into here come out the mouth, they'll have an argument maybe go back into the head and come back down to the puku. So, I just remembered that was the process of tikanga for me growing up. And I really link that into the way I walk and talk with my kids. The way I raise them. Because I'm really powerful with my kids because I feel like the generation that I grew up in and the generation that they're part of are worlds apart. So, I do lots of storytelling.

This example gives not only an example of generational teachings, but also the dynamic and adapted nature of that transmission. Carnation assesses the difference between generations and can calibrate the way she “story tells” and her ability to be “powerful” with her kids.

There was the clear distinction that there was little use in wāhine advancing themselves without being able to carry, or tautoko their whānau or wider communities with them. Knisha described how she “accidentally” started a spin class out of her garage because people would ask to join when she trained. So, she agreed to run a regular spin programme for people who chose to join.

'Cause at the end of the day I do want people to train with, swim with, run with, you know and cycle with. I'm only going to get that if I grow people around me and we can grow together.

Yeah, and that I think helps fill my feel-good baskets when I'm helping people with doing that.

Although a seemingly simple act, Knisha’s appreciation that sharing her knowledge, her training, and a space to accommodate that was not only beneficial for those she shared with, but also for herself.

Whether teaching, or learning, or sharing knowledge in explicit or incidental ways, the rewards that come from the transmission of knowledge were richly described. Crystal went on to describe the benefits of both wānanga and (re)connecting with te taiao.

It's been quite a challenge but we're getting there slowly around what that kaupapa really does look like. I think it's more around how we

connect and engage with wai and are able to observe the tohu as it traverses down.

...we run a few wānanga and we do other contract mahi ... so what we do in our wānanga is we kind of bring in all our mates to come and share that knowledge it's so beautiful, like without having to rely on someone to have everything. And you know, just being able to watch our friends flourish in spaces or watching the participants so in awe and it's really rewarding for us to be able to bring all our mates in to share their knowledge.

Similarly, Sherilee plants metaphorical seeds in her students and seems stoked to hear when they remember the contribution she made to their lives.

Seeing kids, kids a lot of the time are just so raw, and they are honest. And the best part of my job is being able to impart that, watch them grow and love. And come back to me 20 years later and say, "Miss, I still remember you helping me out."

And finally, Nikora described how the impetus to learn te reo Māori came when her children were born and that the rewards soon followed.

[T]he world just fell into place for me. And it keeps falling into place for me because I learn about the values of the atua, and the mana of ngā atua...I'm still finishing my mātauranga Māori masters. But being able to teach it to whaiora makes it all the more priceless.

Although knowledge and the understanding it brings, can be a reward in itself, the residual or peripheral benefits of community flourishing through reciprocal relationships, both personal and environmental, are also significant.

6.1.2 Ira – Tangata

<i>"Genes and physique"</i>	
•	<i>Physical attributes</i>
•	<i>Genetic contributions</i>

The other way that wāhine described the heritage of knowledge or influence was through physical or apparent genetic transmission. Ira – tangata transmission describes how our genetics or physical attributes can express mātauranga or āhua from tūpuna and can influence what we do or how we do it, in this case in the context of physical activity. An observable representation of whakapapa is the physical features we possess

and the influence they have in how and what we do. From a simple association between the size of her feet and her swimming ability and love for the water for Alyx, to more generalised observations of physique and their benefits to chosen sports, each may hold insights into wāhine connections to tūpuna.

Ellen took the opportunity to generalise Māori women's abilities when it came to physicality.

I think in terms of wāhine, they are naturally physically good. They may not be the best, but they can catch a ball, they can move. Yeah, that's what I think. We've just got it. We just don't know we've got it.

Ellen may be alluding to the idea of Māori possessing the blueprint for proficiency in physical activity. Simplifying the notion that the physicality of tūpuna Māori is innate, whether active or dormant in contemporary Māori. Celia took this concept to the next level and argued that success was tied to adaptation, and that the lack of adaptation may be why in some cases the dormant blueprint remained.

... something we've been really good at, and you can see from our tūpuna and what they've done, adapted, adapted. When you look at where we are as Indigenous people, internationally, we are this far ahead in certain places because we adapted, extremely quickly. And we fought, we adapted, and we fought. But I think we've come to a place where we've sort of stopped a little bit, adapting. Because people have been trying to hold so strongly on to our culture that it's not letting it evolve the way it should.

Celia was not necessarily talking about physical activity but more about broader aspects of hauora, tikanga Māori, and our adaptation to contemporary challenges.

Teresa describes a challenging time of her own, where she was told by one of her male relatives to stop training because she was pregnant. She was reminded by her mother that her tūpuna, those whose genetic material she carries, knew what their bodies were capable of during pregnancy,

...I used to be on the farm every day and be milking and you know your grandmother was the hardest working person and she gave birth on the land and then got up and milked the cows again. And our tūpuna, you're right, our tūpuna were so active... they knew what made them safe and if they were tired, they had rest, if they're hungry they'd eat.

Teresa's mum directly refers to the physicality potential within wāhine, the inherent lineage of its expression within her own whānau, and the concept of body sovereignty. Teresa fulfilled the kōrero of her mother and the example of her tūpuna with many examples of how she exhibited control over her own body, being physical, strong, and conscious of its abilities. Teresa's example may straddle the borders of a couple of other huahuatau by fulfilling potential and bucking "conventional" expectations.

6.2 Mana Wahine Influence[r]s

<i>"Female role models"</i>	
•	<i>Inspiring and being inspired</i>
•	<i>Matriarchal influence</i>

As an early developing theme among my kōrero with wāhine, they would often describe an important female role model that had a positive influence on them. Wāhine would usually only describe the way they were influenced, rather than identifying themselves as a role model. But almost every woman I spoke to identified in some capacity, another important female figure who inspired, motivated, or had some positive influence on them now having a physically active lifestyle. Wāhine were positively influenced by other wāhine. But they too were influencers.

The influence of significant women as an early developing sentiment was one that I noted but never directly asked about. Regardless, wāhine would mention a mother, grandmother, aunt, friend, or other influential woman in their active lives. These influential women would inspire, motivate, support, or instigate physical activity in the lives of wāhine participants. Not always stated directly or intentionally, the *Mana Wāhine Influence* did appear to be a strong thread throughout many, if not all conversations.

There were casual mentions of being headstrong like her mother, from Alison, where others clearly identified a dominant matriarchal line in their whānau, like Angelina. She described her grandmother as a very, very strong person. "She didn't have to put up with any shit, that was for sure...she was very, very staunch and whānau was first, and she was always there for everybody."

The mother and daughter “dynamic duo” of Carnation and Summer-Love both spoke of their mothers in endearing terms. The reciprocal role of mother and daughter was initially articulated by Carnation, who describes her own mum as remaining “wholly as a mother, by default” and inspiring her and her sisters “to chase goals, push down barriers. Don't be afraid to speak up. Just make sure you know what you're talking about. Don't talk kaka. No one will understand you; no one will respect you.” Carnation was inspired to take her mother’s advice and mātauranga to not only do well for herself but to honour her mother.

We chased down education, our degrees, our diplomas. They didn't mean anything to us. The paper didn't mean any to us but fulfilling what we believe in, and what our mum didn't get a chance to do. As a part of keeping her mana intact.

Summer-Love also spoke fondly of her relationship with her mum, Carnation. The protective māmā role that Carnation has is clearly appreciated by Summer-Love. They now co-lead a dance-inspired community fitness group and refer to themselves as the “dynamic duo”. Summer-Love explains:

I knew that at some point my mum would come together and become like a duo. And I don't want to sound like a baby or anything, but I need to have her there with me all the time because I get quite nervous. And having my mum there gives me a form of confidence, a lot of confidence.

Mana’s mother demonstrated that she was stronger and more capable than her daughter had thought her to be. Mana noted that her mum surprised her after the death of her father and Mana changed the way she thought about her mum completely.

I find her quite amazing. What changed her world was she got cancer. And I always thought she was a bit timid and a little bit emotionally vulnerable, really weak. But she got cancer and she's like, well I'm not talking about it because there's nothing I can do, but now I'm going to have an operation blah blah blah. And she's cycled and walked every day since, even though she didn't like it. And she can walk better than I can. And she's seventy-three.

With this short description of Mana’s mum, it is possible that Mana inherited her sense of pragmatism (described in earlier sections) from her mother.

Living up to a mother’s expectations, inspiration, or example was something that several wāhine would talk about. But like Carnation and her desire to achieve success

to honour the fact that her mother didn't have the same opportunities, Sherilee found inspiration in living longer and healthier for her late mother.

I'm the age now that my mother was when she died. That's probably a huge thing for me a huge motivator to want to live longer. Healthier. And I always think about her when I'm active like she would love me playing league. She would've loved it. And so, I did a lot of things because I thought if mum had lived, she will have loved it.

By honouring her mother's influence Carnation's success is connected to her mother's mana. By living a healthier, longer, and arguably more fulfilled life Sherilee connected the mana of her mother to her own success.

Wāhine were inspired and motivated by wāhine outside of their family too. Some spoke of neighbours, friends, or team members who directly or indirectly influenced physical activity and success. Crystal mentioned a lady who travelled a long distance to make it to a community health and fitness class every morning. "[S]he never gave up and she was quite a big person. So, she became our motivation." Others identified high achieving women in their sport, that provided an example of success or a symbol to compete with. Teresa talks about the start of her journey with CrossFit and striving to get better and better. She identified another woman she knew from a previous sporting career as her competition and a someone to strive to out-do.

...she was lifting the weight and I was like oh that skinny white girl, I will be stronger than her I thought, I could give that a go and then you know I know she's got some weight on there and anyway they gave me the bar and it went right over my head, and I was like, "No, I don't like it." So, then they said come back the next day.

Teresa eventually used the experience to keep getting better and striving to get stronger and stronger.

Similarly, Carnation reflected on her netball career and how the women she competed against were inspiration to her training ethic.

I just learnt so much and I just you know. And I remember the little seeds of people. That they plant in you, even if they don't talk with you directly or spend time with you. You were still part of something. And I remembered a habit. A habit of, they had dreams and goals, so I remember their habits of practicing that goal, two hundred goals a week, a day, left hand, right hand. So, I learned about how to be really vigorous and rigorous.

Carnation explained earlier that she wasn't always the most skilful player, but her tenacity coupled with the ability to learn from and be inspired by role models or sporting idols, was a significant way that she established her path to success.

There was even an unexpected rivalry between two of the wāhine in this research. The competitive nature of many of these women was clear, and obviously part of the influence that wāhine have in this context. Clearly between Vania and Teresa there was a mutual respect that complemented the sense of competition. As Vania describes,

I wasn't as fast as some. But I was better than Teresa Butler anyway. Tell her that haha. Vania says she was better than you Teresa Butler. I don't even know how she's doing that kind of training. CrossFit. But she's lifting some heavy stuff. She's lifting some heavy stuff.

She compliments Teresa again, "...in the South Island you get the people like Teresa Butlers that are very naturally, they've got those physiques, but they've also got that ngakau." The healthy competition described is an example of the way these wāhine influence each other to succeed reciprocally, pushing each other to be better and pulling each other along. Regardless of the intent or description of the influence of wāhine on other wāhine, mana was often involved. Whether it was a mana-enhancing word of encouragement, an act of motivation, or a competitive nudge, these wāhine were clear that it made a difference to them.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter, *Ngā taonga tuku iho* illustrated the diverse ways that wāhine were committed to knowledge transmission. They were dedicated to advancing their own learnings. They were often in roles that facilitated the learning of others. And they understood the importance of sharing what was handed down to them to others. Some were adept at the skills of tūpuna while others used contemporary means to pass on what they knew. Whether articulated with a hoe through water, via a hockey stick on turf, or through dance steps in a community hall – wāhine demonstrated *Ngā taonga tuku iho* to continue a generational transmission of knowledge.

Chapter 7 Rakanga Waewae – Skilled footwork

Raka: (verb) to be adept, skilful, dexterous.

Waewae: (noun) leg, foot, footprint.

Rakanga Waewae: (noun) dexterity of the feet, fleet footed, skilful footwork.

The ability to maintain balance between worlds, roles, relationships, and ways of being. To move nimbly between spaces.

This huahuatau describes and examines the concept of maintaining balance. The term – *Rakanga Waewae* was one that I discovered as it might relate to warriors who were nimble footed in battle, but in this research context, it manages to encompass the physical nature and skill required of wāhine to maintain balance upon changing terrain. This huahuatau required a journey of its own to develop but eventually landed gracefully upon this term and its wider interpretations. Whether it was knowing certain personal characteristics or implementing the learnings from previous experiences, wāhine would often speak of the importance of navigating spaces or situations with balance. Many of the wāhine spoke of their multiple roles and responsibilities as wāhine Māori, māmā, leaders, business owners, and more, and the need to navigate those roles carefully. They also spoke of the constant need and conscious decision to keep a sense of balance within themselves, physically and emotionally. The ability to navigate those roles carefully, stand in multiple worlds, and balance the needs of self and others were all part of how these wāhine displayed *Rakanga Waewae*.

The appeal of the term, *Rakanga Waewae* also includes a beautiful visual and physical representation. I imagine a fierce, brown, wahine toa, barefoot and agile in battle, moving in and around danger, putting herself into spaces that others may not be able to navigate. Jumping from one place to another with skill. Moving swiftly, but carefully through shifting terrain. Although, the wahine who contributed to this mahi were not literal warriors moving through danger in battle, their ability to move as wahine toa through contemporary challenges brings to life the essence and practice of *Rakanga Waewae* that is so valuable.

The three āhuatanga involved with demonstrating *Rakanga Waewae* will be examined below, with reference to discussions with wāhine. *Māwhitiwhiti* relates to the ability and often necessity for wāhine to be able to jump from one place to another, to be agile, and to be able to reposition when required. *Kākano Whakauru* illustrates the position wāhine often find themselves in, straddling two worlds, having two (or more) ancestries, or being from two tribes. This “two-tribeness” allows wāhine to see multiple perspectives but it can also be a challenge in gaining acceptance or authenticity within either group. Finally, *Āhuatanga Whaiaro* is the ability of wāhine to know themselves, their strengths and weaknesses, and what they need in order to find balance. Each āhuatanga represents the need for constant recalibration, rebalancing, and shifting. Each acknowledges the need to keep assessing their environment or their selves in order to adjust accordingly. Keeping balance is not standing firm in one place, it is dynamic and takes constant work. These wāhine displayed that dynamic work in their *Rakanga Waewae*.

Whether through their activity or within themselves, balancing in the “in-between” spaces was often apparent in much of what wāhine would describe. Emerald described it as finding her “middle ground”. This could involve engaging in specific natural environments, as Celia explained:

...you've just got this amazing stunning view of open ocean and the harbour, and you can see all the way back into Whāngarei...and you're walking through these massive, big, beautiful trees and big, massive rocks and its very raw and natural. You feel small and insignificant

Finding people who complement you or have a contrasting approach to you, like the example Knisha gave of her and her husband's differing skills on the rugby league field:

Yeah, we've got different ways. I cut lines nice and hard; he steps through lines. Yeah, even his mates ...His mates used to tease him, you know, “shit, the missus can tackle all right”. You know, where he's sort of “come and help me”.

Wāhine also used physical activity as a way to find equilibrium, often observing the need to balance a high intensity or high impact activity with something that calms or channelled energy in less intense ways. Sherilee came to understand the need to balance her natural high energy with something calmer.

...so the yoga is balancing me out. This insane amount of high energy that I have in my body. It can be quite full on. So, paddle boarding, yoga, all of those things, I find are helping me balance out some stuff that can make me – whew!

Sherilee's example conveniently encompassed energetic balance but also physical balance. The balancing requirements of both yoga and stand-up paddle boarding were obvious, and I had the opportunity to experience that physical challenge when Sherilee invited me out on the water with her SUP board. The metaphor of *Rakanga Waewae* leaps straight into reality when you attempt to stand on a SUP in open water, especially while 6 months pregnant, as I was at the time. The interaction between the water, the board, and your feet, along with the many other factors can affect your ability to keep balance. The SUP experience illustrated precisely what this huahuatau is about. Acknowledging the environment, its impact on you and yours on it. Utilising your tools and skills to navigate that terrain as best you can. Adjusting to changes in your environment or within yourself. Learning from all of those interactions. These are the skills that wāhine show when they exhibit *Rakanga Waewae*.

7.1 Māwhitiwhiti

"Grasshopper"	
•	<i>Shifting position</i>
	<i>Being agile</i>
	<i>Moving between and bouncing back</i>

Māwhitiwhiti relates to the constant act of 'jumping' from one place to another, like a grasshopper. This addition to the huahuatau reminds us that in order to manage the different requirements or responsibilities of roles, you must be willing and able to move from the place you currently stand. The ability to move between spaces and bounce back between roles, allows a change of perspective, flexibility, and the ability to manage the range of requirements made of us. Holly described how her activity, dance, prepared her for different ways of being in the world.

I am quite a regimented person, and I don't know if that's because of my ballet training...I mean I also studied lots of other different styles of dance, like for example contemporary is the complete opposite in some ways. It's so free and there's no rules, so I don't know. Maybe if anything it's given me lots of different ways of being - ways of operating as a person I guess, you know?

Summer-Love, also a dancer, offered her example of trying many different genres of dance, which developed in her a wide set of skill when instructing her dance fitness classes with her mum.

I feel like for dancing in general, it all started way back when I was at the age of five. It started off with ballet and jazz and then it went to Latin, and then hip hop. And then that's where all the other different styles of dancing came in. Like the current programme, Ezy and I've done a bit of U-jam, Zumba. I've tried everything.

Using the lessons from one type of physical activity to influence or inform another is another example of how wāhine described keeping balance. When I first met Mana, she was instructing a Qi Gong workshop at a fitness conference. Qi Gong is a movement practice similar to Tai Chi, that incorporates gentle movement, rhythmic breathing, and mindfulness. Although a slow and relatively low-intensity activity, I found coordinating the balance between breath, body movement and flowing through positions, a challenge that required a lot of energy. Mana later described herself as “thriving on high-intensity”, which explains why she also instructs a very intense spin class at a local gym and manages to compete and often out-train many of her younger gym goers. She explained she uses her competitiveness, conditioning, and ability to transfer her knowledge of energy to her advantage.

I learnt it in Tai chi, when we make Tai chi. We move to 80 percent. Because we don't know when we need the extra twenty. What's happening in modern day training we're training to 100 percent 100 percent 100 percent, then we go to perform, we got nothing left in the tank. So, I think in my own mind I always know I've got a bit more.

Not all wāhine had that particular insight about retaining energy, others clearly would be categorised as the “100 percent 100 percent” types. But regardless of this, many wāhine had the insight to find balance once that style of energy-use ran its course, by moving purposely towards lower intensity, calming, or rejuvenating activities.

7.2 Kākano whakauru

“Being of two tribes”

- *Multiple perspectives*
- *Straddling positions*

Illustrating a similar sentiment and connected to the act of *Māwhitiwhiti*, *Kākano Whakauru* extends to the position that many contemporary Māori [wāhine] find themselves in, straddling two (or more) ancestries. Whether being from more than one iwi or more than one ethnic background, these differences can require wāhine to consider, from both perspectives, how to navigate the world successfully. This often is required while being pulled in different directions depending on the expectations of each ‘iwi’. Knisha spoke about the struggle to feel accepted as Māori enough, due to her Pasifika heritage, and vice versa. The feeling of not quite making the grade if “my kapa haka is not up to it, if I don't know a certain song, I'm reminded that oh yeah, that's right”. Being in Māori and Pasifika leadership roles, Knisha described “I sit on my own marae Trust Board. You know? So - but am I only Māori to a point? And that's what I say to them; why can't I be both? Why can't that be all right?” The struggle to find your footing in whichever role, heritage, or world you are standing in is a constant challenge that can take a toll on wāhine.

Other wāhine who mentioned being seen as ‘not Māori enough’ or balancing perspectives on being Māori noted it being due to their pale skin and features. Whether being brought up as Pākehā, not knowing their Māori heritage, or being challenged on their Māori-ness, these wāhine have developed a confidence to move skilfully between the range of roles they found themselves in.

...funny thing that I don't even look Māori enough, but I am. And the only people that don't believe it are the white people... Even though I didn't look like it. I just sit with that now. I kept looking and I keep looking and I keep looking and trying to find and I just sit with it and if it emerges it does. And I'll just keep being me.

Mana stood firm in her two-worldness and didn't need to justify to others whether she is Māori or Māori enough, owning that position she described herself as being able to “walk in many worlds”. Similarly, Emerald owned her position at the intersection of two worlds but also acknowledged the significance of her ancestral home:

Well, I always spent my whole life in Whenuapai in West Auckland. Apart from flatting for a little bit, so I definitely identify with that area as home. And I guess I was brought up with the bogan westy, west side life. So, I still identify with that sort of culture in a funny way. But yeah, I mean every time I went back home. The other home. I still identify with that space too.

Christina went a step further to ensure that her mokopuna were aware that despite their pale skin, they are Māori and should understand where they come from and where they belong.

And I talk to them about being Māori. I talked to them about this is where our people originally came from. We came from up here. We actually went down to the South Island and we're Māori. And they go, I'm not brown. I said, yeah but Kai Tahu were not brown. We're not brown. There are browner ones, but you know generally we're quite pale. We're brown on the inside. So, we started talking about things and taught them their pepeha and talking about would you like to come to marae one time.

In that case, Christina ensured her mokopuna knew their heritage so they were prepared to skilfully navigate a world where they may be perceived one way but can remain assured in who they are.

There were other ways that wāhine spoke of their 'two-tribeness', some saw similarities between their two heritages, others described how they were distinctly separated. Either way, this position often enabled a transferrable skillset that was applicable to a range of other situations. Describing her success in balancing two perspectives of religion or spirituality, Nikora illustrated how her skill has influenced the perspective of her father – a Ratana Apostle.

So, for me I'm always connected to te ao Māori anyway. I find I always have that because my father's Āpotoro in the Ratana church. But the downside to that, which I've learned through coming through the whare wānanga is that we learn things te pō and te ao. So, I have a good balance of things Christian and things te ao Māori. Yeah. And the good thing is my father's now come around. So, he doesn't mind me learning all these old karakia but it's because I understand them and because when you go to whare wānanga, university, you get taught those words. Through my mātauranga Māori masters, so I'm not afraid of that.

The influence that whānau, or earlier generations, would have over wāhine experiences of being Māori or identifying as Māori was often significant. One example brought in the idea of assimilation and the successful way in which it operates. Ellen described

how being Māori was for her. “[S]o unbeknownst to us we grew up assimilating Pākehā, because we don't know. We just is who we is, if you know what I mean?”

The challenge of being contemporary Māori and navigating contemporary times means that wāhine would require an ability to balance and stand in multiple worlds and ways of being. This struggle could mean they were perceived to be “less Māori” or could mean they were afforded an advantageous position that others were not privy to. The ability to straddle the roles and responsibilities associated with being of “two-tribes” often gave wāhine a perspective that allowed them to weigh both positions and see multiple ways forward.

