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The Experiences of Year 4 and 5 Māori Students in Primary School Classrooms

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PREPARED BY:

R.Bishop, M.Berryman, T.Cavanagh, L.Teddy,
D. O'Sullivan

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Executive Summary

Influences on Year 4 and 5 Māori students' achievement

Our current generic research base suggests that factors such as home-school relationships, pedagogy, teachers' expectations, teachers' experience and skills, schools (climate, environment, leadership), peer effects, classroom/group dynamics, transition (from intermediate, or full-primary, to secondary school), mentors, family support and socio-economic factors are some of the influences on student achievement. This report explores how these factors among others are experienced by Year 4 and 5 Māori students in mainstream primary schools from a series of in-depth interviews with Māori students themselves and those most intimately involved with their education. It will also investigate how these factors manifest themselves and play a part in what happens in the classroom. In other words, the project will look at how these influences are experienced by Year 4 and 5 Māori students in the classroom (and significant others in their education) in order to enable research into teacher practice and Māori student outcomes in primary schools and to indicate appropriate directions for the development of professional development opportunities for teachers to address the problem of educational disparities experienced by Māori.

The report consists of three parts. The first part is a comprehensive literature review. The second part details the outcomes of the in-depth interviews undertaken with years 4 and 5 Māori students, their whanau, principals, teachers and iwi groups. The third part addresses what might constitute an effective professional development programme for improving Māori student achievement in years 4 and 5 in New Zealand primary schools.

Literature review

The literature review showed that across a