7.3 Āhuatanga whaiaro

“Knowing your person[ality]”

- *Self-awareness*
- *Knowing what's needed when*

This section relates to the way wāhine understand and keep in check the different aspects of their personality. Some spoke of the perceptions of wahine vs tāne traits, behaviours, or responsibilities and the challenges that entails. Others mentioned knowing their weaknesses or temperaments that require them to implement certain counterbalances. This could be the knowledge that you are naturally high energy and drawn to high intensity activities, but also being aware that you need to balance that aspect with a calming or low energy activity, for example, adding yoga to balance high impact or more strenuous activity. This theme also covers the way that wāhine discussed the complementing or contrasting traits that their partners, friends or whānau members provide to certain dynamics.

Often there were discussions about the ideas of femininity and masculinity, and the expectations around them. Some would talk about activities or traits that were associated with masculinity and others associated with femininity. Sherilee shares her balancing act between conventionally masculine and feminine energies, activities, and aspects of her own personality.

... if I'm boxing, because that aggressive sport really appeals to me. I like to be able to think I can survive. I've always loved to compete against boys...But dance is pretty. Dance is hot. It's different, it's like

a flip side to league. One of my league girls says to me one day, you're such a boy, but you're such a girl. She goes, how do you do both things, equally? I like handbags, what can I say. But put a ball in my hand and I'm going to run as hard as I can.

Apikera also referred to facing up to the idea of masculinity and the perceptions of the effects of lifting weights. By gaining a better understanding, and a sense of confidence, she realised that those perceptions were inaccurate.

My understanding of it, I didn't really have much. I always thought that whenever I used weights that I'd start looking masculine, but it wasn't until I actually did it and did it more that I realised oh hell, this is actually benefitting me, and I don't look masculine.

Having a broader understanding of the balancing aspects of masculinity and femininity, along with a less constricted view of the many expressions of being wahine, Mana shared how she connected with atua movements while choreographing a Qi Gong practice:

Papatūānuku was easy enough because I'm way more connected to Papatūānuku than I might be to Ranginui, regardless of gender. Because I often identify, as tangata ira tāne, I have more of the essence of the masculine in me. However, I resonate more strongly with Papatūānuku.

Mana went on to describe how she was gifted her name and the relevance of its gender-neutrality to her. “Ko Mana Aroha ahau. So, its Mana Aroha. I dropped the Aroha because it softens me...” Mana explained that she identifies with a more masculine energy at times and that “Aroha makes me a little more approachable”. Her sense of balance means tending towards what she calls “tangata ira tāne”.

The sense of self-awareness was evident with much of what wāhine would describe about themselves. Some would identify temperaments or behaviours in themselves that they found challenging. Others would realise that their connection with physical activity was a part of what kept these traits in check. Lillian knew that her bubbly personality and desire to talk and catch up with friends meant that “going for a run” with them actually just meant that they’d just spend the whole time talking. She preferred to play basketball instead, admitting: “it’s easier to run for a ball than to go for a run.”

On the other hand, Emerald talked about her tendency to keep (overly) busy at times. She reflected on how the process of learning to balance a stubborn sense of being able to take on more and more responsibilities could be problematic.

I think it all comes back to that stubborn thing, like I sort of refuse to think that there is an upper limit. So yeah, that can be a problematic mindset. But I've always, there's been so many sort of adversities or you know, you could focus on the obstacles or you can focus on the fact that no one believed I would do this, and this and this and I keep doing this and this and this and this and it's like there is no end, I'm just gonna keep doing this and this and this but it's about sort of reining it in sometimes because I think you can burn yourself out by giving too much and all the time... just trying to make sure that you become clearer and clearer, not always 20/20 vision but just clarified that the purpose, like why are you doing all this stuff?

Admitting that the process is not always simple and can often require a bit of trial and error, Emerald described how she needed to make a few mistakes before she came to a place of balance.

I lost a lot of weight at that time, and I thought I was healthy, but I wasn't, just going to the other extreme, overtraining and under eating. So yeah, it took me a few years, but I eventually found my middle ground.

Christina and Ellen found their sense of middle ground in an acceptance of their stage in their life. Christina called it “seasonality”; Ellen described a sense of relativity and a realisation of what she was capable of doing being sufficient to keep her satisfied. She illustrated this when talking about her relationship with Pilates and doing what her body needs.

When I go to Pilates it's all about brain and body, you know, the connection. And honestly, there are a lot of things that if I didn't do different things, I wouldn't know that my brain has shut down on different activities, different movements and things like that.

Well, I've been going for about seven years, but you know, the Pilates teacher who I had automatically come to me because I can never get...where we put our legs...

...but the thing is I can never get the legs to go right and so that's good and I've had all those years and still it's not right, but that's okay. You know, I just laugh, and they all laugh too, because we're all more or less the same age...

...so, there are different types of activities that one is more inclined to move towards. I do things like I always have a massage once a week, so there's always not taking for granted with my age I still need all of that to keep me going.

Vania talked about an awareness of her connection to her Ngai Tahu identity providing her with a sense of grounding. But also, being aware of her need to develop a further connection with to her Te Whānau Apanui heritage.

So, I'm Ngai Tahu. I've been fortunate enough to be around from a young girl being at Te Waipounamu Māori girls' college and then I've worked for Ngai Tahu for many years and then I've worked for my degree, so I've got a real decent grounding connecting from my waiata to my mōteatea to my karanga to my whakapapa. Everything that my identity relates to Aoraki but then my dad's side too which is my Te Whānau Apanui side, it could be stronger, but I think it's really important to have identity and really know who the hell you are. Especially today especially being out there in that world.

Vania's early grounding in te ao Māori afforded her the opportunity to develop a sense of self, aligned with a Ngai Tahu heritage, but it also allowed her to be aware of times when to move more carefully in certain spaces. As a kaikaranga, she described her role when calling manuhiri required her to have a keen sense of balancing energy and safety.

So, you've also got to be able to connect to that other world... When you start your presence of mihi-ing to the other side of the world ...when they're coming on. But probably tangihanga is probably one of the strongest where I do feel those other sides of our tūpuna. And you've got to keep yourself safe at the same time. Yeah. So, relating yourself to your tūpuna and if they're connecting and you encourage it, but you set aside what you think is right and what's what you want to keep. What do you want to keep in your head? What you are putting in whatever space that is whatever it looks like to you.

The way in which wāhine were able to be aware of self and others, meant that they could identify and sometimes capitalise on the opportunity to balance those conflicting, complementing, or enhancing personal traits for gain. The skill of *Rakanga Waewae* meant wāhine needed to see potential dangers, understand how to navigate them, and remain in a position to advance. The picture of an agile warrior moving about the battlefield, navigating danger, helping those in need, and sometimes being able to move between spaces that others do not have access to. This is how these wāhine approach their contemporary challenges, with vision, flexibility, adaptability, and agility.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the huahuatau, *Rakanga Waewae*. It represented the constant balancing act that wāhine demonstrate in their various roles, multiple responsibilities, and ability to straddle often conflicting spaces. *Rakanga Waewae* intended to illustrate the way wāhine can move nimbly and navigate changing terrain. More than the ability to merely *be* balanced, *Rakanga Waewae* contends that wāhine are actively manoeuvring and constantly adapting to the demands they face. The reference to dexterous or skilful footwork illustrates the physical and ongoing nature of keeping balance amongst varying demands. It also extends to having an ability to balance their own personality traits (Āhutatanga Whaiaro), the wahine/tāne elements, and those that complement or conflict with behaviours or people they chose to engage with. The act of moving between roles or spaces is illustrated by two converging metaphors: Māwhitiwhiti and Kākano Whakauru. Each of these two metaphoric traits also describe the act of navigating different worlds, roles or expectations.

Chapter 8 Poipoia te Kākano kia Puāwai – Realising Potential

Poipoia: (verb) to nurture or care for

Kākano: (noun) seed, kernel, pip, berry, grain, ova, ovum, egg cell, descent, stock, ancestry, lineage, pedigree.

Puāwai: (verb) (-tia) to bloom, come to fruition, open out (of a flower). (noun) flower, blossom, bloom.

Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai: nurture the seed and it will blossom.

Refers to latent and active potential that wāhine possess and what is required to bring that potential to realisation. Bringing to fruition the potential that lies within.

This huahuatau is named for the whakataukī which speaks to the need to nurture a seed in order for it to blossom into its full potential. The potential or latency within these metaphorical seeds were discussed in a range of ways. Whether referring directly to the concept of fulfilling potential or telling stories that contribute to a narrative of potential, many of the wāhine I spoke to were committed to realising their potential. Not only that, often they were also intent on ensuring those around them were also nurtured, so that the whakapapa potential that lay within them, was able to come to fruition. This huahuatau explores two stages of realising potential or the fruition of a seed. The two stages include: *Ngā kākano* (seeds), or the latency they represent and the need for them to be nurtured in order to grow/blossom. Secondly, *Puāwaitanga* (blossom or blossoming), where potential is realised, and the ultimate manifestation of a flower is displayed.

8.1 Ngā Kākano

“Being the seed”

- Refers to the latency of a seed
- Holding potential within
- Nurturing potential.

The potential that wāhine often referred to was positioned in their bodies, their genetics, their whakapapa (through tūpuna), and in others. Carnation referred to her puku (stomach), a site of much importance for Māori. She noted how her potential to do more (activity) was an antithesis to doing nothing or being inactive. She also encountered outside challenges, as a physical seed might encounter on its own journey to growing into something taller, stronger, and more. “I always knew inside my puku that I had a capability. And I had a lot of people try and knock that out of me through the years.”

The metaphor of the seed continues with Ellen’s reference to an energy exchange in relationships. Ellen talks about not investing in a relationship if she’s not getting, as she puts it, “a pound of flesh”. Being wise about how and where you invest energy or resources will definitely influence the likelihood of potential successful fruition. If Ellen, or others, are reckless and overly generous in giving or investing in others, the payoff may not be worthwhile. Being wise about how you expend mental, emotional, or physical energy in the pursuit of achieving potential is a way that, in this example, Ellen ensures she’s not watering metaphorical seeds that may never even sprout.

With a direct reference to potential, Mana explained that in her case it was about a decision but also that there were a range of factors that can influence living up to your potential.

I think we're on this earth to live to our fullest potential. If we're not, we're only half alive so I think my world changed the day I went: I choose to live”. And so, when we live well... going back to Te tapa wha, Hinengaro, tinana, wairua, and they also put whānau,

She continued by challenging that sometimes those factors that can help you flourish can also contribute to further challenges. Returning to the metaphorical seed, Mana’s comments could imply that like a seed that may need to take hold in earth

unencumbered by the roots and tangles of its tūpuna, some of us may need to find environments or whānau that nurture us in other ways or allow ourselves space to thrive. Mana continues:

...but sometimes whānau can be our greatest health problem. And it depends, what you mean by whānau. Because sometimes those that boost us might need to step over here while we develop, whānau in a stronger way or a different way. Or a unique way, especially Takatāpui.

Mana described how achieving our potential can sometimes require different things (or people) at different times in our growth.

Vania offers the most direct reflection of this metaphor when asked about her connection to atua wāhine. She reflected on her admiration for the atua, Marama, who personifies the moon, and her contribution to the growth of seeds.

...so, atua wahine, I look at Marama, if it wasn't for her, the seeds wouldn't grow, your kākano...i ruia mai i Rangiātea...photosynthesis and things like that you know just kai in general... from the seeds to the beautiful nutrients because you need that sun for it to grow...

Vania mentioned another well-known whakataukī that refers to Māori as seeds that are sown from Rangiātea – a place, both physical and metaphysical thought to be within the ancestral homeland of Hawaiki. This whakataukī reminds us that we cannot be lost because we are connected to each other and this metaphysical homeland. *E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea.* Rangiātea is thought to be a realm of higher learning (Royal, 2005b), and the concept of connecting learnings to new opportunities is shared by Sherilee.

I've made some massive mistakes in my life...generally centred around people that I've chosen to be involved with, yeah it probably wasn't a good idea although it's all learning. And that just leads into something else which leads into something else. Which connects to something else, but it all has a little bit of physicality and learning about the shell of the body that you've got, what you've actually got to work with.

Her words also illustrated the process of a seed whose sprouts reach out to discover ways of nurturing itself and finding ways to grow into its potential. Each new learning, whether a root planted in rich soil (rich relationships) or boggy or barren earth (challenging relationships), offers an opportunity to grow from it. In some cases, the

lesson tells us where not to go again. In other cases, it reinforces that we are on the right track and nurturing and putting down strong roots will serve us well.

8.2 Puāwaitanga

“Being the flower”

- *To recognise the need to realise one’s potential.*
- *The act of coming into one’s own,*
- *Fulfilling and displaying one’s potential.*

The physical and taiao-connected nature of *Puāwaitanga*, or the act of coming into flower, is an ideal metaphor to illustrate the way wāhine value and articulate the importance of reaching potential or getting the best out of yourself. On many occasions, wāhine would describe the importance of living up to potential in a physical way. By identifying that they had the potential to do exceptional, positive, or useful things with their body, they would do what they could to make the most of their opportunities to use their body. Alyx prioritised activity in order to keep her body working for her. “I just like looking after my body. Cos you know, I’m lucky. Being active is a privilege for me.” Having an appreciation for her body’s potential and abilities, she wanted to ensure she was still able to do what she loved. Angelina shared that sentiment and realised that using her activity potential had additional benefits.

I think it's given me confidence to do so much more, and I always think like me, my body, it's my investment. I've got to look after it to be able to look after other people and I've got the energy.

With the realisation that her investment in keeping herself strong and fit, she was also able to continue nurturing and lifting others up. She noted an appreciation for what her lifestyle did for her confidence and her appearance at certain times in her life. Valuing her body for what it could do, how it looked, but also appreciating that those skills, abilities, are all just seasonal. Just like a blossom, in many cases, those flowers are there for a time and at other times your growth has other purposes.

...it's a whole other world, so that kind of picks you up again and you go actually I like how I look, I like how - you know, I had a six-pack, and I was like - but you've got to be happy with that in the time that you're in it you know.

The concept of blossoming or flowering was articulated in some other interesting ways. Wāhine would sometimes talk about their appearance, looking good, its connection to confidence, and that enjoying “pretty things” or looking good was, at times a valuable aspect of their overall self and self-esteem. Sometimes it was about being happy with what they saw in the mirror, sometimes it was about other people noticing their presentation, and other times it was about how their looks were integral to the way they were perceived.

Summer Love and her mum, Carnation even had a hashtag that described their approach and appearance. As co-leaders of their community dance fitness group, they knew it was important that they be conscious of the way they presented themselves, as leaders.

We just made our own trademark, we're Māori girls got curls. That's our dance cue. Cos every Māori woman, everyone has leadership attributes. And we all have a role to play. And leadership is about letting Māori women shine and trying to be who they are. We have paint on today, and every now and then we straighten our hair, but most of the time we're curly haired Māori girls. That's always our hashtag.

Carnation described how they sometimes wore makeup and straighten their hair, but they usually presented themselves more naturally. Carnation was implying that although they also enjoyed dressing up and wearing “paint,” they believed in presenting themselves in a more approachable and genuine way. They spoke about wearing Kmart workout gear and prioritising being approachable to their fitness class, so that there was less of a divide between them. As tino ātaahua wāhine Māori, their beauty was still obvious, and Summer Love reflects on how that meant she was in demand a lot when she became an instructor. “[B]eing such a young Māori girl I didn't think I was that eye catching to people at first. But as soon as I got out there everybody just suddenly grabbed me from different directions.” Her mum reiterated how her daughter attracted a lot of attention because of her appearance, as well as her talent.

Because she's so young. She's one of the youngest Zumba instructors in NZ. She's the youngest... And because of that appeal that she's really untouched. She's a humble baby. She's a real humble baby. People pick up on her vibes straight away and they want her here and here.

Carnation illustrated how the combination of beauty, talent, youth, and in this case humility, was a highly attractive combination, especially in their industry. In Summer Love's case, she was grateful to have the support and protection of her mother. Being

so young, she was still growing in her confidence to stand proudly as a tino ātaahua wahine.

Other wāhine, like Sherilee, were firm in their place of confidence. Sherilee presented herself sometimes as an apparent contradiction to her friends who were often baffled that she could be a hardened league player but also enjoy “the trappings of the dresses and the sparkle” of dance. Sherilee considered how she grew up not having a lot of money but choosing to dance when she was able to afford to.

I've always loved dancing. When you're Māori and you grow up on...not the most well-off side of town, and as I got older, we didn't have swimming lessons, ballet, ever. We got the local sports club which is still huge. And so, dance, when you can afford to do sports. I would pick dance. There's the trappings of the dresses and the sparkle. I just love it, I love dance.

Sherilee declared that she could have it both ways and that's okay. She was happy to get smashed on the league field while also being into handbags and pretty things associated with dancing. Being confident in their “blossoms” was a shared sentiment that women like Sherilee, described in their own unique ways.

The commitment and sacrifice that wāhine would put into achieving their goal, whether time or energy, was reflected and appreciated in the pride they had in what they achieved: the blossom. Although, there were indeed aspects of ego and vanity mentioned, the sense was that there was still a strong mana wahine vibe to that vanity. Less about whakahīhī (being boastful) and more about an appreciation for the outcome and an acknowledgement of its beauty, whether it was physical or otherwise.

Christina articulated a sense of confidence in herself in recognising her talents and that her confidence was part of a seasonality that she was coming into.

So, this year I'm going to try to get on the executive and also this year, I have a mission to get into more governance roles...So there are four or five boards in the Ngai Tahu group that need directors. So, I'm gonna put my CV in...

Christina realised that she had a set of skills that she had developed over her life and that they had value, not only to her but potentially her wider iwi. Recognising the value of her skills and their potential meant that she set a goal to be on three governance boards by the end of the year, in order to set herself up for retirement. Christina's

recognition of her value was a step towards better self-awareness where she was able to accept herself for who she was and how she got to where she was.

...seasonality, you know I feel like this is my season, I'm coming into my season, which is weird because I'm so old, I'm nearly sixty. Two years away from being sixty but I don't feel like it. I look at other young people and go, you're amazing, I wonder what I could've done if I'd been like you at that age. Nah, then I wouldn't be me...I needed to be smoothed and cracked and sharpened and dulled... I needed to be worked like pounamu, like Aotea. I was a bit too rough...

Self-awareness and its connection to realising one's potential was also articulated by Apikera, who had previously described herself as someone who was happy to “fade into the background” and remain invisible. She talked about potential in relation to her powerlifting. Apikera was clearly a strong competitor with natural talent, but she used her humility to keep her confidence in check.

And I would even see myself even if I was like - oh, let's just pretend, hypothesis - that I become the world champ, even then I know I'll still have those doubts...And I love them now, because to me again they just keep me humble. They keep me humble. If I feel too - and it's okay to be confident. I definitely accept that. But when I feel like a - when I recognise the weaknesses in myself, they keep me in check. Well, that's what I'm learning at the moment.

Being naturally confident wasn't the way Apikera presented herself, but her achievements within her short career in powerlifting were clearly giving her reason to consider that maybe she didn't need to fade into the background anymore. Moving into potential, like Apikera, can build a sense of self-confidence, and Ellen described her newfound activity and abilities as giving her “great pride it does, to be able to move, to do things.” Crystal also described a sense of pride in her kapahaka community improving their fitness levels:

[o]ur kapa haka roopu to come in the mornings, just to do - like well basically get themselves at a fitness level where they were able to project the kaupapa or the kōrero that we were trying to get across on stage. And then from there it just flourished. I just - I totally loved it. I loved the fact that we were participating in something that was enhancing the mana of our whānau.

Crystal also talks about how her own children learned about fulfilling the potential of their ancestors, by bearing their names and representing them in their actions.

...and one of our tikanga in our whare is when we walk outside our gates, we have to remember that we are not here for us. We are here, we represent all our ancestors and they're named after their ancestors.

The act of stepping into your potential, flourishing, and displaying your blossoms was articulated by wāhine through action, presentation, and words. Wāhine valued their bodies and what they could do for them. The potential that they have to move in this world physically, was clearly apparent to these wāhine. They knew its value and knew it was worthy to be displayed. Mana explained how simply she views stepping into her potential by being active.

To feel better. It's purely simple, to feel better. You can sit and do all the navel gazing in the whole wide world but to get some of those chemicals out of your body you gotta move and a lot of people do move and feel better and then they get frightened of what feeling better might mean because it might mean they have to step in to pride and strength, into the virtues of pride and strength and mana.

8.3 Conclusion

Acknowledging both potential and realisation, this chapter illustrated how they were clearly both significant to wāhine. They saw their own potential, knew its value, and were conscious that it would not remain unrealised. Whether in themselves, their whānau, or their communities, wāhine were actively involved in ensuring the seed that held their potential was nurtured into realisation, to fruition. From the acknowledgement that we are seeds of Rangiātea, connected to each other (and each other's potential fulfilment) - *E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea*, to the celebration of that realisation and the excellence of achieving that potential - *Kia puta ai te ihu ki Rangiātea*. When our "noses" reach Rangiātea, so too have we reached our potential.

PART THREE – Whakamāori – Whakatinanatanga

Introduction

To whakamāori is to decipher something or translate it into Māori. In this chapter, the findings aren't literally translated into te reo Māori, but they are interpreted and translated in order to make sense of them. The previous chapters (chapters 4 – 8) introduced each of the huahuatau and began to discuss their relevance. This section will continue by including a discussion of the relevance of Ngā Hua(huatau) in relation to what is currently known or proposed in relevant contemporary Māori and other academic literature. Part of this translation and interpretation's intention is to bring into context the taonga shared by the wāhine in this research. In doing so, this chapter will create a space where these taonga, presented as huahuatau, can eventually be made sense of in the context of atua wahine, mātauranga Māori, alongside aspects of other knowledge systems.

In Chapter 2 (Kaupapa – Methodology), I discussed the interface approach and the intersecting space between Māori and Western ways of knowing and/or researching, as well as the space between being Māori and being wahine. This *Whakamāori* chapter will begin to discuss how each huahuatau, perspective, or strand of knowledge is woven together to create a new interpretation of what it means to be an active wahine Māori in contemporary Aotearoa. In the following chapter – *Aro Atua* – the weaving of traditional and contemporary interpretations of atua wāhine will illustrate how the traits described as huahuatau, can provide a template or blueprint for understanding how the mana of wāhine and atua wāhine are (inter)connected. Finally, *Whakatinanatanga* will bring this thesis to a close and draw together the threads of this work to present the way forward. It summarises and synthesizes the contributions. *Whakatinanatanga* is the embodiment and realisation of the chapters that came before it and in so doing represents the fruition, but also offers seeds of potential to begin a new journey of mātauranga.

Chapter 9 Whakamāori

In this chapter, each of the huahuatau identified and described in the previous chapters will be discussed and contextualised with reference to relevant literature. The intention of this discussion is to position the findings within the literature. At times this will include comparisons to findings of other work from varying backgrounds, and at other times it will outline the way that the findings of this research provide an alternative view of similar concepts. Positioning these findings, the huahuatau and associated āhuatanga, within and around other literature, includes assessments of both western and Māori research in areas such as health, psychology, exercise, culture, and more. In the previous chapters, the huahuatau that were developed out of kōrero and korikori kōrero with wāhine, are described and articulated with the very words that wāhine used. My analysis of those words provides a framework for their presentation – as huahuatau. This chapter then follows on from the descriptions in that framework to understand how they fit within current literature, to provide a foundation for answering this research's questions.

9.1 Ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au

Ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au is a considerable section which illustrates transactions with the environment. Weaving those transactions into contemporary literature includes exercise and environmental effects on the physical and psychological (Pikitia ngā maunga and Whakaataata te taiao). It considers how 'conventional' expectations and practices are challenged or changed (Te tangi o te kūmara). It also describes the benefits of finding support systems (Kitea to hapori). Subsequent discussions compare concepts developed in personality psychology and Māori educational assessment and offer alternatives or alterations. These discussions will then lead into a (re)viewing of atua wāhine in the following chapter.

Te tangi o te kūmara

The light-hearted idea of a singing kūmara is an illustration of how we can use the knowledge and practices of our tūpuna and adapt them to our contemporary environments. By no means does this section intend to diminish the significance of the whakataukī: *kāore te kūmara e korero mō tōna ake reka*. What it seeks to illustrate is the ability to see things from different perspectives and adapt depending on where you're standing. It is about having the courage to speak up and be heard, to challenge

expectations, and to be adaptable. In this section Emerald introduced her tūpuna, Muriwai. The story she refers to is significant for a range of iwi around the East Coast of Aotearoa. Its protagonist is said to be responsible for the naming of the nearby town, Whakatāne. While Emerald refers to Muriwai, other descendants refer to Wairaka as being the tūpuna wahine who performed the great feat of paddling her whānau to safety. Jani Wilson (Ngāti Awa, Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Hine, Mataatua) describes her whakapapa connection to Wairaka and the relevance of Wairaka's actions on the development of her own academic and teaching career in Film Studies and Māori Media. She considers the consequence of inaction, as her tūpuna, Wairaka would have done, and as many other wāhine likely do. "Wairaka is constantly with me throughout this persistently choppy navigation around the vast ocean that is academia...Wairaka's DNA is in my veins" (Wilson, 2021, p. 125).

The question raised by Wilson (2021) is one that is echoed in the many comments by the wāhine who contributed to this research. It considers whether we decide to stay in a waka and adhere to predetermined roles and expectations, or whether we acknowledge the metaphorical storm brewing, the impending danger of inaction, and whether we decide to pick up a hoe and paddle to safety. The decision of Wairaka, or Muriwai, to make the decision to stand up and stand out is one that wāhine must consider also. There may be those in our metaphorical waka who may tell us to sit down and leave that hoe for the men. There may be those who encourage us to paddle. And there may be others still, who join us by taking up their own hoe to paddle us to safety. In any case, the story of Wairaka or Muriwai, can teach us about the need to adapt conventional practices, especially when the situation requires it.

One recent example of how tikanga had to adapt to a changing environment was explored by Dawes et al. (2021). On 28 February 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was reported in Aotearoa. By 25 March 2020, Aotearoa had entered Alert Level 4, where the entire country was required to self-isolate within household 'bubbles' and maintain strict physical distancing. The Alert Level 4 (and subsequent level) restrictions meant gatherings such as tangihanga and funerals would be severely affected. Therefore, communities would have to act swiftly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their kaumātua and vulnerable populations – many of whom recognised that tikanga would need to be adapted (Dawes et al., 2021).

Nikora et al. (2010) refer to death and the grieving process at tangihanga as being developed over many generations and one of the most significant expressions of tikanga Māori, while also being integral to Māori cultural identity. Some of the significant practices associated with the tikanga of tangihanga were also those which were most affected by the COVID-19 restrictions. The gestures associated with welcoming those who gather for tangihanga, such as hongi, hariru, and kihi, are seen to be equally important in establishing both physical and spiritual connection. However, with physical distancing and in more severe situations, heavy restrictions on even attending any type of gathering, these practices were seen as a threat to health (Dawes et al., 2021). In particular, the hongi, which is a greeting that consists of the pressing of noses and the exchange of breath, is seen to carry a deep spiritual meaning (Barlow, 1991). Both hongi and hariru, with the sharing of breath, are integral aspects of tikanga Māori with deep connections to te ao Māori, but in the times of COVID-19 restrictions, could also contribute to spreading the virus.

Research conducted as a response to COVID-19 found that kaumātua were willing to alter practices during the epidemic but experienced a sense of diminished rangatiratanga as a result of feeling by-passed in decision making (Dawes et al., 2021). Although the temporary change in tikanga was difficult, Māori were able to create and implement new practices that would aide in ensuring kaumatua and whānau health and wellbeing. The *hā mamao*, or long-distance hongi for example was encouraged to acknowledge the significance of the breath while remaining physically distanced. Although the example presented is extreme, our tūpuna have, and we as contemporary Māori will continue to, experience changing and challenging environments to which we must adapt. Whether it is a cultural practice that has been developed over generations, or the interpretation of whakataukī, the initial response to a different perspective or need for change can be confronting but also often necessary for survival. Wairaka used her hoe. Kaumātua had their *hā mamao*.

Whakataukī (and whakatauāki) are a type of proverbial saying that can be viewed as a way of “handing down ancient wisdom and knowledge through the generations to guide people’s lives, and treasures from the past, to support our aspirations for today and the future” (Rameka, 2016, p. 394). However, whakatauāki especially are associated with the author’s time, place, and their original audience. For those whakataukī whose author and initial purpose are unknown, their application can become more generalised. When considering the whakataukī about the kūmara, there have been a range of

thoughts about the generalised application of it, from different rangatira who see the kūmara analogy as either a guide for humility, as a balancing act for contemporary Māori, a potential impediment if engrained into your value system, or a challenge to begin building our own new proverbs to fit our time (Murray, 2016).

The value of whakataukī, whakatauākī, and the many varying practices of tikanga are integral to the development and maintenance of Māori cultural identity. However, that value is highly dependent on the contextual circumstance within which they are developed and possibly even more so, when they are practised. The argument that wāhine seemed to be making was that many of the practices (tikanga) were outdated, not fit for current conditions, or that they were (mis)interpreted to limit their full potential expression of being a wahine Māori. *Te tangi o te kūmara*, acknowledges the original whakataukī that inspired it and values it as it applies in certain contexts. However, *te tangi o te kūmara* also illustrates that there is a challenge in keeping your sweetness to yourself – no one experiences it, no one hears your success or what you have to share. *Te tangi o te kūmara* argues that we should be able to “ring our bell” or at least have it rung on our behalf, so that the sweet sound of success, the sweetness of wāhine resonates in the ears of others.

Kitea to hapori

The idea of being a part of an active whānau, as Sherilee describes, or being motivated by active social groups, as Carnation illustrates, are concepts that have been explored in relation to the support facilitated by physical activity and group dynamics. Self-determination theory posits that an individual has three innate psychological needs that affect behaviour and the source of that behaviour (intrinsic or extrinsic): competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2006). Social environments that support these three needs are seen to facilitate more longstanding behaviour through autonomous motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In the context of youth activity, support for active behaviour in a friend group is likely to contribute to the child feeling confident or competent to be physically active in that group. Consequently, active friend groups can help to build a sense of relatedness and autonomy. Essentially, those who feel that physical activity is an accepted and encouraged way of being are reinforced to be active, and subsequently are able to engage in those activities independent of that group (Jago et al., 2009).

Eyler et al. (1999) made similar inferences about the influence of social support on the initiation of exercise behaviours, and the effect on future independent exercise habits, in women from minority groups. Wāhine in this research and Indigenous women in other research, describe a range of positive support mechanisms through co-participation in physical activity. Anishinaabe women (Anishinaabekweg) described their running groups as having a sense of family just as Sherilee, Vania, and others described. Dahlberg et al. (2018) describes Indigenous physical activity as being “embedded in a complex web of meaning which links family and their larger Indigenous community together” (p. 5). The social support that is gained through positive interactions, such as group activity, are noted as a strong determinant of health in populations such as Canadian First Nations peoples and women from Australian Aboriginal descent (Salmon, et al., 2019). And in some cases, the social and familial connection offered by physical activity is seen to be of far more importance than any health benefit it may convey (Thompson et al., 2000).

Similarly, in a study of Māori men about their motivations for being physically active, a sense of camaraderie and so-called “bro-ship”, were noted as being significant. The men involved spoke about training with a friend and collective orientations such as sports teams. They also noted that those relationships were important for accountability, more so for the collective rather than their own individual aspirations – while also being relevant to their roles within their whānau and community (Warbrick et al., 2016). Aboriginal players in Aboriginal sporting organisations also noted the sense of community connection and identity experienced by playing sport (Thorpe, et al., 2014). Sport was seen as playing an important role in promoting social wellbeing and is described as an “energetic social and geographical space” (McCoy, 2008, as cited in Salmon, et al., 2019, p. 23). Similarly, previously inactive wāhine who participated in an adapted high intensity group fitness study, noted the value of the group dynamic and sense of working towards a common goal – aligned with the Māori concept of kotahitanga (solidarity or unity). In their case, they appreciated the opportunity to engage in an activity with women who were at a similar fitness level (D. Heke, 2017). The sense of whanaungatanga and kotahitanga inherent in these and other studies with Māori participants (Forrest et al., 2016) reiterates the commonality of the wider social aspect of physical activity as a motivator and enhancer.

Whakaataata te taiao

Whakaataata describes reflecting, shadowing or mirroring. It can also describe to act, simulate, or to exhibit something (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021). This āhuatanga describes how wāhine saw reflections of themselves in the environment. These reflections informed their knowledge of themselves and consequent behaviour.

The reflection that Christina saw of herself in her tūpuna Aotea or pounamu, is mirrored by others through their whakapapa to other natural environments. Ihirangi Heke refers to this concept in the Atua Matua Māori Health Framework, where he posits that we may inherit or develop characteristics of environments “as a reflection of the particular demands that ancestral existence in the one environment has demanded” (p.8, Heke, 2014). This would suggest that an individual from a coastal region could exhibit characteristics reflective of those areas or that are beneficial to engaging in those areas. Similarly, individuals connected to a dominant river area, mountainous regions, or plains may reflect those features and excel in activities associated with them (Heke, 2014).

Ecological diversity is one way of explaining this phenomenon. Human adaptations to ecological diversity can be exhibited in the range of skin colours, physical features, and genetic predispositions among humans across the world. Biological adaptations occur as a result of the variety of environments that are occupied and are often related to climates or the ability of ancestors to deal with those climatic or environmental stressors with technological buffers, such as housing, tools, or clothing. The adaptations may be genetic but can just as likely be the way we acclimatize or adapt through experience or over a lifetime (Stinson, 2009). Through a Māori lens, the environments we whakapapa to, can influence our physical features and capabilities through heredity, but our engagement in those environments may have an even larger impact. This could mean that the degree to which we reflect environmental features or characteristics of atua, depends on the degree to which you physically engage with them (Heke, 2014).

Recent findings around human adaptation to extreme environmental conditions is suggestive that the self-imposed conditions of physiological stress, or the adoption of specific extreme lifestyles, can produce significant biological adaptations. One such population is the Bajau people of Indonesia, “sea nomads” whose marine hunter-gatherer lifestyle has contributed to a proficiency in a particular physical skill that benefits their lifestyle. Their lifestyle often requires them to be able to dive (and breath-

hold) to depths of 100ft or more for several minutes. Subsequent genetic analyses of the Bajau people found an adaptation to the acute hypoxia or lack of oxygen through an enlarged spleen - which essentially presents as “a novel adaptation that enhances functionality” (Ilardo & Nielsen, 2018, p. 80). Although this example is an extreme one, it describes the result of a physical activity associated with cultural lifestyle enhancing physiology beneficial to that culture’s environmental physical requirements. A cyclical reinforcement of an active engagement in an environment. In less extreme conditions, this could begin to provide a biological contribution to understanding the reflection of environments on wāhine, especially those who choose to engage in those particular environments.

Although the adaptations or physical preferences of wāhine may be less pronounced than those developed over thousands of years of human adaptation to ecological diversity or extreme conditions, their significance cannot be ignored. Wāhine who reflected their environments or saw themselves reflected in them, did so in part because of their whakapapa relationships. Their whakapapa may be illustrated in an intergenerational connection with the moana, whenua, maunga, or awa. Or it could be an adopted whakapapa, whangai relationship facilitated through their repeated physical activity relationship with an area.

Pikitia ngā maunga

This āhuatanga – Pikitia ngā maunga illustrates the many ways wāhine described overcoming challenges in life, whether every day or significant events. It describes the way activity represented an outlet for stress, how it provided protective and supportive qualities, and it demonstrates that the benefits associated with being active extend well beyond the physical domain.

The role that physical activity has on women’s ability to overcome struggles – whether through stress relief, as a coping mechanism, or through gaining perspective – is one that has been researched widely in different ways and may be relevant here. The effect that physical activity or exercise has on chronic or acute stress is explained by some via their physiological mechanisms. The effect that exercise has on buffering stress responses is thought to occur on many levels, including neuroendocrinological, immunological, and behavioural (Greenwood & Fleshner, 2011). Exercise can effect change on hormones and neurotransmitters in the brain, such as dopamine and serotonin – both of which affect mood and behaviour (Jackson, 2013). The potential that activity

has on increasing mood via pleasure induction is explored by Esch and Stefano (2010). They describe a “neurobiological signalling” of molecules, which are activated through exercise and become more finely tuned. They explain an evolutionary basis to the process of certain activities and autoregulatory pathways being linked. The reward mechanisms imbedded in the central nervous system (CNS) are linked to subjective experiences of pleasure, and these reward pathways are linked to the brain’s limbic system (structures that deal with emotion and memory). These reward pathways influence motivation, which can either direct behaviour towards conventionally positive or pleasurable processes or away from unpleasant conditions (Esch & Stefano, 2004).

The additional effect of natural environments on the experience of stress is also well-documented. Working from the definition of stress as the “process by which an individual responds psychologically, physiologically, and often with behaviours, to a situation that challenges or threatens well-being”, the stress reduction theory is offered by Ulrich et al. (1991). The theory suggests that being exposed to natural environments that are inherently unthreatening, activates a “positive affective response, a behavioural approach orientation, and sustained, wakefully relaxed attention” (Hansmann et al., 2007, p. 214). Such feelings of reduced stress are seen as biological preparedness based on evolutionary adaptations that relate to the critical role that natural elements such as vegetation and water had on early human survival and wellbeing (Ulrich et al., 1991).

There are various other theories that attempt to explain the stress-reducing or pleasure-inducing effect of natural environments. The biophilic hypothesis suggests an “instinctive bond between human beings and other living systems” (Annerstedt et al., 2010, p. 34). Amongst other areas, biophilia is closely connected to the field of environmental ethics. Essentially, this connection presumes that our predisposition to “emotionally affiliate with living kinds and processes, it is in our own interest to preserve them” (Joye & De Block, 2011, p. 190). The assumed sense of fulfilment or other positive emotions elicited from that relationship, is described as an important aspect of the so-called anthropocentric environmental ethics.

Centring human benefit in such a relationship is not a remarkable concept, and in the context of a Māori worldview – a well-known whakataukī relates closely. *He aha te mea nui o te ao? Māku e kī atu, he tangata, he tangata, he tangata.* This whakataukī asks, what is the most important thing in the world? And the answer is given, it is people, it is people, it is people. This saying has long been used but has been put into

question by some who challenge that by “putting people first and above all else has resulted in referring to our natural environment as a ‘resource’, as something for us to rape, pillage and plunder to satisfy our own wants and desires” (Tapiata, 2019).

Regardless of the origins of the whakataukī, its broad and possibly distorted use has centralised tangata – people, in a conversation where the environment, te taiao, ngā atua could be more prominent.

The biophilia hypothesis seems to attempt to define a concept that Indigenous peoples have practised long before the term was coined (Wilson, 1984), and consequently critiqued (Joye & De Block, 2011). Instead of developing a hypothesis with anthropocentric qualities, an Indigenous interpretation of such a hypothesis would illustrate the innate predisposition for people to “emotionally affiliate with living kinds and process” as an inherent responsibility to protect, care for, and centralise te taiao, the environments that sustains and nurtures the survival and preservation of whakapapa (Heke, 2014; I. Heke, 2017; Tapiata, 2019).

9.2 Ahuwhenua

Ahuwhenua refers to traits or behaviours that reflect purposeful and forward planning, being resourceful, organised, energetic, and committed to the cultivation and care of people, land, and self. Ahuwhenua describes how these wāhine demonstrated the ability to be resourceful despite not necessarily being full of resources. It challenges the idea that successful planning and cultivation of success need to comply with so-called conventional means.

The concept of conscientiousness was outlined in an earlier chapter reviewing aspects of personality as they relate to physical activity and health behaviours. As a dimension of the Five Factor Model (FFM) or Big Five Taxonomy, conscientiousness has considerable and consistent connections to positive health behaviours such as physical activity. The term encompasses a range of facets and associated behaviours, much like those described by wāhine earlier in this chapter. As a trait, conscientiousness relates to the predisposition to adhere to socially prescribed norms and rules; however, as discussed in an earlier chapter, wāhine were not always so keen on following these norms and rules if they did not seem to fit the circumstance (see *te tangi o te kūmara*). The facets of conscientiousness that do seem to align with the āhuatanga – *Tātaihia* – are those that also seem to have some predictive value on health. Facets that relate to impulse control, being task-orientated or goal directed, orderliness, or tendency to plan

ahead, all have some connection to this āhuetanga, along with being potentially useful indicators of future health (John & Srivastava, 1999; Kern & Friedman, 2008). Those facets especially related to persistence, orderliness, organisation, discipline, and responsibility are even more strongly associated with health benefits (Bogg & Roberts, 2004; Kern & Friedman, 2008).

Problem-behaviour theory posits that these facets are likely to correlate with health behaviours in part through the interaction between personality, perceived environment, and consequent behaviours. Essentially, dispositions or traits will influence the way an environment is perceived and will contribute to the way an individual consequently behaves in it. The notion that individuals display a degree of “orientation toward, commitment to, and involvement in the prevailing values, standards of behaviour, and established institutions” (Donovan et al., 1991, p. 52) may not relate in the way that was initially assumed in the earlier review chapter. However, the facets of traditionalism (upholding social norms and traditions) and responsibility (avoiding trouble and not letting others down) do seem to hold some relevance in comments connected to the āhuetanga *Pukumahi* and *Kaitiakitanga*.

Doing your part, not being lazy, being persistent and hardworking, along with attributes associated with taking care of others (and the environment), have similarities to those *conventional* facets of conscientiousness (Donovan et al., 1991). Similarly, they align with the previously mentioned concepts related to mātauranga Māori such as tikanga, tapu and noa. For tūpuna, these concepts and their practices were a practical way of establishing a system of social order, risk management, whānau well-being, and aided in the continuation of whakapapa. The nature, balance, and interaction of tapu, noa, and mana within early Māori society were important for maintaining social conventions and well-being, and individuals or whānau members who adhered to these social conventions could be seen to be contributing to the continuation of whakapapa by minimizing risk and/or burden to the wider community (Best, 1924; Marsden, 1989; Marsden & Royal, 2003). Similarly, wāhine ability to plan, be persistent, nurturing, and purposeful are contemporary actions that can be viewed in the same way.

The resourcefulness that is described as part of this huahuatau is one that is not necessarily associated with the aspects of FFM personality just discussed. However, the concept is addressed in a contemporary application of traits associated with a romanticised figure within Māori and Polynesian mythology. Utilised in the context of

Māori children's education assessment, it provides insights into Māori children's personality and achievement using traits that are commonly connected to the exploits and personality structures of Māui tikitiki a Taranga. Māui – the demigod hero – was known for his mischievous, quick-witted exploits, and bravery in pushing boundaries to achieve his ambitions (Walker, 1996). Māui's characteristics, are described by Ranginui Walker as “quick, intelligent, bold, resourceful, cunning and fearless, epitomising the basic personality structures idealised by Māori society” (Walker, 1990, p. 15). The traits and behaviours that Māui was famous for are seen to provide an ideal structure from which to examine children's educational development, and the *Best of Both Worlds*’ assessment tool identifies six particular categories.

Several of these categories, although identified for children's assessment, actually encompass some of the same attributes of this huahuatau, and the more specific āhuatanga. Others align with huahuatau and āhuatanga discussed in other chapters. Tinihanga, the category with evident whakapapa to Māui's trickster nature, describes a sense of cunningness, trickery, deception, testing limits, challenging, questioning, curiosity, exploring, risk-taking, and lateral thinking (Rameka, 2011). This category considers behaviours that might sometimes be considered as “naughty”, as useful to finding unique ways to solve problems or achieve goals. The sense of resourcefulness exhibited by wāhine often requires them to use the limited resources they have at hand to cultivate successful outcomes – just as Māui used his grandmother's jawbone to fish up Te Ika a Māui (the North Island) or to slow the sun and lengthen the day. The development of relationships, the nurturing of others, and self-confidence (whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and rangatiratanga) exudes from wāhine whose purposeful planning, resourceful cultivation, hard work and determination, and caring nature contributes to “kai” that benefit themselves, whānau, and their wider communities.

Resourcefulness, determination, and purposeful nurturing to cultivate success are not new ideas to Māori. Despite the many trauma associated with colonisation and more recent socio-political inequities or socio-cultural upheavals, the resourcefulness and adaptability of Māori has been apparent (Nikora, 2007b). While these inequitable environments were, and continue to be, discriminatory, Māori continue to find ways to adapt and continue to achieve their aspirations in a range of areas. In the context of physical activity, these qualities are apparent. Wāhine and wider Māori have demonstrated resourceful cultivation of success by revitalising “traditional” Māori

activities as contemporary ways to be active and to build strong cultural identities.

Waka ama, kapahaka, and other “traditionally” Māori activities have experienced rapid growth and popularity in recent years (Borell & Kahi, 2017). Between 2013 and 2017, waka ama alone experienced an increase of 34% in clubs, 54% increase in membership, 124% increase in the youth grades. In 2019 the 30th annual Waka Ama Sprint Championships was held on Lake Karāpiro and attracted more than 1,700 teams from sixty-one clubs (Sport New Zealand, 2021).

Another traditional knowledge system that is being re-popularised is the maramataka – or the Māori lunar calendar. Contemporary practitioners and experts are utilising the knowledge and skills that they have developed to re-engage Māori (and others) in a knowledge system based on the phases of the moon and its relevance within te taiao and human activity. The maramataka allows us to understand the influence that different lunar phases have on natural phenomena, like tidal movements or fauna and flora. It also allows us to gauge the influence it can have on our physical, emotional, or social domains through natural changes to energy (Roberts et al., 2006).

In that way, it could also help us to contextualise how wāhine who have a good sense of their energy levels and needs through their physical activity, are more ‘in-tune’ with their own ‘maramataka’. Heeni Hoterene, a maramataka practitioner, talks about the need to be prepared for how different lunar cycles can affect us. By being prepared for the different highs and lows, and changes to energy during different lunar phases, we can match “different activities accordingly so that we’re able to navigate our way through the ebb and flow” (Hoterene, 2021). The ebb and flow of energy that Hoterene talks about reflects the way wāhine were able to identify their own changes in energy flow, or the kinds of activities they needed at different times. Just as the maramataka can be used to account for the differences between unique environmental micro-climates, so too can we as wāhine consider our own ‘micro-climates’ and their specific needs at different times.

Whether it is displayed in the revitalisation of Māori practices, through cunning curiosity, or through deliberate determination, *Ahuwhenua* and its associated āhuatanga are evident as Māori resourcefulness. Wāhine articulated aspects of their personality and behaviours that reflect purposeful cultivation of successful outcomes. Those outcomes, the kai that they planned for, nurtured, and tended to, were cultivated for the benefit of whānau as much as for themselves as individuals. Wāhine were diligent and

hardworking, and they were conscious of the energy that they possessed to do that mahi. Whether within the domains of physical activity or sport, or in everyday life, wāhine knew that their efforts would cultivate positive outcomes. They experienced success in part because of the traits and behaviours that *Ahuwhenua* describes. Wāhine knew the direction of their aspirations, they planned accordingly, and they implemented their strategies with determination. He kai kei aku ringa. E tipu, e rea, mo nga ra o tou ao. *With the resources at hand, grow into the days destined for you.*

9.3 Ngā taonga tuku iho

Wāhine described a range of ways that they learned, shared, or taught. Having a diverse arsenal of tools to pass down knowledge was how tūpuna Māori could share mātauranga through generations, while remaining an oral society (until recent history). Just as tūpuna wāhine used waiata, karanga, oriori, or raranga to pass on important knowledge, wāhine of today have their own resourceful ways of communicating. Contemporary applications of Māori ways of knowing, being, and doing are engrained in tikanga. Constructed over centuries of practice, tikanga was underpinned by its core values and principles that governed all aspects of behaviour. Its flexibility and adaptability meant that it could be interconnected to fit situational demands and as new circumstances arose (Durie, 1994). Tikanga is a prime example of how *Ngā taonga tuku iho* is manifested. The passing down of practices through tikanga allowed Māori to learn from the past but adapt to the present.

Pūrākau presents another way that knowledge transmission was contextualised. Just as wāhine interpreted, translated, and (re)transmitted knowledge of themselves, activity, or otherwise, in creative (physical) ways, Pūrākau offers the same opportunity. Pūrākau are commonly referred to as Māori myths and legends; however, Jenny Lee-Morgan suggests that they need not be “relegated to the category of fiction and fable of the past”. It is suggested that they hold relevance today as a “pedagogical-based anthology of literature”, but also as a tool to construct new ways of understanding our experiences of teaching, learning, and developing a cultural identity (Lee, 2009, p. 1).

The value of pūrākau and the mātauranga they contain, was highly valued in traditional Māori society, and they remain so for contemporary Māori. The mana of whānau, hapu, and iwi relies on protection of knowledge that sustains them (Lee, 2005; Mead, 2016). Not necessarily in keeping it exclusively held but protecting its development and the way it is practised. Ako, within traditional Māori society, was an “inclusive, co-

operative, reciprocal and obligatory” method of knowledge transmission (Lee, 2005, p. 5). The process of teaching, learning, and sharing using pūrākau as a tool, contextualised within certain physical, societal, or familial environments, grounded that mātauranga and connected it to both the storyteller and their audience (Lee, 2009). The messages conveyed by wāhine in this research can also be viewed this way. Contextualised within the spaces they were shared, whether through physical activity or stories, they convey not only the content of what was shared but also a picture of the relationship between the wāhine who shared, the people and environments within their stories, and even myself (as the audience). This relates, not only to their relaying of stories for this research, but also in their desire and perceived obligation to share their knowledge with others. Wāhine were teachers, instructors, mentors, and leaders. They knew the importance of knowledge transmission and were active conduits of it, just as Pūrākau are. They adapt to meet the audience. They are rich and full of texture and meaning. The mātauranga within them is highly valuable and integral to the growth, development, and maintenance of mana – mana wahine, mana whānau, hapu, iwi.

Ngā taonga tuku iho is an expression of whakapapa. By taking the learnings of those who went before them to apply to their own lives and circumstances, wāhine represent the product of a whakapapa process. When wāhine share and teach what they have learned and experienced, they manifest the purpose of whakapapa, to hold, carry, and transmit mātauranga. In such an equation or process, the mātauranga that is learned, shared, and taught does not remain static. As mātauranga or the influence that one holds, moves from one generation to the next, it adapts and evolves to fit the time and circumstance.

In previous chapters, the idea of genetic knowledge transmission was also related to wāhine feeling connected or drawn to particular environments. It was discussed that Māori who whakapapa to certain environments may exhibit physical characteristics related to that environment (Heke, 2014). Whakapapa can account for a range of physical or personality traits, but it also holds generations of mātauranga within it. Whether referring to whakapapa as a genealogical tool or its broader significance to structuring and arranging mātauranga, whakapapa is fundamental to the transmission of knowledge – whether orally, physically, or genealogically. While there were said to be restrictions around detailed cosmological or esoteric knowledge, the whakapapa of everyday things was more commonly held amongst early Māori. Essentially, it was seen that in order to understand something, it was necessary to know its whakapapa

(Roberts, 2012). Similarly, wāhine were expressing their knowledge of whakapapa when they identified aspects of themselves, their preference or proficiency for certain activities, as connected to their whānau, their ancestors, or their past experiences.

Whakapapa can encapsulate the various āhuatanga related to *Ngā taonga tuku iho*. It stores and orders knowledge, holding it in physical experiences and stories alike. It provides a template to interpret knowledge, translate it, and (re)transmit it to next generations. Its templates can extend to the physical embodiment of strength, speed, or stamina. It can be translated from a coach to an athlete, or from wahine to wahine. It can be expressed when a new movement is taught or when another is perfected. The ripples created when Celia pulls her hoe through the water, display whakapapa past present, and future. When Teresa reflects on her tūpuna wāhine who were strong, active, and resilient – she also acknowledges their reflection in her when she has their whakapapa etched on her kauae. *Ngā taonga tuku iho* are the treasures that are passed down. Whakapapa is the medium, the vehicle, the means by which they are transported from one generation to the next. Whakapapa reflected through genetics and Alyx’s “big feet” for swimming. Whakapapa reflected in our names and on our chins. The whakapapa of our abilities and preference for dancing or cycling. The art of learning, sharing, and teaching is an art that our tūpuna designed in our whakapapa. Movement or physical activity is a way of expressing whakapapa and coming to know the world we live in, those who reside with us, and indeed ourselves. Embodied experience, physical activity and the mātauranga it contains, as with whakapapa, is a useful vehicle for uncovering knowledge of self and others and passing it on to next generations (McGuire-Adams, 2017; Pere, 1982; Picard, 2000).

9.4 Rakanga Waewae

Each aspect of *Rakanga Waewae* described earlier contributes to the dynamic nature of the huahuatau and wāhine expression of it. Whether being able to see from different perspectives or being conscious and capable of keeping balance in many situations, this huahuatau is deliberately broad and conveniently adaptable. Balance holds significance in a range of areas from health and fitness to Māori cosmology, and each is articulated differently. Below I will continue to discuss some of the applications in these areas and others. I will situate *Rakanga Waewae* – the huahuatau that describes dexterous footwork – among the many other relevant references to balance, adaptability, and dynamic positioning.

The concept of balance and its value to Māori society, leadership, and women's roles has been the subject of a range of literature. The importance of the complementary nature of masculine and feminine roles within traditional Māori life and lore has been impacted by the processes of colonisation; however, the significance remains (Mikaere, 2003; Yates-Smith, 1998). Just like some of the sentiments shared by wāhine in this research, wāhine have long been required to demonstrate the ability to move between different spaces and balance the needs of whānau, hapu, iwi. Both in the physical and metaphysical realms, wāhine have displayed an ability to balance energies, and bring calm to areas of tension.

Ngāhuia Murphy includes a discussion of tohunga and the roles of wāhine in times of warfare in her doctoral thesis (Murphy, 2019). Their roles would see them navigating “the complexities of inter-tribal relationships, issuing the ultimatum of war or alleviating discord and charting a course of peace” (p. 120). Wāhine were known to help smooth out hostilities in situations where the potential for further violence was imminent. Using a particular set of skills that included a deep knowledge of karakia and a demonstrable degree of mana, one particular tohunga ruānuku from the Hokianga was described as using her expert skills to work between worlds and ease tensions between hau kainga and manuhiri during a pōwhiri (Murphy, 2019). The skills and dynamic mana of wāhine described by Murphy are some that are rarely discussed in writing, often as a consequence of colonial influence prioritising patriarchal dominance (Mikaere, 2003; Murphy, 2019).

Wāhine are known to have a significant role as kaikaranga in pōwhiri – providing a gateway between physical and metaphysical spaces. These dynamic roles are apparent in the [un]conventional, traditional, and contemporary roles that wāhine describe of themselves. They navigate complexities in contemporary settings as tohunga ruānuku, kaikaranga, and tūpuna wāhine did in their own contemporary times – whether in the physical or metaphysical realms.

When considering the physical aspects and recognisable benefits of having the ability to maintain balance, the link to physical activity and fitness is clear. Wāhine who contributed to this research often related to the need to maintain balance in their physical activity but also in relation to mood, cultural positioning, and energies. Balance in the context of physical fitness is represented in various ways. There are reciprocal relationships between a range of fitness qualities such as strength, power,

speed, and agility. Increases in certain areas of strength can result in improved balance and consequently reduce potential for falls and their impact (Emery et al., 2015; Herman et al., 2012). Additionally, balance training is also said to improve performance in those previously mentioned fitness components (Gebel et al., 2020). Balance is often seen to fit into both health and skill related components of physical fitness. This means that the benefits of better balance translate to both the ability to perform a skill proficiently, but also decreases risk to injury (Hrysomallis, 2011). The benefits of balance to physical fitness and its components therefore have clear benefits, and wāhine were inherently conscious of them, if not the detail.

Wāhine in this research may not have spoken directly to the concepts or components of fitness specifically, but what they did acknowledge were the range of benefits that their sport or activity had to these components more generally. The cross-over benefits that those different activities had in keeping their bodies, strong, active, and in optimal shape to perform was clear. Balance was at the centre of these discussions, whether it related to balancing the impact of certain activities on their tinana or hinengaro, or ensuring their training provided the necessary stimulus to improve their performance or health.

The importance of keeping balance between the dimensions of wellbeing is also acknowledged by different Indigenous/Māori models of health. Often seen as the combination of an individual's personal, environmental, cultural, and spiritual, with te ao Māori, maintaining those aspects means maintaining wellbeing (Huriwai et al., 2001). Inherent in this balancing act, or the success of it, is mauriora, or a strong sense of identity, self-confidence, and mātauranga. Mauriora is one of six key tasks associated with Te Pae Mahutonga – a Māori model of health promotion. Each of the six aspects represent a star within the Southern Cross constellation (plus two pointers). They represent a range of qualities that are essential to successful health promotion but also align with maintaining health and wellbeing. Similar to the widely known Te Whare Tapa Wha, which illustrates hauora or wellbeing as keeping a balance between the physical, emotional, spiritual, and whānau dimensions (Durie, 1994). The constant balancing of dimensions is reflected in both healthy outcomes but also attributes that are highly valued and that represent mana. Wāhine displayed their mana and mauriora in different ways, but there was often an acknowledgement of knowing themselves or having a strong sense of identity. Regardless of the many challenges that were faced, their ability to stand firm in who they were, while remaining agile enough to adapt to

shifts and changes, was often apparent. In this way, wāhine were able to navigate spaces using the many tools they had at hand, while continuing to balance taha tinana, taha wairua, taha hinengaro, and taha whānau.

The concept of balance is also connected to the collective nature of Māori. By being connected to things that are greater than the self, whakapapa, whānau, hapu, and iwi, fosters a sense of identity that connects to past, present, and future (Te Rito, 2006). Balance is seen to prevail, both in the physical and metaphysical, when ancestry, tradition, and identity are able to pave sustainable futures for whānau, hapu, and iwi (Marsden, 1989; Marsden & Royal, 2003). In the context of Māori leadership in sport, Te Rito (2006) considers some of the characteristics of both traditional and contemporary Māori leaders. The paper describes a contemporary Māori leader as someone who “virtually exists in two worlds” and is often required to move “from one to the other adhering to both associated sets of protocols provided by each institution” (Te Rito, 2006, p. 5). Informed by and required to operate under distinct and often conflicting values systems, Māori leaders within the Pākēha world often need to demonstrate their mana with seemingly mystic powers (Winiata, 1967). Te Rito essentially describes both huahuatau – Māwhitiwhiti and Kākano Whakauru. Clearly, these descriptions of Māori leaders are also applicable to wāhine who's own “mystical powers” of mana are displayed in their ability to move swiftly and nimbly between worlds.

9.5 Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai

For the wāhine involved in this research the concept of realising one's potential was of utmost importance. Flourishing into their fullest potential and helping others along in their own flourishing journeys were inherent in wāhine drive and motivation to achieve their goals. Whether personal, physical, sport-related, or otherwise, it was clear that these wāhine were not leaving their potential to be unrealised. The notion of striving to achieve their potential for these wāhine is also articulated in areas of sports performance, Indigenous wellbeing, personality psychology, and leadership. Flourishing and reaching potential can be presented in terms of positive self-conceptualisation, pride, optimal functioning, and excellence or accomplishment.

The work of Ryff (1989a) which sought to articulate the concept of psychological well-being, posits that optimal psychological functioning requires an ongoing effort to develop one's potential and continue to grow as a person. Ryff's extensive work in the

area is based on the ancient Greek concept of Eudaimonia – which had arguably mistakenly been translated to mean happiness – but more closely relates to the idea of “striving toward excellence based on one’s unique potential” (Ryff & Singer, 2008, p. 14). The idea of personal growth is integral to this particular framework of psychological well-being and relates to the need to actualize and realise potentialities but also argues that the process is more of a continuous striving rather than the achievement of a fixed state (Ryff, 1989b). The concepts presented by Ryff’s framework hold some similarities to those articulated by wāhine broadly and as seen in values held by Māori. Self-acceptance and personal growth dimensions align most closely with this particular huahuatau, describing an individual’s sense of self-acceptance, positive attitude of self, and realisation of potential. Other dimensions – autonomy and positive relations with others – align with the important Māori values and aspirations of whanaungatanga and tino rangatiratanga. The final dimension – environmental mastery – describes an individual’s ability to manipulate and control complex environments (Ryff, 1989b). This dimension has broad application to other huahuatau described across this thesis but will not be discussed here.

Wāhine discussed and demonstrated a degree of positive attitude and self-conceptualisation, a desire to flourish and realise potential, and an appreciation of their achievements, excellence, and proficiency. They, like others who identify the positive and holistic benefits of sport and activity, were able to demonstrate a celebration of their accomplishments, embrace their skill and excellence, and have a healthy or humble recognition (Ferguson et al., 2019). Earlier, I described that wāhine had a sense of vanity with a mana wahine vibe. This articulation aimed to recognise how wāhine could appreciate their success, abilities, or physical attributes, whilst retaining a sense of the wider source of those attributes. In the context of this huahuatau, it acknowledges how wāhine are the seeds that require constant striving to flourish, along with being the fulfilment of tūpuna aspirations. Wāhine, with their attractive features and physical potentiality, are manifestations of the continual cycle of kākano to puāwai – seed to flower.

An area of research that investigates a more positive focus on body image is one that has developed over the recent decade. Like growing numbers of other research domains that have historically focussed on the negative aspects of Indigenous people, there is a move in some psychological research towards focussing on positive experiences in order to identify potential resources to strengthen wellbeing (as is intended in this

research). One such study that sought to explore the body pride experiences of young Aboriginal men and women highlighted themes that emphasised a connection between mind, body, and spirit; and was attributed to cultural influences (Coppola et al., 2017). In the context of positive body image, the concept of pride has been described as one of the strongest relative emotions in this area (Castonguay et al., 2013). It has the potential to manifest in one of two ways: authentic pride or hubristic pride. The former appears to represent the sentiments articulated by wāhine in this study more, where pride is connected to a sense of increased self-esteem and achievement, whereas the latter relates more towards a degree of narcissistic self-aggrandisement (Tracy & Robins, 2007) – a feature not demonstrated by wāhine in this research.

A number of wāhine acknowledged the need to appreciate their body for what it could do; ensure it is ‘fit for purpose’; and that they should look after it appropriately. Similarly, participants in the Coppola et al. (2017) research, described their body as a ‘vessel’, homing their mind and spirit, and that it needed to be cared for. Aligning with understandings of body appreciation offered by Tylka and Wood-Barcalow (2015) among others, such appreciation relates to gratitude and acceptance of one’s body functionality, strengths, and health, and less on actual physical appearances. The benefits associated with these positive body-image-related constructs comprise both psychological and physical health outcomes along with life satisfaction (Davis et al., 2020). Consistency in much of the research around the personality structures that influence positive body image suggests that both increased sociability and emotional stability are associated with better wellbeing. This is demonstrated through a higher degree of extraversion and lower level of neuroticism (Diener et al., 2003).

A challenge with these, and other western perspectives on psychological functioning and health overall, is that they arguably represent manifestations of middle-class values (Ryff & Dunn, 1985). This assessment was argued over 35 years ago but remains pertinent today. Despite their value in societies and cultures from which they are derived, their use is not always relevant to those outside those social structures. It is suggested that such a rift could be bridged by “studies that assess the fit between theoretical conceptions of well-being and the values and ideals of those to whom they are applied” (Ryff, 1989b, p. 1080). Indeed, this is a sentiment voiced by many Indigenous peoples whose aspiration for healthy flourishing includes Indigenous approaches to understanding health and well-being and those that acknowledge the values they hold (Durie, 2004b; Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013; Thompson et al., 2013).

9.6 Conclusion

Being Māori and being wahine in these contemporary times requires us to demonstrate a range of ways of being. Often being Māori does not mean being part of a homogenous group but being a manifestation of the whakapapa that came before you. Similarly, being wahine Māori often means that you have many roles to play, many complexities to your identity, and you have to employ a range of skills and capabilities to make your way successfully through this challenging contemporary landscape. The wāhine who contributed to this research displayed this in the range of huahuatau explored in this and the previous chapters. Although articulated in terms not usually ascribed to personality traits, human behaviour, or skillsets, the huahuatau explored and contextualised here offer wāhine a way to position themselves in a uniquely [wahine] Māori way. Sharing some parallels to aspects of western psychology and Māori perspectives alike, these huahuatau extend the way that wāhine Māori traits and behaviours can be understood, at least from the perspective of physical activity.

Each huahuatau offers a frame from which to understand wāhine ways of being.

Ko au te taiiao explores the transactions between different environments. It aligns with a range of existing ideas around physiological and social responses to different environments, while also acknowledging the whakapapa relationships that wāhine have to those environments.

Ahuwhenua illustrates a sense of purposeful resourcefulness that wāhine often display. It shares some parallels with aspects of conscientiousness but is distinctive in the way it incorporates wāhine having the ability to achieve a range of successful outcomes with a limited (often negligible) number of resources or using what they have in creative ways.

Ngā taonga tuku iho is an acknowledgement of the diverse ways that wāhine can, and do, communicate the knowledge they have. It begins with a desire to learn and continues as a commitment to teach and share. The huahuatau encompasses a range of values and systems that sustain mātauranga Māori, both traditional and contemporary.

Rakanga Waewae offers a visual and physical picture of how wāhine are required to and often master the ability to straddle multiple ways of being and balance the requirements of their many roles. The huahuatau weaves in aspects of physical abilities with cognitive, emotional, and spiritual. *Rakanga Waewae* considers the many ways wāhine have long been standing in spaces between and navigating ways forward.

Finally, *Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai* repurposes a whakataukī that speaks of the need to nurture potential, and it illustrates the many ways that wāhine have taken this idea to heart. Aligning with contemporary psychological concepts that draw the focus away from deficit and towards positive perspectives of self, body image and pride, this huahuatau explores the journey from latent potentiality to the appreciation of beautiful blossoming achievements.

These huahuatau and their positioning among other relevant literature demonstrates the way that Māori ways of doing (this research) can uncover Māori ways of being (huahuatau) that have the potential to resonate with how Māori can view themselves. In this context, physically active wāhine Māori have demonstrated and provided a template that could be applied more widely than that particular group. The presentation, exploration, and contextualisation of huahuatau in this and previous chapters has provided a way to conceptualise an answer to the first research question posed in this thesis. What are the attributes of physically active wāhine Māori? But I also believe it goes further, in offering a framework and a means by which to consider a wider question. What are the attributes of wāhine Māori successful in [blank]? This blank space allows for the exploration of wāhine ways of being, and ways of demonstrating success in countless areas. Further clarification of this idea is presented in the following chapter, where a connection to atua wāhine is explored and consideration of the second research question is included.

Chapter 10 Aro Atua

Aro Atua is an attempt to conceptualise the influence of atua. It takes what is viewed through a Mana Wahine lens and reflects on its meaning. It presents that reflection via an expression of whakapapa. *Aro Atua* is a way of thinking about our whakapapa (as wāhine) to atua wāhine through a lens that aspires to whakamana both. I begin this chapter with an introduction to the atua wahine – Parawhenuamea, the atua of fresh water and floods. I will then continue to introduce and (re)interpret pūrākau and characteristics of other atua wāhine with relevance to huahuatau from previous chapters. The atua I present and the order in which they appear do not follow any particular cosmological order, hierarchy, or other predetermined sequence. They appear in this chapter in the order that they ‘appeared’ to me through this kaupapa. Parawhenuamea was the first to my mind when I started to think about how she connected to the ideas presented in the huahuatau – *Ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au*. Specifically related to the āhuatanga – *kitea to hāpori*, and notions of social relationships and social environments. I follow on with a (re)interpretation of Hineahuone, the first woman, moulded from the red earth of Papatūānuku, whose pūrākau then proceeds to Hine-tītama and her consequent persona of Hine-nui-te-pō; then lead into a powerful story of Hineteiwaiwa’s many talents. Scattered in amongst these discussions are references and acknowledgements of other significant tūpuna or atua wāhine and their contributions to the whakapapa of mana wahine. There are a host of other atua who could take their rightful place in the sub-headings of this chapter, but I would not do them all justice. I will make mention of some of these other atua wāhine to allow for a brief insight into their potential relevance. However, just as authors before me have done, I leave open the possibility for future seekers of mātauranga wahine to bring atua stories and relevance to light in their own ways.

Each of the proceeding sections of this chapter will begin with a ‘brief’ introduction in the form of free-flowing prose to demonstrate my Aro Atua. My Aro Atua represents my process of coming to understand and articulate each atua from my ‘current’ position – giving a sense of divine attention and comprehension. The construction of this prose usually occurred after a series of readings and served as a means to spark the writing process. At times it was challenging to commence the process of telling these atua stories. It was challenging because I did not presume to have the requisite mātauranga to do them justice. By allowing this free-flowing process, I declared to myself and

ultimately to the reader, that what was being presented was a current and evolving understanding. From that position, I begin to present their connection to the wāhine, and the traits described in earlier chapters.

10.1 Parawhenuamea

Born of a mother who stands tall and firm, stoic and resistant to the forces of nature. Her mother's perspective sees from high above, from the tops of the trees that cloak her, to the oceans beyond, and most of all in between. Born also of a father whose innovation and strength forced the world out of darkness, whose determination brought enlightenment to that world, and whose desire and curiosity brought about the diverse vastness of the forests. She, Parawhenuamea, is born of her parents and expresses her whakapapa as she follows her path. Bursting forth from puna originating from the first sacred teardrops of Te Ihorangi, pooled upon the peaks of Hine-tu-pari-maunga, she gathers and she flows.

Her flow and her direction are determined by those she interacts with. Controlled and contorted by intersections of rock, sand, silt and water. She moves around one, while moving through another. Pushing aside or collecting others as she flows. Her power is determined by those who surround her. Some hasten her by facilitating a smooth and direct route. While others slow or divert her, creating a shape that feeds, houses, and provides sanctuary for those within and around. She, Parawhenuamea, collects and disperses. She builds upon herself and pushes out to sea. She gathers in those who care to be swept up. Carving through space and leaving a little of herself where she has been.

Sometimes she is overwhelming and overwhelmed. She can be overcome with power and force, and she can destroy what lies in her path. Clearing a way through and leaving a trail of mud and silt and brokenness. She is overcome and overcoming. But new life springs forth from that overcoming to becoming. She ebbs but mostly she flows. She can teach us how to do the same. When to advance and when to retreat.

When to be more and when to be less. When to exert power and when to move carefully around an obstacle. When to push the para to the side and when to carry it with you out to sea. To disperse it or to pile it upon itself to create a bend or a barrier or a new place entirely. She provides. Feeding into veins that require the life that she brings. Nurturing new life or carrying away the dead. Her arms out wide, fingers spread, reaching further to feed, sustain, nurture, and cleanse. She forges a path from the breast of her mother, through the feet of her father, to the arms of her lover. The two meet in estuaries where fresh water meets salt, and the loving embrace of Kiwa merges with Parawhenuamea.

Parawhenuamea, a feminine deity of the waters of earth, represents rivers, springs, streams, all that run from the tops of hills and mountains. She is known as the atua of

freshwater, floods, or deluges. Parawhenuamea is the daughter of Hinetūparimaunga (atua of mountains) and Tāne Mahuta (atua of forests and birds). Her potential and movement are seen to exist in relationship to Rakahore (rocks and stones), whom she produced with Kiwa (atua associated with the Pacific Ocean) (Ngata et al., 2018; Yates-Smith, 1998). The whakataukī: *E kore a Parawhenuamea e haere ki te kore a Rakahore*, explains that Parawhenuamea would not flow without Rakahore, and illustrates the significance of relationships between particular elements (Mead & Grove, 2004). These significant relationships are demonstrative of how an element in a particular environment can shape the behaviour or the direction of another. Similar to the way wāhine would describe the relationships they developed or people that positively influenced their physical activity, Rakahore supports and influences Parawhenuamea on her journey. Similarly, Parawhenuamea encounters a range of other elements or atua on her way towards the ocean. Aroha Yates-Smith describes Parawhenuamea's journey:

Parawhenuamea emerged from her mother as pure (alluvial) spring waters. She then cascaded down the slopes of her mother, falling as a waterfall, then gliding across the surface of the plains. The term Parawhenuamea connotes fine grains of silt deposits rising up out of the ground with the water's force, and being carried along by the flow of the stream, merging with other streams to form large rivers, while depositing silt along the riverbanks. As Parawhenuamea approached the coastline, she saw the form of Kiwa, the ocean entity in the distance. Kiwa moved forward to embrace Parawhenuamea as she drew closer. Their bodies merged creating Hinemoana, the sea (as cited in Robertson, 2019, p. 289).

In her poetic description, Yate-Smith illustrates the many forms that Parawhenuamea may take depending on her environment and those around her. She describes a powerful waterfall, a gliding movement, carrying, merging, depositing, and embracing. Each behaviour or way of being was influenced by where she was, what she needed (or needed to do), and who was supporting her. This mirrors the way in which wāhine can be, their roles, and the support they get from others. Just as many of the wāhine I spoke to would surround themselves with people that supported them, motivated them, or guided them to be or remain physically active, Parawhenuamea often does the same. At times, Parawhenuamea flows with her full force as descends the slopes of her mother, Hinetūparimaunga. Her journey brings her in contact with other streams who together form larger rivers. These larger rivers represent the like-minded direction of wāhine who find a community with shared interests or supportive kaupapa. They bring together

their individual histories and paths to form a strong, supportive, and more resilient collective. Gathering strength and supporting each other as they strive to perform, compete, or merely keep moving. Parawhenuamea illustrates our connection with supportive environments like Rakahore. She shows us that our energy and power can be influenced by those with whom we surround ourselves. She shows us that there are times when those around us are there to smooth our path, and times when they divert our course. Interestingly, the context of those interactions is significant and coming into contact with a particular element or environment at the wrong time or place, could result in adverse outcomes.

Parawhenuamea and her ongoing pūrākau of movement, supported relationships, and “social behaviours” reflects the notion of *Kitea to hapori* as well as the wider huahuatau, *Ko au te taiao*. Exhibiting that we are often just like rivers and other waterways and demonstrating how to reach out and find those relationships and environments that foster your journey, your direction, and your needs. Sometimes you are actively searching, reaching out streams to connect with those who can join and support your kaupapa or journey. At other times, they happen upon you. Maybe you are struggling to pick up speed, and they smooth your path. Maybe you are at full force and your supports are bends in your path that bring a new shape to your journey. Maybe they are an obstacle. Maybe you are their support system, feeding their success and growth. Parawhenuamea shows us that the interconnectedness of our environments (social, natural, physical, etc) and those within them are fundamental to our success.

Tina Ngata explains that interconnectedness or whakapapa relationships to atua helps us to move through this world. Understanding our relationships with atua, their influence on us, and our influence over each other is central to the idea of whakapapa. This whakapapa connection helped our tūpuna consider the consequences of their actions across multiple spaces and how to make sense of their surroundings (Ngata et al., 2018). Indeed, it can and does for contemporary Māori also, and the interconnectedness and reciprocal relationships are illustrated in the kōrero of wāhine in this research, as they are in pūrākau centred on Parawhenuamea.

One such kōrero was introduced when discussing the stage of life and achievements of one wahine I spoke to. This Kai Tahu wahine reflected about comparing herself and her achievements with younger people in her field. She realised that her journey was similar to one of her Kai Tahu tūpuna – Aotea (or Hine-aotea), pounamu. Although, the

interpretations or telling of this story and names within may vary, Christina likens herself and her journey to that of pounamu. Pounamu or greenstone is highly prized and only found in certain areas in the South Island (Te Waipounamu). Pounamu has a natural “enemy” in Hine-tuahoanga (atua of sandstone), as told in many story variations. But their relationship, as illustrated by Christina’s reflections, is integral to the ultimate appeal of pounamu. Parawhenuamea is also implicated in this relationship. Christina admits that she was like pounamu in that her roughness needed to be “smoothed and cracked and sharpened and dulled”. This process and her ultimate realisation of its outcome was due in part to the influence of Hine-tuahoanga and Parawhenuamea. Each played a part in the smoothing, cracking, sharpening, and dulling. In this illustration, the rushing waters of Parawhenuamea creates the environment where Hine-tuahoanga is pushed across the surface of pounamu, grinding away at her surface, and shaping her.

The relationship between Parawhenuamea and the many elements she encounters, and indeed us, are effective pūrākau to help make sense of things. They make sense of stories. They make sense of our behaviour. They make sense of the influence that we have on others and those others have on us. Parawhenuamea can teach us many things, but in this lesson, she teaches us to recognise relationships, influence, and the power that we have in each other’s lives. Parawhenuamea is not always in complete control but together with the elements she is surrounded by; fresh water can reach the sea; pounamu is shaped and polished; and the para can be swept aside or out of the way.

10.2 Hineahuone

Sculpted from the red clay of the loins of our ancestral mother
Her image is ours and her image is in her origins
She, the first, breathed and sneezed
Tihei Mauri Ora!
She stands and straddles two worlds as her daughter would one day too
Atua – Tangata she connects us to both
In search of te ira tangata, her husband will seek her out
She is of Kurawaka, of Moana, of Whenua, of the stars
“The regenerative female element that birthed the world into being”⁵
She brings the Hine to our Wa-hine
From Papatūānuku, through Hineahuone, to Mana Wahine
Kurawaka. Hinekura. Ikura.
Daughter. Mother. Kuia

There are many iterations of pūrākau surrounding Hineahuone and the details will often depend on who is telling the story, and how or when they were told the story. Not unlike many stories we hear, that are laden with contextual bias and representations of the teller’s own background, Hineahuone is the same (Lee, 2009; Yates-Smith, 1998). However, regardless of the details, Hineahuone is known as the mother of humanity. Aroha Yates-Smith collates a range of recounts of Hineahuone as they relate to birth and death practices, in her doctoral thesis (1998), and more recently Ngāhuia Murphy (2011) follows on with her own (re)interpretations as they relate to the significance of menstruation. From stories that liken Hineahuone to the Biblical Eve, “cut from the cloth of the male, denying women’s autonomy” (Murphy, 2019, p. 21), Murphy describes how many ethnographical accounts of Hineahuone cement the notion of female inferiority in te ao Māori, as was the convention in Victorian times. The irony of the (mis)representation of atua wāhine such as Hineahuone and others, is that women, wāhine Māori especially, were also subject to these cemented notions of inferiority (Murphy, 2019). This example could be viewed as an early example of Hineahuone reflected in wāhine, albeit via colonial mechanisms.

⁵ Excerpt from: Yates-Smith, A. (1998). *Hine! e Hine! : rediscovering the feminine in Maori spirituality* [Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Waikato]. Hamilton, NZ.

Yates-Smith (1998) recognises the inevitable variations between diverse tribal traditions and presents one record (from Shortland, 1882) of Hineahuone's origins as part of a quest by Tāne to find te ira tangata, the human principle:

...Tāne goes in search of the female element. His main quest is to create humankind, te ira tangata, but to do this he must first seek a female partner. He ventures forth in his search, frequently returning to Papa to ask how he should go about finding the female principle, te uha, which would enable him to create te ira tangata, humankind. She sends him to various female ancestors, with unsatisfactory results for, although all manner of life forms are created (plants, rocks, birdlife), no uha is found. Finally, Tāne approaches his mother again and is told to go to the sea, and shape the soil (or sand) at Kurawaka into a human form: 'E tae koe ki te one I Kurawaka, ahua te one whakatangatatia'. Having reached Kurawaka and shaped this human form, Tāne returns to his mother and is sent to various tūpuna to receive parts for the body. The female form is named Hineahuone (p. 121).

The many variations of the significant location of Hineahuone's origins reflect environmental localities of significance. Sites of significance include the sands of Pikopikoiwhiti – thought to be a beach beside a pool or lake; Ngāti Porou describes another sandy beach at Tapatairoa, in Hawaiki; Te Urewera traditions speak of the river of Hawaiki where a woman was formed of river mud (Yates-Smith, 1998). The particular sites seem only to reinforce the connection that tribal localities can trace to Hineahuone, where her origins, just like theirs, are traced to the environments with which they identify. Connecting pūrākau with significant localities can be seen as a way of grounding it within a familiar space, which subsequently allows a more personal connection to it. Jenny Lee-Morgan (2016) explores the inherent role of pūrākau being in its “pedagogical potential”. She explains that:

Pūrākau as a cultural imperative, guides us to share our ‘stories’ in ways that engage with the audience, provoke a self-directed process of meaning making, raise questions and provide answers, or quench the thirst to learn more (2016, p. 5)

In this way, the way that particular iwi ground Hineahuone's origin, Kurawaka, within environments that they relate to is an important aspect of the pūrākau process to engage their specific audience and embed it within their own identity.

The reflection of Hineahuone and wāhine extends not only to grounding in cultural identity, but it has also been exhibited in a range of colonially influenced mechanisms, as introduced earlier. Just as the accounts of Hineahuone had been conveniently

morphed into those with uncanny resemblance to that of the biblical Eve, where Tāne's role in her creation was amplified while Papatūānuku's essential input was virtually ignored, wāhine roles have suffered ongoing impacts too. The "missionary zeal and redefinition at the hands of settlers" meant that their paternalistic ideals and approach influenced the perception of Māori women and eventually embedded those ideals within society (Mikaere, 2011, p. 194). Just as her story (Hineahuone) was (re)defined to fit a Victorian, paternally dominant view of the world, Linda Smith also described the same happening for Māori women:

Māori women were perceived either in family terms as wives and children, or in sexual terms as easy partners. Women who had "chiefly" roles were considered the exception to the rule, not the norm ... Māori women were considered attractive in the absence of a pool of white women. Their autonomy was interpreted as immorality and lack of discipline. Christianity reinforced these notions by spelling out rules of decorum and defining spaces (the home) for the carrying out of appropriate female activities (1997, pp. 48-49).

This dual-disconnect – wāhine from their vast roles within te ao Māori, and Hineahuone (and other feminine atua) from their significance within cosmogeny – meant that the "deep and fundamental connection" with the land and identity was diminished (Mikaere, 2011; Royal, 2005a). The (re)claiming and (re)telling of the important role of Papatūānuku in the forming of Hineahuone, and the significant role of Hineahuone in the birth of humanity can (re)create that stable base, balanced with the powerful roles of atua tāne, upon which tribal interests can flourish. The complementing roles of atua are a template for the complementing roles of tāne and wāhine Māori. The (re)telling of pūrākau that represents and reflects those roles can provide us with a sense of ancestral authority to follow. Those templates were put in place to help guide our actions and they can continue to do so in a way that supports long term aspirations (Lee, 2005; Marsden & Henare, 1992; Yates-Smith, 2003).

Ngāhuia Murphy also considers the significance of the location of Kurawaka, or the birthplace of humanity, and challenges the consistent down-playing of colonial ethnographic literature. She contests that the location, at the uha (vulva) of Papatūānuku, epitomises it as the creative centre of the world. Reinforcing Ani Mikaere's assertion that "[f]emale strength lies at the core of Māori existence, and is sourced in the power of female sexual and reproductive functions" (2011, p. 209). It was only with his mother's counsel that Tāne was able to discover "the elusive material capable of materialising his procreative longing, ushering in humanity" (Murphy, 2011,

p. 72). Murphy's investigation into the origins and practices of wāhine menstruation led her to explore the term *ikura* – which she describes having reference to menstruation originating from the red earth of Kurawaka – *mai-i-Kurawaka*. She provides reflections on the connection of menstruation by deconstructing the place name. *Kura* can refer to a prized treasure, a shade of red associated with red ochre, and is a ritual *mātauranga* or lore. *Waka*, then provides a vehicle or the medium for *atua*. Metaphorically, by conveying generations, *waka* also represents the female reproductive organs. The reconstruction then presents Kurawaka as “a precious red medium that conveys the generations and a precious red medium of *atua*” (Murphy, 2011, p. 72). This representation of the capacity of wāhine to convey generations through their connection to Hineahuone, through *ikura*, and ultimately to Papatūānuku, is a physical and metaphorical representation of *Ngā taonga tuku iho*.

Beyond the knowledge transmission associated with menstruation that Ngāhuia Murphy discusses, the wāhine who contributed to this research encapsulated the importance of *Ngā taonga tuku iho* through a range of other practices. Inherent in their being as wāhine Māori, with whakapapa connections to Hineahuone and Papatūānuku, they exemplified their role of *atua* mediums. Passing on knowledge, passing on *taonga*, and manifesting as a vehicle for the exchange and transmission of knowledge, influence, and generative power. Murphy reiterates this connection and relates to other *huahuatau* connected to the balancing roles of wāhine and the *kaitiakitanga* that they practise (Murphy, 2011). Ngāhuia Te Awekotuku also describes the role of wāhine as “keepers of the correct records” (p. 75) and that they would often hold orators accountable for their recounts of history and whakapapa by interrupting, correcting, and if necessary, humiliating them (2007). This important role that wāhine held in monitoring and enforcing the correct transmission of knowledge is inherent in their *kaitiaki* nature, reinforced by their whakapapa connection through *ikura*, to Kurawaka, Hineahuone and Papatūānuku (Murphy, 2011; Yates-Smith, 1998).

The capacity and role of wāhine in knowledge transmission is also discussed by Hirini Reedy (1996), who refers to the *whare tangata* as the location where the pre-determining or navigating of a child's future as a warrior is instilled through the institution of *oriori* (lullaby). The importance of the *whare tangata* as the first *whare wānanga* is recognised as providing a child their first teachings and orienting them within their own whakapapa (Kahukiwa & Potiki, 1999). A mother might perform the *oriori* while pregnant with the intention of shaping the future of her child. Apirana Ngata also describes how

strands of knowledge are woven with tribal histories and whakapapa and are conveyed through the oriori (Ngata, 1948). The role of wāhine and kuia as repositories of knowledge and the conditions under which they deem it necessary to share it (Mikaere, 2011), will be discussed further with reference to tohunga wāhine such as Muri-ranga-whenua, Mahuika, and Hine-nui-te-pō, and their relationships with Māui-tikitiki-Taranga.

Hineahuone and wāhine are reflections of each other. She is of the earth – whenua. She holds an important role in birthing humanity – tangata. Her significance has been under-appreciated and purposefully diminished by colonial narratives. She provides an essential medium for the transmission of knowledge – mai i Kurawaka (Murphy, 2011). The template or archetype that Hineahuone provides, when viewed through a Mana Wahine lens, is one that shows us the significance of how we are represented. Pūrākau are framed to capture the audience and connect with them. They bring with them histories of those who are telling the stories, those in control of the narrative (Lee, 2005, 2009). Hineahuone and pūrākau of her origins are an important way that wāhine Māori can locate themselves within that story. We must then be the ones in control of (re)telling and (re)claiming those stories.

Kurawaka and the significance of its location can (re)present the uha, the procreative space of wāhine, of Papatūānuku, as vital to cultural identity, rather than a location for male or colonial dominance. The ikura, that Ngahuia Murphy (2011) describes as being connected – mai-i-Kurawaka – to that origin of humanity. The ikura, from Kurawaka, which provides a medium for the transmission of ancient knowledges and future knowledges, is what connects wāhine to Hineahuone. *Ngā taonga tuku iho – mai – i – Kurawaka.*

Hine-ahu-one. The woman shaped of the earth. The earth is heaped and mounded and shaped to form the female element, the human element – te ira tangata. The construction of the name of Hineahuone brings with it clues as to how we might trace or understand our connection to her. *Ahuwhenua* and the way that wāhine display those ways of being can provide us with that connecting piece of the whakapapa. The construction of *Ahu-whenua*, the word and its broader meanings, illustrates that connection through the earth, through the whenua, and through to *Hine-ahu-one*. The composition and origins of Hineahuone being shaped from the earth, mirrors the āhuatanga that connect wāhine with skills and behaviours related to tending the earth,

kaitiki ki te whenua, *mahi māra*, and being purposeful in shaping their successful outcomes. The mātauranga, planning, and application of knowledge that brought about Hineahuone was essential to her existence. It was not just Tāne and his search for the *ira tangata* and desire to procreate. The successful (wo)manifestation of Hineahuone was a result of the contributions of many other atua, with each of Tāne's brothers being responsible for providing particular body parts (Yates-Smith, 1998). Papatūānuku held the essential knowledge that was required for Tāne to complete the task, and the collective effort – from knowledge potential to the trial and error, to the purposeful shaping, through to the eventual first breath. *Tihei mauri ora* – success.

Hineahuone's origins, from locations of significance to her physical formation, allow us to consider her significance in our contemporary selves. Through the *huahuatau*, *Ahuwhenua*, we trace our whakapapa metaphorically and metaphysically through our shaping and care for [tangata]whenua. She is connected to fulfilling potential, being the manifestation of the collective effort to bring her to life – *Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai*. She represents for us the medium of knowledge transmission, through her connection *mai-i-Kurawaka* (Murphy, 2011) – *Ngā taonga tuku iho*. She is our reflection, and we are hers – *whakaataata* – as the first woman, the first representation of humanity and the mother of humanity. She connects wāhine to the earth, as reflections of it, caretakers of it, and those who have the capacity to shape it. Hineahuone's role within Māori cosmology is more than the mere vessel that is shaped by Tāne for his procreative purposes. Although, that role indeed still holds significance, Hineahuone provides us with a picture of wāhine as potential manifest. She represents what can be achieved with collective effort, informed direction, and purposeful construction. She is more than how she came to be. She is a vehicle for knowledge, whakapapa, and humanity. Just as wāhine are.

10.3 Papatūānuku

Kai – tiaki – tanga

She of us

And we of her?

Ngā tangata o te whenua

From her we origin

Te whenua o ngā tangata

To her we return

To nurture and feed us

And we the same for her?

She, mother of the earth

Te whare tangata

Mine and hers

Entwined through whakapapa

Through whenua

Through wairua

Connected from one to all

Realm to realm

Through past, present, and time yet been

Her blood flows through ours

Te awa atua

To generations next

From whenua to whenua

Te Ūkaipō

From her breast we are nourished and sustained

Our bodies reflections of hers

With the power to nurture life

Connected to and through whenua

Where we originate

And to where we return

Drawing from *kōrero* from her research participants, feminist geographies, and Mana Wahine literature, Naomi Simmonds examines the so-called “co-constitution” of female/maternal bodies with the body or spaces within Papatūānuku. In essence, highlighting the parallels between the significant roles of intrauterine space or the womb, and those of Papatūānuku, she re-iterates the discourses of Papatūānuku as a nurturer and mother. This emphasises her influence and connection to the maternal bodies of *wāhine*, which also hold the capacity to nurture life (Simmonds, 2009).

There are many narratives of Papatūānuku, as with many other significant figures of Māori cosmogeny. However, she is well-known as Mother Earth and the mother of many *atua*. Her union with Ranginui is re-counted as an important, balanced, and loving bond between genders. As primordial parents, Rangi and Papa clung to each other in a way that Pere describes as reinforcing the notion of gender balance, as “one deity” (1982, p. 8). Therefore, exhibiting her significance among *atua* and the role she played in a “sacred story-cycle, which provided the template of social relations” (Murphy, 2019, p. 27).

Papatūānuku was eventually separated from the loving embrace of Ranginui, when one of her sons, Tānemahuta forced them apart. In this act, the world that was once darkness (*Te Pō*) was filled with light (*Te Ao Mārama*). Papatūānuku now represents the nurturing and life sustaining force of the earth (Yates-Smith, 1998). She provides a maternal archetype for *wāhine* and is at the centre of several dualisms that connect *whenua* (land) with *tangata* (people), especially through *wāhine*. Naomi Simmonds again relates the intimate relationship represented in Māori ontological traditions, where Māori women are closely intertwined with Papatūānuku through *whakapapa*, *whenua*, and *wairua*. She describes the way “the maternal body as *te whare tangata* make inextricable the individual from the collective, the physical from the spiritual and the present from the past and future” (2014, p. 137). *Te whare tangata* (the house of humanity) is represented both with Papatūānuku and as the womb. A place where new life is nurtured and sustained. A place where new life has the potential to thrive.

The term *kaitiakitanga* is often used concerning the guardianship or care for the land but it can also reflect the care that is taken for people, similar to *manaakitanga*. This dual meaning further connects people with the land, *wāhine* to Papatūānuku. Just as *whare tangata* and *kaitiakitanga* connect *wāhine* to Papatūānuku, so too do the *āhuatanga* of *Ahuwhenua*. This *huahuatau* illustrates and further connects *wāhine* to *whenua*. It

connects wāhine to the earth, grounding us, and exhibiting our skills and behaviours connected to it, as whakapapa to Papatūānuku and also Hineahuone. The huahuatau displays references to tending the land or successfully harvesting kai. Such references may relate to literal connections to whenua but the ability that wāhine have to cultivate, nurture, and harvest successful outcomes are also broader. The wāhine-whenua connection through Papatūānuku is highlighted in that wāhine are the whenua and they are also the caretakers of the whenua. Wāhine nurture and cultivate, just as Papatūānuku models for us to do. Wāhine prepare and procreate, just as Papatūānuku is known for. The template that Papatūānuku provides for us is implemented and displayed in the practical skills demonstrated by wāhine. Their ability to care for themselves, others and the whenua is manifested in behaviours that result in creative cultivation, the creation of new things, the cultivation of success, of continuation. Just as our Earth Mother, Papatūānuku continues to do.

10.4 Hine-tī-tama

*She is the dawning light that makes our eyes glisten.
 Ko Hine-titama koe, matawai ana te whatu i te tirohanga⁶.
 Her beauty such that the bounds of righteousness and wrongness are blurred.
 Her father, her husband, her children, her self.
 Knowing in her self, her children, her husband, her father.
 To ask the pou, a mere confirmation of a truth she sensed.
 To balance a choice to transform. To empower. To stand and make a stand.
 She empowers her self. To transform her self. To become her self.
 Not to flee but to step into her rite and evolve unto the gatekeeper of worlds.
 To stand and straddle and ease the way for those yet to come.
 Her power potent. Potential. Of life and death. Dawn and night.
 Giver and taker. Whare tangata and whare o aituā.
 Daughter and mother. Hine, e hine.
 She holds between her legs the power to deliver life or end it.
 Hine-tī-tama - dawn. Hine-nui-te-pō - night.
 Hine. She is us. We are her.
 Her balance within.*

Hine-tī-tama is described as the atua of the dawn, born of Hineahuone and Tānemahuta. Her persona as associated with the dawn is juxtaposed with her eventual persona of Hine-nui-te-pō, of the night. Hine-tī-tama represents an important archetype within Māori cosmogeny, referred to at times as the first human born, or first female born. She provides a range of narratives that establish an important set of relational regulations as a result of the unfolding discovery of her whakapapa. Yates-Smith collates a range of sources to provide a synopsis of Hine-tī-tama's journey:

In due course Hineahuone gives birth to a girl who is named Hine-tī-tama. Years later Tāne takes Hine-tī-tama as his wife and she gives birth to several children, the first being Hineteiwaiwa. Hine-tī-tama becomes curious as to her father's identity and asks Tāne who her father is. Tāne's answer is evasive, telling her to ask the poupou in their house. Hine-tī-tama, knowing that Tāne had carved their house Huiteananui, eventually concludes that Tāne is, in fact, her father. Shamed by the truth, Hine-tī-tama decides to flee to the Underworld,

⁶ Whakataukī that translates: *You are like Hine-tī-tama, the eye glistens when gazing upon you.*

reciting a karakia to deter Tāne from following her. Tāne manages to follow her, passing through the various gateways of te Pō, asking the guardians (all female) of those gates as to the whereabouts of Hine-tī-tama and always being told that she has gone ahead. When Tāne finds Hine, he pleads with her to return with him, but she replies that she will remain in Rarohēnga to wait for their children to come to her, and that Tāne should return home. Hine-tī-tama remains in te Pō and becomes known as Hine-nui-te-pō (p.135, 1998).

Being of the dawn, Hine-tī-tama was always positioned between the worlds of night and day (Hutchings, 2002; Kahukiwa, 2000). Born into a space between worlds, she was challenged to navigate “the incestuous transgression of her father” (Murphy, 2011, p. 24). Through that navigation, balancing, and shifting, she invoked the power to transform into Hine-nui-te-pō. In that shift, she claimed a new and important position, holding dominion over the realms of death (Kahukiwa, 2000; Mikaere, 2003). Such a decision could not have been made without the capacity to encompass the many characteristics often exhibited by wāhine.

The ability to stand and balance the different roles she held and make decisions to move away or towards. The skill and dexterity to overcome obstacles, challenges, or shifts in the terrain. Hine-tī-tama exhibits what may be one of the first and most significant acts of *Rakanga Waewae*. Her ability to move in spaces between and balance her position between worlds, realms, and roles is an archetype to which wāhine can trace their contemporary capabilities. Hine-tī-tama had to consider more than the supposed shame of incest, but also considered the importance of her potential gate-keeping role between the worlds of life and death (Murphy, 2011, 2019; Yates-Smith, 2003). She provides us with an archetype of what it means to take control of and navigate the spaces in between, from the dawn of life to the night and death. Hine-tī-tama/Hine-nui-te-pō is empowered and empowering and shows us how shifting position can be about changing consciousness, changing form, and fulfilling potential.

Wāhine can express a connection, through karanga (and other means), to the potential power and shifting consciousness demonstrated by Hine-tī-tama/Hine-nui-te-pō. As gatekeepers of a spiritual doorway or threshold, and conduits of transformation, kaikaranga stand on the threshold between worlds and call to the dead to unite with the living (Marsden & Royal, 2003; Murphy, 2013). This ability to stand at the threshold and facilitate that union is attributed to te whare tangata – a cultural construction of the doorway between worlds (Mikaere, 2003; Murphy, 2011).

From work in her master's thesis, Ngāhuia Murphy explores the ability of tipuna whaea to traverse the in-between space, by utilising the dual power to cross back and forwards between realms, of life and death, tapu and noa (2011). Aroha Yates-Smith suggests that the inherited power of wāhine, additional to te whare tangata, is the creation of te whare o aituā – when Hine-nui-te-pō crushed and killed Māui between her legs. Wāhine inherited this dual power of whare tangata/whare o aituā, and the subsequent power to straddle and hold life and death, creation and destruction (Yates-Smith, 1998). The contemporary translation of this connection to Hine-tī-tama/Hine-nui-te-pō is illustrated in ceremonial practices such as karanga (Murphy, 2011) but maybe even in our wāhine demonstrating a dexterous ability to balance many other roles that they hold in their contemporary lives.

Not mentioned yet is the way Hine-tī-tama's beauty is famously described. “Ko Hine-tī-tama koe, matawai nga karu i te tirohanga” describes the way in which her beauty made the beholder's eyes glisten (Riley, 2013, p. 455). This description is often related to her physical attributes, but arguably could have just as easily have been an expression of strength, courage, vision, and the initiative to embark on her transcendent journey. Hine-tī-tama's beauty, the attributes that bring a glisten to the eye, are demonstrated and displayed by wāhine today. Wāhine who display their ‘beauty’ with pride, as reflections of their whakapapa and as physical manifestations of their inner strength, courage, and resilience. “Māori girls with curls”, enjoying “trappings of the dresses and the sparkle” of dance, or stepping into their whakapapa by displaying it on their chin as moko kauae. Wāhine reflect the beauty of Hine-tī-tama in their own ways. The initiative or intuition of Hine-tī-tama, is discussed by Murphy (2011) as setting a path in which she would come to know her full potential power (Pihama, 2001; Yates-Smith, 1998). In that discussion, Hine-tī-tama represents a dynamic and active passage of becoming (Murphy, 2011), sacrificing one part of herself in order to step into another. She provides, within this pūrākau, a map for us to facilitate our own transformation and realisation of potential – *kia puāwai*.

As mentioned, the connection and power that wāhine have through the whare tangata/whare o aituā to Hine-tī-tama/Hine-nui-te-pō is represented in the ability to straddle the spaces between realms. In Hine-tī-tama's retreat to the darkness, she inhabits a space “that represents the cosmogonic womb of becoming and undoing, dissolution and rebirth” (Murphy, 2019, p. 152). Though her journey of becoming is often related as a transformation from Hine-tī-tama to Hine-nui-te-pō, the transition is

described by Yates-Smith (1998) to have involved many stages of initiation. Through those initiations, the transitory name of Hinekura appears. Kura has been interpreted previously with reference to its precious, ceremonial nature – as with red ochre. The additional translation relating to divine knowledge or intuition of learning, is a continuation of the earlier discussion about ikura and whare tangata, as a medium for transmitting matrilineal knowledge. Eventually, Hine-tī-tama who became Hinekura who became Hine-nui-te-pō, becomes an example of the wāhine capacity to endure, empower, and transform to fulfil potential.

10.5 Hine-nui-te-pō

Who is she that has moved through realms?
Who has conquered those who sought to conquer her
Who is she that has balanced worlds between her thighs?
Who has held space for we who pass through
Te Ara whanui a Tāne – Rarohenga – Beyond
Who is she who sacrificed her whole world?
Who took upon a journey to ease the way for ours
She is Hine-nui-te-pō
She is potential manifest
She holds our souls in her embrace
She is our gatekeeper
She is Hine-nui-te-pō

Hine-nui-te-pō, her persona and her origins, are tied up in the persona and origins of Hine-tī-tama. The role that she plays is of immense significance for Māori, but for wāhine she holds additional significance. As the so-called *Great Woman of the Night* Hine-nui-te-pō, she awaits the arrival of the souls of her *children* and descendants in Rarohenga – the spirit world. Upon their arrival, she provides them solace and protection. The space between life and death, that Hine-nui-te-pō occupies, brings with it a great power (Best, 1973; Murphy, 2019; Yates-Smith, 1998).

That great power was such that Māui – the well-known demi-god trickster – would one day seek it out for himself. The character of Māui holds great significance within Māori and wider Pacific history. His escapades and accomplishments are amongst the most popular stories of Māori mythology (Roberts et al., 2004). Unfortunately, these adventures have often portrayed Māui solely as the hero whilst demonising or representing the other characters, often tūpuna wāhine, as evil, dark personas (Murphy, 2019).

Māui and his adventures frame him as a character that pushes the boundaries and strives to seek out knowledge that often is held and cared for by tūpuna wāhine (Walker, 1996). He seeks the source of fire from Mahuika – atua of fire – who chooses to share that taonga with him until realising he is trying to trick her by extinguishing the fire, each time she shares it. Additionally, Māui's grandmother, Muri-ranga-whenua was

motivated to gift Māui her kauae mārō (jawbone), arguably through a sense of aroha, whanaungatanga, and manaakitanga. This act provides Māui with the necessary technology to achieve the many feats he eventually takes on (Ka'ai, 2005).

Māui is often granted many opportunities to fulfil his desired ambitions by these tūpuna wāhine, and one version of his interaction with Hine-nui-te-pō continues that theme. Ngāhuia Murphy presents a version told to her by Rose Pere, a well-known tohunga, whereby Māui's final adventure and aspiration to have the ability to wax and wane like Hina-te-iwa-iwa (atua of the moon) is actually facilitated by Hine-nui-te-pō. In popular versions, Māui decides to enter the vulva of Hine-nui-te-pō, with the hopes to reverse the process of birth and achieve immortality. In such versions, Māui's plan is thwarted by Hine-nui-te-pō, who crushes Māui with the obsidian teeth of her vagina, when he enters her, and thus his desires for immortality are ended (Kahukiwa, 2000; Mikaere, 2011; Yates-Smith, 1998).

The version that Rose Pere offers, presents Hine-nui-te-pō as another tūpuna wāhine who sees beyond the immediate aspirations of Māui to the potential for his adventures to serve a purpose for many others.

Māui went to Hine-nui-te-po-te-ao and climbed up to her thighs. The Tiwaiwaka (fantail) flitted right up to Māui, and asked him what he was up to. Māui told the Tiwaiwaka that he wanted to go back into the womb where he was sure he could receive immortality. The Tiwaiwaka warned Māui about cutting across the natural laws, but Māui continued on his journey. The Tiwaiwaka woke the sleeping Hine-nui-te-po-te-ao up. Hine-nui-te-po-te-ao asked Māui what he was doing heading up to her groin and Māui told her about wanting to be like the Moon. Hine-nui-te-po-te-ao said she could grant Māui his wish but he was not to return to the womb; she then crushed him and made him the first menstruation to come into the world. As long as woman menstruates, Māui will live on (Pere, 2010, cited p.49, in Murphy, 2013).

Interestingly, in this version Māui once again becomes a conduit of the power and potential of wāhine. His exploits are often told in ways that celebrate his crafty acumen and adventurousness. But when an appreciation for the wāhine influence in many of Māui's adventures is acknowledged, it is clear that their wahine impact is significant. Muri-ranga-whenua's strong jawbone is a symbol of knowledge – kauae runga (esoteric knowledge), and kauae raro (practical knowledge). It is handed down to him in order for him to use that knowledge to slow the sun and lengthen the day, when he fashions a patu from the jawbone (Ka'ai, 2005). It also allowed him to achieve the feat of fishing

up Te ika a Māui – the North Island of Aotearoa when he transforms it into a matau (hook). His escapades with Mahuika, eventuated in her passing on her fire-generating power to Hine-kaikomako – the Fire Conserver and personification of the Kaikomako tree – and other forest trees that now hold the potential to generate fire (Kahukiwa & Potiki, 1999; Walker, 1990).

Hine-nui-te-pō also enables and facilitates Māui, but not for his own glory but for the potential that lies beyond his actions. In her case, Hine-nui-te-pō allows Māui to achieve his goal of achieving immortality and in a sense to wax and wane like Hine-te-iwa-iwa, as a representation of a women's monthly menstruation (Murphy, 2019). The relationship between Hine-nui-te-pō and Māui, shows us the complementary and dual roles of tāne and wahine in continuing whakapapa, in this case demonstrating menstruation as a medium of whakapapa – involving both wahine and tāne functions. In this way, Hine-nui-te-pō, through the final adventure of Māui, creates a connection that links humanity to atua, through the medium of monthly menstruation, *Ngā taonga tuku iho, Ko au te taiao, Ahuwhenua*.

If we take this (re)interpretation and apply it to the contemporary mana exhibited by wāhine, it manifests in a range of ways. The nature of complementing roles or traits is apparent, where wāhine can appreciate and utilise the types of energies, people, and environments that may challenge them but pose a potential future benefit. Whether they find that complementing energy from an intimate partner, a physical activity, or a place that provides the so-called “yin” to their “yang” – the Māui to their Hine. This narrative also shows us that wāhine ability to see potential in themselves and others (or both), can result in future benefits or the metaphorical “continuation of whakapapa.”

Sacrifice is a trait that wāhine exhibit when they commit time to their training and competition, but also when they sacrifice their own success or gain in order to help others. Muri-ranga-whenua knew that her kauae mārō, in the hands of Māui, would contribute to amazing accomplishments. Her knowledge, her kauae combined with Māui's youth, strength, and ambition. Their complementing contributions achieved great feats. Similarly, wāhine who have inherited that ability to use what mechanisms they have at hand, creatively, to see potential, channel or incorporate complementing or contrasting energies, and achieve a successful outcome because of it – he kai kei aku ringa. What they have at hand, often handed down from ancestors, can become a successful outcome, for them, for others, and for future generations.

Hine-nui-te-pō, just like her previous persona of Hine-tī-tama, represents how we as contemporary wāhine Māori can see beyond the immediate to picture a potential outcome that is well worth the sacrifice it takes to achieve it. In contemporary cases, using physical activity as a frame for understanding, wāhine are manifesting the mana of Hine-nui-te-pō when they sacrifice time and energy, in order to achieve a long-term goal or aspiration. Whether it is maintaining a healthy tinana for a long life with whānau, or whether that healthy tinana represents a positive model of behaviour for others. It could be the act of sacrificing time with family in order to achieve success in their chosen sport or to lead others in achieving their own health goals. The ability of wāhine to see beyond the present and into the potential is an essential role within both te ao Māori, te ao tangata, for which our tūpuna wāhine – Hine-nui-te-pō, Mahuika, and Muri-ranga-whenua, are archetypes.

10.6 Hineteiwaiwa

Moon, weaver, warrior
Creative, collective, connected
She waxes and she wanes
Her glow, her power
Weaves light into darkness
Her fingers deft and stained
Wielding strands of potential
Keeping count as each passes into the next
She holds the power that moves tides
And with them she moves in us too
Our waters with the waters of great oceans
Her pull on us as on them all
She knows in herself and informs us too
When to powerfully or peacefully engage
When to gather in, draw near to whānau or foe
When to proceed and when to retreat
Over, under, or through
She fills our kete with the skills required
To dance to weave to commune
To bring life or death
E ako au ki te haka⁷
She, our Hina, our light in the dark
Guides our path as we weave our way through
From whenu to whenua and beyond

⁷ The name of a haka, that translates to: *I learn to dance*. Kāretu, T. S. (1993). *Haka! : the dance of a noble people = Te tohu o te whenua rangatira*. Reed.

Hineteiwaiwa plays many roles within Māori cosmology. She epitomises the multi-talented and multi-tasking nature of contemporary Māori women, notably those who participated in this research. Hineteiwaiwa or Hinateiwaiwa, is known as the atua or guardian of childbirth, weaving and the cycles of the moon. The responsibilities that align with the procreation and rhythms of life are often what Hineteiwaiwa is most commonly known for (Murphy, 2019; Yates-Smith, 1998). They are also the roles that were amplified with colonial (re)tellings of her in written records, representing her as a “role model of Māori womanhood” (Murphy, 2019, p. 115). Parallel to these roles, Hineteiwaiwa is also regarded for her strategic military leadership. With such a wide and diverse portfolio of responsibilities and skills, she represents a narrative that “disturbs the sanitised colonial descriptions of Hinateiwaiwa that reinforce Christian and Victorian cultural constructs of what it means to be a ‘good’ woman” (Murphy, 2019, p. 117).

One pūrākau that vehemently demonstrates a ‘disturbed colonial description’ of Hineteiwaiwa, is one that is often referenced with the names of the tāne involved – *Tinirau and Kae*. However, the more significant aspect of this story, at least from a Mana Wahine perspective, involves the skill and strategic calculations of Hineteiwaiwa, as a military leader, along with those of her female contingent – arguably *keira*, or female assassins. This telling is adapted from Murphy (2019), who recounts a range of recorded oral histories. Hineteiwaiwa was tasked with hunting down and capturing a tohunga by the name of Kae. Kae had deceived Hineteiwaiwa’s husband, Tinirau – who was a guardian of fish and the keeper of pet whales. Kae was charged with murdering and eating Tutunui, a beloved pet whale of Tinirau, so Hineteiwaiwa summoned her war party of wāhine toa in search of this tohunga recognisable by his crooked front teeth. This war party disguised themselves as a group of dancers and made their journey throughout the Pacific Islands to arrive at Te Tihi o Manono – the home of Kae. The strategy was to perform dances that displayed their sexual prowess, in order to captivate the crowd and make them laugh. In doing so, they would be able to identify Kae by his crooked teeth. They began to grow suspicious of one man in the crowd who appeared to remain tight-lipped, while the rest of the crowd laughed and cheered. Once they had identified their potential culprit, they performed the “erotically charged” haka *E ako au ki te haka*, thought to be one of the first haka composed (Murphy, 2019, p. 116).

E ako au ki te haka!
 E ako au ki te ringaringa
 E ako au ki te whewhera
 E kaore te whewhera
 E ako au ki te kowhiti
 E kaore te kowhiti
 E kowhiti nuku e kowhiti rangi
 E kowhiti puapua,e kowhiti werewere
 E hanahana a tinaku e!

I learn to dance!
 I learn to explore with my hands
 I learn to open wide
 Not to open wide
 I learn to twitch
 Not to twitch
 Pulsating upwards, pulsating downwards
 My vagina throbs, my vagina vibrillates
 A haven of lingering warmth! (Kāretu, 1993, pp. 15-16)

The words and their associated movements culminated in the troupe exposing their naked tara (vulva), whereby electrifying the audience and compelling the tohunga to lose his composure and “exploding into a fit of laughter that sealed his fate” (Murphy, 2019, p. 117). Then Hineteiwaiwa displayed another of her ritual artistic talents, in performing an incantation or karakia that puts the entire audience to sleep, allowing her and the wāhine keira to carry the tohunga away to be executed for his misdeed.

In this story we are presented with an abundance of ways in which the power of wāhine can be manifested. Hineteiwaiwa is indeed a role model of Māori womanhood, but not necessarily in the way that Victorian colonial or Christian constructs might have tried to convey (Best, 1924, 1973; Grey, 1971; Shortland, 1882). Her seemingly contrasting roles as guardian of childbirth and women’s arts with that of a vulva-wielding military strategist, covert operative, and executer of justice, actually offer us a range of overlapping templates for our own behaviours and roles as contemporary wāhine.

Ngāhuia Murphy argues that the pūrākau surrounding the haka that Hineteiwaiwa and her war party performed “graphically narrates the assertiveness with which our ancestresses celebrated their sexual power” (Murphy, 2019, p. 117). In that way, the roles that we as wāhine Māori have been conditioned to comply with by the mechanisms of colonisation can be dissected and deconstructed. Like those male-dominated narratives imposed by “western civilisations” via missionaries and early settlers, where they:

did not allow its womenfolk any power at all – they were merely chattels in some cases less worthy than the men’s horses. What the colonizer found was a land of noble savages narrating...stories of the wonder of women. Their myths and beliefs had to be reshaped and retold...in the retelling of our myths...Māori women found their mana destroyed (Jenkins as cited in Mikaere, 1994, p. 131).

Hineteiwaiwa and her diverse personas, roles, responsibilities, capabilities, and talents demonstrate that we need not be defined by one or two or a few so-called feminine characteristics that are prescribed by colonial systems or ‘christian’ ideals that minimize our potential as leaders, as wāhine, and as entities of fierce female power (Mikaere, 1994, 2003; Murphy, 2019). She also encourages us to reclaim the responsibility to reshape and retell those stories that we now have the ability to rebuild, restore, and enhance mana by narrating stories that once again tell of the wonder of women, their diverse feminine power, and its relevance through our connection to atua like Hineteiwaiwa.

Just as has been discussed with Hine-tī-tama/Hine-nui-te-pō and Papatūānuku, Hineteiwaiwa illustrates the dual power of wāhine and the significance of the whare tangata and female reproductive organs. Those mechanisms that wield the most significant feminine power are those that are most connected to the pathways of birth, new life, and those of death (Yates-Smith, 1998). Hineteiwaiwa also inhabits those spaces. She encompasses so many essential roles that it is clear that her functions within Māori cosmology are mirrored in the many essential roles that wāhine also often assume. Hineteiwaiwa guides childbirth, the important first moments of life (Yates-Smith, 1998). She is represented in the waxing and waning of the moon. That waxing and waning exerts power and influence over the tides, is aligned with menstrual cycles, and holds relevance to much of Māori food growing and gathering practices. Her involvement with te whare pora extends beyond the practice of weaving and encompasses the art of karakia and reaching toward new consciousness and higher learning (Te Kanawa, 2014; Tupara, 2011). And finally, her strategic nous and military leadership means that she is connected with passing on knowledge of warfare to young warriors. She and other tipuna wāhine are in this way “vital repositories of sacred ritual knowledge;” they are able to “maintain and enforce their own authority” and have the capacity and skill set to “respond swiftly and aggressively to transgression” (Murphy, 2019, p. 131).

Hineteiwaiwa then encompasses and provides a template for many of the āhuetanga that have been outlined throughout this and previous sections. Her stories, the traits she displays, and the roles she plays provide learnings for contemporary wāhine to align themselves with. Her feminine power and authority over her many realms can illustrate connections to the way wāhine now too also display their feminine power.

Hineteiwaiwa encompasses the huahuatau *Rakanga Waewae* in both the literal and metaphorical sense. Her abilities as a warrior alongside her prowess in displaying an enthralling haka performance demonstrate her physical capacity to move dexterously. She uses that physical skill to navigate the battlefield *a tinana* (physically) and through her warfare strategy. The skill to move from one place to another intersects her military prowess and her proficiency in the weaving arts. The āhuetanga *Māwhitiwhiti* holds the dual meaning of (1) jumping from one to another, likened to a grasshopper, and (2) being a type of crossover stitch in weaving kākahu, or a counting system for the top and bottom of a kākahu, to ensure a weaver is keeping count correctly (Te Aka Māori Dictionary, 2021). Her position as guardian of childbirth contrasted with the pūrākau of her executing justice on the tohunga, Kae, show us her ability to straddle responsibilities for facilitating new life while also standing firm in the delivery of justice.

She aligns clearly with the huahuatau *Ahuwhenua*, where her analytical and strategic knowledge is essential to successful outcomes on the battlefield. Leading and passing on her knowledge of both the art of war as well as the art of weaving. Both require forward planning, creativity, an eye for detail, and the ability to know the lay of the land and being able to use its resources for benefit. Te whare pora represents a space where weavers can convene and wānanga and grow their knowledge of the art of rāranga (Te Kanawa, 2014). The supportive collective space that it provides aligns with women's contemporary need to seek out supportive spaces that nourish their tinana and wairua. Sharing space with and learning from each other, gaining inspiration, and being supported to achieve their aspirations aligns itself with both *Kitea to hapori* and *Ngā taonga tuku iho*. And finally, Hineteiwaiwa exemplifies *Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai* and *Te tangi o te kūmara*, in showing us that there need not be limits to our potential as wāhine. Not those inflicted by colonial systems, nor those inherited by our colonized forebears, nor those internalised by ourselves as a result.

Hineteiwaiwa shows us that we can be caring, careful, and nurturing as we are as new mothers. But also, we have the capacity for strength, power, and an ability to endure intense pain – both through our labouring and in the battles we face. She demonstrates

to us that we too can be creative, reach new levels of consciousness, cast incantations, and commune with our collectives. She connects with us through our connection to the lunar cycle, through our menstrual cycles. The influence of her waxing and waning is felt within our *whare tangata*, just as it is felt by the vast oceans that ebb and flow at her will. Hineteiwaiwa no longer needs to be defined by her few so-called feminine characteristics that align her (and by association, us) with a colonial or ‘Christian’ view of ideal Māori womanhood. She takes up space well beyond domesticity and women’s arts, which are in no way demeaning in themselves. But she demonstrates to us that we can extend our skills and talents into areas of our own choosing. Creatively cultivating, implementing tactical strategies, facilitating supportive spaces, flourishing into spaces beyond designated borders, and challenging ideas of what it means to be a “role model of Māori womanhood.”

10.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented a conceptualisation of the influence of *atua wāhine* in a way that acknowledges their *mana*, and a *whakapapa* we share. It weaves in the *huahuatau* presented in earlier chapters and positions *huahuatau* as aligned with the many traits of *atua wāhine*, as with *wāhine*. It purposefully viewed and (re)interpreted *atua* through a *Mana Wahine* lens in order to reflect a meaning that was empowering and empowered. It presented a reflection of *atua wāhine* in the attributes and actions of *wāhine* via an expression of *whakapapa*. *Aro Atua* was my way of giving attention to a handful of influential *atua wāhine*, while leaving a space for others to come to light also. From the sacred tear drops that gathered to form the beginnings of *Parawhenuamea*; feeding into the red earth that formed *Hineahuone* from *Papatūānuku*. From the dual personas and sacrifice of *Hine-tī-tama* / *Hine-nui-te-pō*; to the diverse portfolio of skills of *Hineteiwaiwa* – *atua wāhine* offer us templates to guide or position ourselves within.

Chapter 11 Whakatinanatanga

11.1 Introduction

Whakatinanatanga is a term that indicates realisation, embodiment, or implementation. In this chapter it represents a journey of recognising and realising the intentions of this research. In the context of the Atua Matua Māori Health Framework, from which this term was adopted and adapted, whakatinanatanga is the physical expression or interpretation of mātauranga, whakapapa, and huahuatau. It represents action and it represents the medium through which potential is realised (Heke, 2019). In this way, this chapter aims to gather together all those things with the intention of representing a way forward – summarising the journey of the research, highlighting its contributions, and proposing potential avenues for continued applications.

11.2 Research Objectives

The aim of this research was to provide an understanding of physically active wāhine Māori and their connection to atua wāhine, while also engaging in and empowering a process that resonated with what it meant to be Māori, wāhine, and physically active in contemporary Aotearoa. This research sought to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the unique attributes/traits/characteristics shared by physically active Māori women?
- 2- How do the attributes of physically active Māori women connect to themes associated with atua wāhine?

In doing so it ultimately sought to bring wāhine voices to the fore and celebrate their successes as expressions of their whakapapa to atua. The first of these questions was addressed in the development and contextualisation of a set of five metaphorical categories that described a range of traits and behaviours, or ways of being and doing, developed out of the kōrero and korikori kōrero with wāhine. The development of these descriptions as huahuatau or metaphors, allowed for a broadening of meaning rather than a narrowing. A way of viewing mātauranga wahine that allowed for creative and critical thought and one that holds the potential for further meaning rather than restricting that mātauranga within narrow definitions.

What these huahuatau represent are demonstrations of wāhine ways of being in the world, while successfully navigating a physically active lifestyle. They provide a way to view and understand wāhine in a more mana-enhancing way than reductional or

deficit terms have previously done. These huahuatau and their potential to be positioned amongst a broad range of relevant literature also demonstrate that Māori ways of knowing and doing are valid and can contribute considerably to [Māori] research. They also demonstrate a unique ability to uncover understandings of Māori ways of being that are more likely to resonate with the way Māori view themselves or want themselves to be viewed.

The second of the research questions was addressed as the expression of *Aro Atua* – an interpretation of atua wāhine using a Mana Wahine lens. The roles and responsibilities that atua wāhine hold within te ao Māori, both through their pūrākau and their contemporary applications, can be fundamental to wāhine identity. Understanding our connection, as wāhine Māori to our ancient feminine ancestors provides us an opportunity to engage in a whakamana process, a celebration of their significance but also a celebration of our own (Forster, 2019; Forster et al., 2016; Mikaere, 2003). By taking a mana-enhancing perspective in the (re)interpretation of atua wāhine roles, we can do the same for wāhine. Wāhine can (re)claim their significant and diverse roles within Māori and contemporary society, as atua wāhine are restored to their rightful place as complementary characters with diverse and significant roles within Māori cosmological and contemporary society.

In the process of considering atua wāhine as they relate to us through huahuatau, I was able to deepen my own personal understanding and relationship with those atua wāhine from my evolving position as a colonised wahine Māori. My position is one that many wāhine may find themselves in too, as someone trying to (re)connect with te ao Māori, strengthen connections, and make sense of their place in this everchanging world. This process involved learning and unlearning, interpreting, and reinterpreting, prioritising, and reprioritising. It is my hope that this thesis can also provide the opportunity for wāhine to make sense of their world and strengthen connections by aligning themselves with huahuatau that they relate to and can provide a template to begin tracing their whakapapa to their most ultimate of feminine ancestors.

Mere Roberts explains that in order to ‘know’ about a thing (or a person) it is essential to know its whakapapa (Roberts, 2012). This is relevant to elements of the environment but equally for us as wāhine Māori, whānau, hapu, and iwi as we (re)position ourselves within society. This thesis, through physical activity, provides some first steps in tracing our collective whakapapa, our ways of being and doing, and our mana, to those

atua wāhine who sparked it. The challenge remains in navigating those lines of whakapapa that have been hidden, redrawn, or manipulated as a result of colonisation and its ongoing effects. I do not claim to have uncovered any new lines of whakapapa or (re)established any wāhine positions within Māori cosmogeny; however, I do present a unique way of viewing that whakapapa – through huahuatau, through physical activity, and through a lens that enhances mana wahine.

Although the initial idea behind this research was to explore how wāhine were successful in maintaining a physically active lifestyle, what was ultimately developed was something broader and arguably more significant. Instead of developing a set of categories that described what it meant to be a physically active wahine Māori, this research utilised physical activity as a means for developing a wider understanding of wāhine Māori. Wāhine in this research displayed their identities, their personalities, and their sense of engaging in the world through their chosen physical activity. They communicated through their physical activity. They learned about themselves and others through their physical activity. And ultimately, their physical activity would provide a basis from which Ngā Hua(huatau): *Ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au; Ahuwhenua; Ngā taonga tuku iho; Rakanga Waewae; and Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai* would evolve. Through these huahuatau there is the potential to view our connection to atua wāhine as they relate to our contemporary lives, and in a way that enhances our mana rather than supressing it.

Between the lines of that second research question also lies the opportunity to describe, not only the *how* wāhine are connected to atua wāhine, but also the *how* we come to know this connection. The process of coming to know wāhine and coming to know atua wāhine, involved a range of mechanisms of knowing and was also an important component in answering each of the research questions. In the context of this research and its whakapapa, it occurred through kōrero – over cups of tea and at the tops of maunga. It occurred through korikori – articulated with a hoe through the water or via highspeed hongī. These are just a few of the examples of the way in which mātauranga was and continues to be transmitted. This research not only meant to present the answers to the research questions listed earlier but also illustrates and illuminates the diverse means by which these kinds of questions can be answered – physical activity was just the chosen vehicle.

11.3 Contributions

Indeed, part of the journey of this research has been in presenting the different ways that research, knowledge, or mātauranga can be transmitted. Our tūpuna used their voices to sing stories into waiata. Their fingers bore the stains of their harakeke medium as they practiced [whatu] raranga and left strands of whakapapa in each woven taonga. They whispered oriori to their unborn or new-born pēpi to impart first teachings. They stood on thresholds and chanted karanga that cleared a way for shared thoughts and shared breath. Their methods were connected to the resources they had at hand and those with which they were adept. Wāhine and indeed researchers like me, still have access to these resources and skills but our evolving world allows us a breadth of other resourceful means of communicating or transmitting our ever-evolving mātauranga. Just as Mason Durie described of interface research, the value that each hold should not have to detract from the other. There is value in affording both space in a respectful and purposeful way, in order to develop, maintain, and celebrate mātauranga [wahine] (Durie, 2004a, 2004c).

11.3.1 (Re)constructing methods

The research methods employed, and the methodological framework developed offer [future] research(ers) a range of opportunities. Korikori kōrero enables a researcher to engage with a research participant in a more levelled power dynamic and while also engaging in an activity that highlights personality and physicality traits not necessarily apparent in a conventional interview. This allows a researcher to observe ways of being in a purposeful and active manner, making them an active observer and active participant at the same time. This allows a sense of the physical, environmental, and relational as they engage in both korikori and kōrero with their research participant.

The adapted analysis framework – Whakaāria – also enables a unique way to engage in the subsequently collected data. The process of data analysis begins even before any data is collected or any interactions occur. It moves from exploring and understanding concepts and data (mātauranga), to framing it from a relational and connectedness perspective (whakapapa). It offers an opportunity for creative and critical thought by categorising data as they develop into metaphors with broad meaning (huahuatau). And finally, they are embodied and put into practice through application and realisation (whakatinanatanga). The influence and tools provided by reflexive thematic analysis offer this analytic method benefits from both western and Māori approaches that may be useful in a range of other interfacing research.

My intent has always been to contribute to the raising of voices and narratives of wāhine Māori through this research. It is not a unique idea, as there have been and continue to be many wāhine who strive to whakamana and whakanuia the voices of wāhine, mātauranga wahine, and Mana Wahine as a process of decolonisation, reclamation and (re)indigenisation (Murphy, 2011, 2019; Pihama, 2001; Simmonds, 2009, 2011, 2014; Te Awekotuku, 1991, 2007). But what I do believe is unique about my research is the way that it was designed, implemented, and ultimately presented, as a reflection of our Māori, wāhine, and active ways of being.

Inherent in the design, implementation, and presentation is an acknowledgement that we are inextricably connected to the power and significance of atua wāhine. The way we are designed is etched in our whakapapa through to atua. The way we conduct ourselves can be a reflection of the conduct of atua or is influenced by the conduct of atua (Heke, 2014; Mead, 2016; Wilson, 2021; Yates-Smith, 2003). And how we are (re)presented through generations and to generations can influence the way we indeed see ourselves. Therefore, it remains vital for wāhine to take charge of presenting and representing our own mātauranga to next generations (Pihama, 2001; Simmonds, 2011; Te Awe Awe-Bevan, 2009). Moving mātauranga wahine in a way that enhances mana wahine and acknowledges atua wāhine. This was my intent, and it is illustrated throughout this thesis.

11.3.2 (Re)constructing methodologies

The methodological framework that this research developed and employed was initially expressed as three intersecting lenses. The lenses represented the approaches that contributed to the research design. Their intersections illustrated where their similarities aligned and where potential was positioned. The three intersecting lenses were an effective way to articulate an initial approach but what they now represent is the foundation from which a wider philosophical framework was constructed.

The whakatinanatanga or embodiment of this research can also be represented within the same analogies referred to in the kaupapa and tikanga of this thesis. What originated as three intersecting lenses was developed into a methodological framework based on te kupenga – a woven net for gathering kai – and illustrated the intersecting philosophies, methodologies, and methods considered in this research. And in this section, it serves to illustrate the culmination of all those processes – embodied. The net within which mātauranga wahine is collected, sorted, and ultimately understood.

The kupenga is woven with the intention of gathering or storing a particular type of kai. The desired kai and the conditions in which they are collected, will determine how the kupenga is constructed. The whenu or strands that comprise the kupenga are durable to carry the weight. They are flexible in order to adapt to the conditions. And they are constructed in a manner that allow them to be repaired if required (Pendergrast, 2003; Puketapu-Hetet, 1999). Just as this framework allowed for the integration of Whakapapa, Mana Wahine, and Korikori tinana, it also conveniently provides the capacity to present and emphasise the mātauranga wahine developed out of this research.

Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa is represented as the integration of three separate triangular sections of a net – Mana Wahine, Whakapapa, and Physical Activity. Each of these three sections offers unique contributions to the kaupapa. They also intersect with each other at certain points where they share similarities. At the junction of those intersections where their similarities exist, the three create a new, central triangle within, one that holds the potential for new knowledge and new ways of being and doing (*Aronui*). As a whole, these four triangles create one larger, integrated triangle that holds the mana, whakapapa, and potential of wahine (*Te whare tangata*).

The reiteration of this framework, *Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa*, offers an opportunity to also display and realise the implications and contributions of this research. It provides a means to illustrate whakatinanatanga and the key messages of this research.

Figure 27*Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa – Whakatinanatanga***Whare tangata – the site of wahine potential – personality and physicality**

The consideration of mātauranga, mātauranga wahine, and its movement from one place to another is illustrated in the shape and orientation of *Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa*. The large downward pointing triangle represents the whare tangata – the place of human potential that is known as the house of humanity, or the womb. Throughout the discussion of wāhine connection to atua wāhine there was a common thread that originated at the female reproductive space. The thread begins with Papatūānuku as the nurturing force of the whenua. We relate to her through our roles of kaitiaki and manaakitanga, by creating and nurturing life. That thread then continues through the sculpting and creative potential of Hineahuone from the red earth of Kurawaka. Hineahuone is the culmination, the whakatinanatanga, of the many efforts and gifts of those atua who saw the potential that could be realised within her. Hine-tī-tama was born out of that potential and came to realise her own by stepping into another nurturing role, but this time at the end of life, straddling the realms of life and death as Hine-nui-te-pō. Hine-nui-te-pō also offers a representation of the relevance of the female

reproductive space when she crushes Māui as he tries to reverse the birthing process to achieve a sense of eternal waxing and waning – like the moon. His demise, as he is crushed when he enters her tara, can be viewed as the first ikura which in itself is a medium of knowledge transmission – mātauranga wahine. And Hineteiwaiwa, whose diverse portfolio of skills includes a facilitating and supporting role in childbirth – the whakatinanatanga and process of bringing new life from te whare tangata into te ao marama.

Wāhine are carriers of (extra)ordinary knowledge and capabilities, which are passed to us and through us, through whakapapa from tūpuna and atua. Our ability to traverse challenging terrain and stand in multiples worlds – *Rakanga Waewae* – is in a sense, part of our physiological but also metaphysical make up. Our whare tangata is a place that connects the worlds of potential and realisation. It determines the creation of new life, and it connects us to our ancient feminine ancestors via generations and generations of tūpuna. It encompasses whakapapa – both the genetic connections to tūpuna and the structures that store and eventually transport mātauranga and new life into the world. It is the site of active power and creativity. It is the place where wāhine (and their whānau) are connected to past, present, and the future (Murphy, 2013; Simmonds, 2009). In this way, te whare tangata is connected to each of the huahuatau explored in this thesis. It grounds us and directs us through whenua to te taiao and our care for it – *Ko au te taiao* and *Ahuwhenua*. It is an essential instrument of *Ngā taonga tuku iho*. It is positioned between realms and allows us to position and navigate ourselves in multiple realms – *Rakanga Waewae*. And finally, it is where latent potentiality is first nurtured. It is the site where new life is realised - *Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai*.

Aronui – pursuing mātauranga wahine

Within the context of the kupenga framework, the whare tangata also provides a space for the pursuit of knowledge – storing it and transmitting it throughout generations. The central triangle, where the three outer triangles meet, represents *Aronui* – the pursuit of knowledge. *Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa* was constructed as a means for collecting mātauranga wahine, using the three previously mentioned approaches. By combining those approaches, this framework was deliberate about the type of “kai” that it aimed to collect. This illustration declares that the pursuit of knowledge, or the potential for knowledge attainment, lies in the approaches that are applied. In this case, mātauranga wahine – understandings of wāhine ways of being and their whakapapa to atua wāhine.

Ngā Hua(huatau), the fruits of this research, and the interpretation and contextualisation of each of those metaphorical categories are now stored within the *Aronui* structure. Every strand of each huahuatau is woven together with mātauranga, atua wāhine, and of other knowledge systems, to shape a strong and flexible structure. Each piece of mātauranga, whether informed by korikori tinana, whakapapa, Mana Wahine, or a combination of each, provides an integral thread to this research.

Ko au te taiao and its exploration of environmental transactions acknowledges our whakapapa relationships to particular features of the natural world (or atua) and considers the physiological and social responses they may elicit. This huahuatau reminds us of our reciprocal relationship with te taiao, our many environments.

Ahuwhenua illustrates wāhine who are purposeful and resourceful. It considers wāhine ability to elicit successful outcomes using creativity, determination, and an in-built sense of kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga.

Ngā taonga tuku iho acknowledges the diverse mechanisms by which wāhine communicate knowledge. It represents a continuous cycle of learning, sharing, and teaching that sustains the values and systems of mātauranga Māori, both traditional and contemporary.

Rakanga Waewae represents the ability to be nimble footed. It suggests that a sense of balance requires wāhine to continuously manoeuvre between multiple demands. It considers the many ways wāhine have long been standing in the spaces between and navigating a way forward.

Finally, *Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai* repurposes a whakataukī that speaks of the need to nurture potential. It explores the journey from latent potentiality, realising potential, to appreciating one's flowers when they blossom.

11.3.3 Significance and Implications

Ngā Hua(huatau) are just one of the ways that this thesis provides a unique way of viewing concepts. The structure of this thesis is another. They are a new take on old concepts. They hold meaning but also allow different perspectives to co-construct further meaning. They are metaphors to help make sense of being Māori, being wahine, and indeed being physically active.

Being Māori and being wahine in these contemporary times requires us to demonstrate diverse ways of being. Beyond homogenous, being wahine Māori is often about manifesting whakapapa and adapting what tūpuna passed on in order to succeed. Similarly, being wahine Māori often means that you have many roles to play, many complexities to your identity, and you must employ a range of skills and capabilities to make your way successfully through this challenging contemporary landscape. Wāhine in this research demonstrated these diverse ways of being, and this research merely sought to describe and explore them in a unique way. Although articulated in terms not usually ascribed to personality traits, human behaviour, or skillsets, the huahuatau explored and contextualised throughout this thesis offer wāhine a way to position themselves in a uniquely [wahine] Māori way. Sharing some parallels to aspects of western psychology and Māori perspectives alike, these huahuatau extend the way that wāhine Māori traits and behaviours can be understood, at least from the perspective of physical activity.

11.4 Future research recommendations

In this research, physically active wāhine Māori demonstrated and provided a template of behaviours/characteristics that has the potential to be applied more widely than that particular group. What is not addressed in this thesis is the way that these huahuatau may indeed be relevant to wāhine Māori who can be identified as successfully navigating other aspects of the contemporary world. The huahuatau presented throughout this thesis provide an exploration and contextualisation of wāhine ways of being that were then traced back through to atua. The conceptualisation of huahuatau contributed to answering the first of the research questions but I believe they have more to offer. The framework that each huahuatau offers in the context of understanding the traits and behaviours of wāhine allows for the exploration of wāhine ways of being, and ways of demonstrating success in countless other areas. The five metaphorical categories and their contributing āhuatanga were able to give clarity to the question: What are the attributes of physically active wāhine Māori? But they may also provide a foundation for considering a wider question or a variation of questions about wāhine. Such as: what are the attributes of wāhine Māori successful in [blank]? How do wāhine express their whakapapa to atua through [blank]? The blank space is a space where the potential lies. The blank space is where further research or practical application continues whakatinanatanga.

Although this research was successful in implementing a uniquely Māori, wahine, and active method(ology), its focus on those who self-identify as “physically active” limited its scope. This was intentional. However, for those wāhine who do not identify with being physically active, there is scope to extend the findings of this research to include them. *Rakanga Waewae*, for example, has the ability to be applied to understandings of hauora or wider applications to health. Health models such as Te Whare Tapa Wha, represent balance between dimensions of health as sturdy walls of a whare – each must be in place for the whare to stand strong (Durie, 1994). The concept of *Rakanga Waewae* adds a different perspective to understanding how wāhine, and Māori in general, may be able to successfully navigate pathways to hauora or wellbeing. The ability to proficiently navigate changing terrain is indeed a skill that can be of benefit to anyone trying to negotiate pathways to hauora. Exploring the wider relevance and potential applications of *Rakanga Waewae* (and other huahuatau) along with their connection to atua [wāhine] could provide useful insights to health behaviours, and wider areas of Māori success.

There also remain a number of other atua wāhine and significant tūpuna wāhine who were not mentioned in the pages of this thesis. Further exploration of their roles and relevance in the contemporary lives of wāhine Māori could provide better insight into our connection to them and our ways of being. Previous authors have begun: “Re-igniting Native women’s ceremonies” (Murphy, 2019, p. 279), exploring the “Embodied Understandings of Papatūānuku” (Simmonds, 2009, p. 50), and “Reclaiming the Ancient Feminine” (Yates-Smith, 2003, p. 10). Wāhine who are re-igniting, re-discovering, and re-claiming their whakapapa to the ancient feminine have a growing number of resources to support their own kaupapa. However, there remains potential unrealised.

Explorations of atua wāhine and (re)storing their relevance through pūrākau (re)tellings is an area where wāhine can begin to (re)claim their own stories. Ngāhuia Te Awekotuku is often cited for her (re)tellings of pūrākau in her book *Ruahine: mythic women* (Te Awekotuku, 2003). In it she re-tells well-known stories to reflect a contemporary lens, one that highlights takatāpui, mana wahine, or merely an alternative, arguably contentious perspective. Ngāhuia Murphy includes re-tellings of well-known stories in her academic work, as told by her aunty Rose Pere (Murphy, 2011, 2019). They flip the script on ‘conventional’ narratives of Māui, Hineteiwaiwa, and others. Aroha Yates-Smith (1998) laid important groundwork for the rediscovery and

reclamation of the divine feminine. Her work inspired others to continue the journey of rediscovering and reclaiming atua wāhine relevance in their own realms. But just as there remained ground to cover after Yates-Smith's – *Hine, e hine* – in 1998, there remains unexplored applications of atua [wāhine] in contemporary Aotearoa.

In the context of physical activity and other similar health behaviours, this research has begun to explore the expression of mana, through physical activity. These expressions of mana – inherited through tūpuna from atua – can help us understand how we can best navigate our modern lives. We live in contemporary times with unique contemporary challenges. However, our tūpuna were also living in their own contemporary times with a range of their own challenges. Their advantage was their intimate knowledge and relationship with their natural environments. They used the knowledge accumulated from their journey from Hawaiki and other islands with the resources they had on hand in Aotearoa, Te Ika a Māui, Te Waipounamu, to adapt and thrive. We too have that opportunity to use the mātauranga handed down, including a growing understanding of our ancient [feminine] ancestors – atua – along with our access to today's resources, to adapt and thrive in our own challenges. Tititro whakamuri, kōkiri whakamua.

11.5 Limitations

This research was conducted with a group of wāhine who responded to a recruitment process that was mostly online. The women who responded came from varied backgrounds. Some had little engagement in te ao Māori, while others were confident and strong in their connection to it. As varied as their backgrounds may have been, the fact that they responded to an online post (social media or email) could say something about their personality (despite their physical activity level). But it could also say something about the kaupapa of this research. I choose to believe that it was likely both of those things; that they were drawn to contribute to a kaupapa that valued their story but also that they felt that they had a story worthy to tell.

Just as any similar qualitative research would acknowledge, this research was conducted with a small group of wāhine who self-identified as physically active. Its data were analysed by someone who would identify the same way. Any findings and interpretations developed from this research, then, cannot be generalised to wider populations. With that said, it was never the intention to generalise the findings of this research to all Māori, or all Māori women, or even all Māori women who are physically active. It intended to identify attributes and draw connections, through

(re)interpretations, to broader understandings of atua. These interpretations again are contextualised within the understanding of a contemporary wahine Māori who is in the process of (un)learning, (re)connecting to, (re)engaging with her own position as a contemporary wahine Māori.

It could be argued that despite the validity of the methods and the justification of the methodologies, this research could have yielded a vastly different outcome if it was conducted by someone else. This limitation means that my position as the researcher is integral to the process, findings, and interpretation of the research. Conveniently, this was acknowledged when I declared a bias to this research at the outset. It would prioritise the voice of wāhine, particularly those who are physically active. My voice, as the researcher was one of them.

Finally, I acknowledge that this research had the opportunity to explore a vast range of atua wāhine – those already well known and those who are lesser known. In this thesis, I prioritised the (re)interpretations of only six atua wāhine. There remain several other influential atua wāhine who could have added another dimension to this research. I could have purposefully prioritised the influence of these “lesser known” atua to contribute something “new” to the current literature. However, with my limited fluency in te reo Māori, my desire to produce a genuine interpretation, and in light of the huahuatau developed from the research I came to present the six atua who are presented in Chapter 10.

11.6 Concluding statement

The questions posed at the beginning of this research aimed to identify certain attributes and traits shared by a group of physically active wāhine Māori. Those attributes would then represent pathways or connections to atua wāhine. Essentially, I wanted to pose a question that brought to the fore our contemporary successes as wāhine Māori, within the context of physical activity. I wanted to explore how those successes could inform a better understanding of our connection to our most ancient of ancestors, atua. Part of the process of answering those questions involved undertaking a research process that also intended to flip the narrative of what and how we hear about Māori, wāhine, and/or physical activity. I wanted to present a piece of research that prioritised and championed the voices of wāhine Māori in a uniquely ‘Māori’ way. Part of flipping the narrative also meant that understanding our connection to atua could also teach us about how to express that success in our contemporary lives.

From the structure of this thesis to the stories and interpretations that brought shape to its message, the intention was to cultivate something that expressed the whakapapa of mana wāhine to atua wāhine. In that cultivation was the realisation of a whakapapa potential through the medium of physical activity, and with a focus on the intersectionality of being wahine Māori described through Mana Wahine theory. The subsequent development of *Te Kupenga o te Kaupapa* intended to illustrate the purposeful act of gathering. Gathering thoughts. Gathering ways. Gathering taonga. And then sharing them with the hope that they enhance the mana of the wāhine involved, their whānau, hapu, and iwi.

Ki te whei ao

Ki te ao mārama

Tihei mauri ora!

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Appendices

Appendix A Ethics Approval



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTC)

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7 November 2018

Isaac Warbrick
Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences
Dear Isaac

Ethics Application: 18/391 Atua Wahine - Mana Wahine. Tracing the whakapapa of physical activity among Maori women

Thank you for submitting your application for ethical review. I am pleased to advise that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTC) approved your ethics application at their meeting on 5 November 2018, subject to the following conditions:

1. Provision of details of who is in the advisory group referred to in Section B.12 and D.2 of the application. Clarity the response to C.3.3.1 with regards to 'extra people who exceeded the requirements for participation' as being invited to join the advisory group. How will this affect the confidentiality of those participating; Current confirmed advisers include Parawhenua marae chair and whanaunga – Hinerangi Himiona, Mātauranga Māori Specialist – Sarah Kinred, Atuatanga and physical activity expert - Ihirangi Heke, and former Toi Tangata kaiarahi Callie Corrigan. Details for section C.3.3.1 updated on record.
2. Clarification of the involvement of a third party for recruitment. If a third party is involved details of how this will be carried out need to be provided; Any third party involved in directing potential participants to this research will be contacted initially via email and then potentially with a face to face follow up. Once ethics is approved and recruitment begins, third parties will be sent research advertisement email/posters to distribute to relevant networks. Third parties will not provide potential participant details to the researcher unless being given permission to do so. Potential participants will be given researcher contact details and can directly contact if interested in participating.
3. Further explanation of the potential conflict of interest referred to in section K.1, in particular the role of toi tangata in terms of recruitment and that of the researcher; K.1 updated. The primary researcher is not a current employee of Toi Tangata, and merely has a connection through a previous internship and networks established through that time. Toi Tangata are just one of the potential organisations who might provide assistance with directing potential participants to this study.
4. Clarification of how data will be recorded when the physical activity is taking place. Details of this needs to be in the Consent Form; details added to section B.12 and consent form updated.
5. Provision of the indicative questions; indicative interview questions added to appendices
6. Provision of the recruitment poster/advertisement; recruitment poster added to appendices
7. Provision of the email invitation; template of email invitation added to appendices
8. Reflection on whether it is necessary to offer counselling in section I.1.7. If the researcher considers that it is needed, AUTC suggests that AUT counselling may not be appropriate and suggests that the researcher sources other suitable agencies; It was decided that it would be still worth keeping the statement about

1. sources other suitable agencies; It was decided that it would be still worth keeping the statement about offering counselling services through AUT for those participants who are Auckland based, those outside Auckland will be referred to an appropriate local service – statement has been added to section I.1.7.
2. Confirmation of the value of koha in section K.4.2; \$50 in the form of a gift or taonga
3. Amendment of the Information Sheet as follows: changes to information sheet made
 - a. Review for language, in particularly statements such as 'like you';
 - b. As well as the inclusion criteria in the section 'An invitation' include advice about how they came to be invited;
 - c. Provide more details about the physical activities, perhaps an example; how long they might take;
 - d. Removal of the ACC statement. It was decided that the ACC statement should remain, due to the inclusion of a physical activity session. We are unsure why we would be requested to remove it.

Please provide me with a response to the points raised in these conditions, indicating either how you have satisfied these points or proposing an alternative approach. AUTEK also requires copies of any altered documents, such as Information Sheets, surveys etc. You are not required to resubmit the application form again. Any changes to responses in the form required by the committee in their conditions may be included in a supporting memorandum.

Please note that the Committee is always willing to discuss with applicants the points that have been made. There may be information that has not been made available to the Committee, or aspects of the research may not have been fully understood.

Once your response is received and confirmed as satisfying the Committee's points, you will be notified of the full approval of your ethics application. Full approval is not effective until all the conditions have been met. Data collection may not commence until full approval has been confirmed. If these conditions are not met within six months, your application may be closed and a new application will be required if you wish to continue with this research.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, we ask that you use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at ethics@aut.ac.nz.

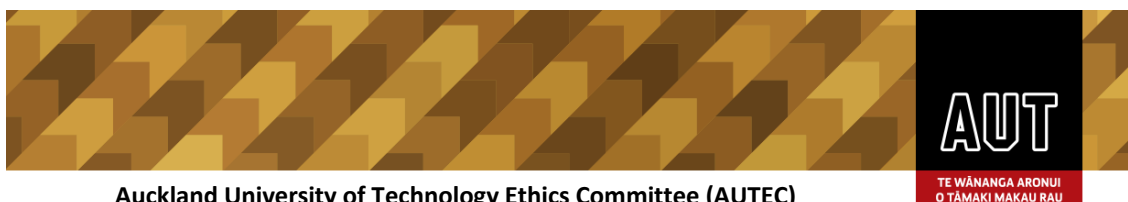
I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely



Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: debsheke@yahoo.com; Denise Wilson



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

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

21 January 2019

Isaac Warbrick
Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences

Dear Isaac

Re Ethics Application: **18/391 Atua Wahine - Mana Wahine. Tracing the whakapapa of physical activity among Maori women**

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 21 January 2022.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

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

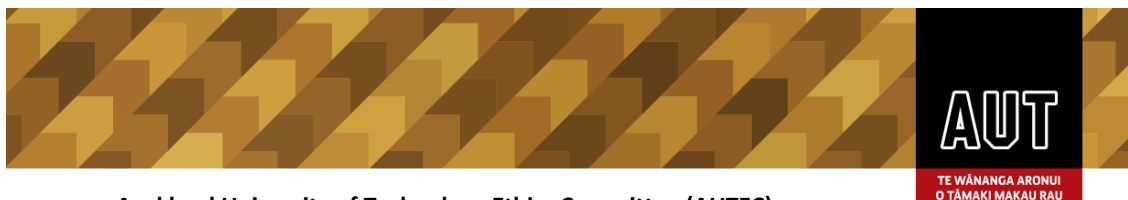
AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation, then you are responsible for obtaining it. You are reminded that it is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: debsheke@yahoo.com; Denise Wilson



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
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E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

26 March 2019

Isaac Warbrick
Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences
Dear Isaac

Re: Ethics Application: **18/391 Atua Wahine - Mana Wahine. Tracing the whakapapa of physical activity among Maori women**

Thank you for your request for approval of amendments to your ethics application.

The amendment for the addition of focus groups/wananga to this research project is approved.

Non-Standard Conditions of Approval

1. Please ensure the option about the video use is clear in the Information Sheet.

Non-standard conditions must be completed before commencing your study. Non-standard conditions do not need to be submitted to or reviewed by AUTEC before commencing your study.

I remind you of the **Standard Conditions of Approval**.

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

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

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation then you are responsible for obtaining it. If the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all locality legal and ethical obligations and requirements.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: debsheke@yahoo.com; Denise Wilson

Appendix B Researcher safety protocol



Researcher Safety Protocol

Project title and brief description:

Atua Wāhine – Mana Wāhine. Tracing the whakapapa of physical activity among Māori women in contemporary Aotearoa.

Applicant

Isaac Warbrick

Primary Researcher

Deborah Heke

Where is the research being undertaken?

At mutually agreed locations to be decided between primary researcher and each participant.

Locations may include public spaces such as parks, walking trails, beaches, or sports centres. It is possible that members of the public will be in these shared spaces.

Locations may include private dwellings, offices, or meeting rooms.

The researcher will drive her private vehicle to most locations but may need to use public or other modes transport if participants are based long distances from the Auckland.

If a chosen location is unfamiliar to the researcher, she will consult a map and if possible visit the site to familiarise herself with surroundings and potential risks.

Who will be collecting the data and interacting with participants?

The primary researcher will collect the data and interact with the participants alone.

General safety protocol

The primary researcher will undertake data collection at a range of locations outside of AUT; therefore, these safety protocols will be in place to ensure the location and safety risks are made known to the primary researcher and an additional person.

- Researcher will inform primary supervisor via text and an additional person (friend or partner) of interview and activity session locations (if different), expected time of completion, and confirmation of completion.
- Researcher will carry a cell phone at all times.
- If activity sessions or interviews are conducted in an outdoor setting, the researcher will check weather forecasts and prepare appropriately.

Physical activity session safety protocol

- Researcher will confirm the participant which activity will be conducted and ensure appropriate warm up and injury prevention activities are performed prior to beginning activity.

- Researcher will ensure appropriate food and water is available – depending on requirements of the activity.
- Researcher will wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the activity to be performed.

How familiar is the researcher with the social or cultural context of the research?

What level of familiarity does the researcher have with the social context of the participants and the research?

It is likely that the researcher will share similar social context with participants due to her involvement in a range of sporting and physical activities, and connections to different sport and recreational organisations.

What level of familiarity does the researcher have with the cultural context of the participants and the research?

The researcher will share a similar cultural context with participants, as she is also a Māori woman.

How safe are the activities in which the researcher is taking part?

Does the research involve sports or activities that may be hazardous in nature?

The researcher will engage in a range of physical activities led by participants. Participating in any physical activity carries a certain degree of risk; however, the researcher is a registered and experienced Personal Trainer and has experience in a wide range of physical activities.

Appendix C Recruitment tools

Recruitment poster



ACTIVE WĀHINE MĀORI

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Are you a Māori woman over the age of 18 who is regularly physically active?

I am looking for women who are willing to participate in a research study that aims to understand more about Māori women who successfully lead an active lifestyle.

The research will involve an interview and an opportunity for you to show and lead me in an activity of your preference. The interview will help explore characteristics of active Māori women, while the activity session will allow you to express your connection to that activity in an environment that it relates to.



The information will contribute to a description of the “whakapapa of physical activity” with connection to atua wāhine or the ancient female representations within mātauranga Māori. By weaving understandings of physically active wāhine and attributes of atua wāhine, this research aims to contribute to positive messages of wāhine and develop a model that resonates better with Māori.

If you are interested in participating and you:

- identify as a Māori woman.
- identify yourself as being regularly physically active (generally presumed to be at least 30 minutes a day)
- are over the age of 18

Please contact me to hear more about how you can get involved.

Deborah Heke

debhek04@aut.ac.nz

027 2253 779

Research Project: 18/391 Atua Wāhine – Mana Wāhine. Tracing the whakapapa of physical activity among Māori women in contemporary Aotearoa.

Participant information sheet



Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

20 September 2018

Project Title

Atua Wāhine – Mana Wāhine. Tracing the whakapapa of physical activity with active Māori women in contemporary Aotearoa.

An Invitation

Tenā koe. He uri ahau no Ngāpuhi me Te Arawa. Ko Ngati Hineira me Uri Taniwha ngā hapū. Ko Deborah Heke tōku ingoa. He tohu kairangi ahau i Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau.

As part of my journey to obtaining a Doctor of Philosophy – Health, I am doing some research with physically active wāhine Māori. I would like to invite you to take part in this research and share your insights and stories that will contribute to work that celebrates the successes of wāhine who have developed and sustained an active lifestyle. You have been invited because you either self-identify or someone has identified you as fulfilling the criteria of this study.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to explore an empowering and mana-enhancing narrative identifying the whakapapa of physical activity among Māori women. By understanding characteristics shared by wāhine, this research aims to connect *mana wahine* (powerful attributes of women), relevant to physical activity, to *te mana o ngā atua [wāhine]* (powerful attributes of ancient female ancestors). The (re)interpreting of stories associated with atua wāhine and tupuna wāhine will contribute to work by other wāhine Māori researchers that prioritises the narratives of mana wahine. It is the intent of this research to use the korero and whakaaro of wāhine to inform strengths-based initiatives that represent wāhine Māori more positively. The findings of this research will form my doctoral thesis, a range of publications and potential conference presentations, and will contribute to me gaining a PhD.

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

You are being invited to take part because you are:

- Māori
- Wahine / Female
- Over the age of 18 years
- Identify yourself as being physically active / have a physically active lifestyle / regularly engage in physical activity

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Once you have read and understood this information sheet and had the chance to have any questions answered, you will be asked to complete an informed consent form – that will be provided by me (the primary researcher). Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. 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?

Your major contribution to this project will be via a uniquely styled interview process. If you choose to participate, you will be one of around 15-20 participants. Learning and sharing can occur a range of ways, including talking and doing. An interview will give me the opportunity for us to *talk* and for me to ask you some questions about what factors may have influenced your success in being regularly physically active. The interview will be conducted in a mutually agreed upon venue and at a time that suits (could be immediately following the activity session). I will ask you about a range of topics that are relevant to understanding how and why it is you are successfully active in your everyday life and how that might be relevant to specific characteristics you possess. Included in the questions I ask will be demographic, questions related to your actual physical activity and personality. Importantly, you will have the opportunity to share relevant stories around your relationship with physical activity.

I will record and transcribe the interview data, and you will be given the opportunity to review or revise your comments. The information I receive from research participants will then be weaved into the relevant (re)interpretations of mātauranga wahine/mātauranga Māori.

Prior to the more conventional interview we will have the opportunity to *do*, and you will be asked to share and lead me in a practical session of your chosen or favoured physical activity. The intention of this session is to allow you to introduce me to an activity that you connect to and to allow me, as the researcher to add a physical dimension to the information you provide via the subsequent interview. The activity will be mutually agreed upon and can be conducted in an environment that suits. This is a chance for us to build a relationship through your chosen activity and is intended to be fun. An example of possible activity sessions could include leading me on a hikoi up your maunga, teaching me a specific skill related to your activity, or showing me the types of activities you engage in at home or work. An activity session may take an hour or longer depending on the activity you choose, the location, and how much time is available to us both.

What are the discomforts and risks?

It is unlikely that you will experience any discomfort from participating in the research. The risks are minimal (if any), but with participation in any physical activity there are always risks involved.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

Although the risk of discomfort during discussions is minimal because of the mana-enhancing focus, if you do feel uncomfortable during the interview process at any time, we can end the discussion at your request.

What are the benefits?

The benefit of participating in this research is that you will be contributing to a positive narrative about wāhine Māori successful in maintaining a physically active lifestyle. Your participation will inform and contribute to the development of a thesis and relevant publications celebrating mana wahine. By participating and choosing to remain identifiable in publications, you will be contributing to whakanuia (celebration) of not only your successes, but for your whānau, hapū, and iwi.

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

(ACC), providing the incident details satisfy the requirements of the law and the Corporation's regulations.

How will my privacy be protected?

You will have the opportunity to be in control of your privacy. It is the intent of this research that participants can choose to remain identifiable in certain parts of the data. This means that you can decide whether you want some information kept private or not. This means that if you choose to be named in the research, your iwi, hapū, whānau, and community may be able to share in the acknowledgement and whakanuia of your contribution. All other aspects of confidentiality will be maintained, your personal information will be stored safely, and it will only be used for the purposes of this research.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

By participating in this research, you will be agreeing to contribute a significant amount of your time. I would anticipate that your total time investment would be approximately 4 hours, including interview, physical activity session, and any potential follow-up or reviewing of your interview data. These activities can be spread over different days, depending on your availability.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

1 month

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes. You will be offered a summary of the findings of this research.

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 Isaac Warbrick, Isaac.warbrick@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 7591.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

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

Researcher Contact Details:

Primary Researcher:	Deborah Heke	debhek04@aut.ac.nz	027 2253 779
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Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Project Supervisor:	Isaac Warbrick	isaac.warbrick@aut.ac.nz	+64 9 921 9999 ext 7591
Project Co-supervisor:	Denise Wilson	denise.wilson@aut.ac.nz	+64 9 921 9999 ext 7392

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on **21st January 2019**, AUTC Reference number **18/391**.

Appendix D Consent form



Consent Form

Project title: *Atua Wāhine – Mana Wāhine. Tracing the whakapapa of physical activity among Māori women.*

Project Supervisor: *Isaac Warbrick*

Researcher: *Deborah Heke*

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 20 September 2018.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they 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 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 be named in the publication of this research (you will have the opportunity to amend this option and any data that is connected to your name). Yes ☐ No ☐
If you do not choose to be named in this research, you can still participate and remain anonymous.
- I agree to the video recording of my activity session Yes ☐ No ☐
- 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:

Appendix E Indicative questions

Indicative interview questions:

Start interview with participant given the opportunity to tell a story about how physical activity has impacted their life or a fun or memorable experience...

How does physical activity fit within your life? What is your/your family physical activity history? What are your preferred activities? Why do you think are physically active?

What are your social support systems/structures and how do they impact your activity? What are some of the ways you socialise physically/non-physically?

How would you describe your health, health-related or risky behaviours?

Do you feel any distinct connection to any particular natural, physical or social environments? Are those environments relevant to your pepeha, whakapapa? Which, if any, cultural/ancestral practices do you connect to/participate in? Do you connect with any particular atua [wahine] and why?

Are there any significant challenging events in your life that you feel are relevant to how you engage in activity? How did you overcome these, if you did?

How would you describe your behaviour in social situations? Are you more likely to seek out the company of others or tend to be quiet and reserved?

When interacting with others, do you tend to be quite trusting and friendly, or more aggressive and less cooperative?

How would you describe your organisation and persistence in pursuing your goals? Are you a methodical planner or do you prefer to take a more laid-back approach?

How would you describe your experience of negative thoughts or feelings – such as insecurity or distress? Or are you more relaxed and less emotional?

Would you describe yourself as imaginative and creative, or more practical and down-to-earth?

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		Expected presentation date	2021-10-18
Instructor name	Deborah Heke		

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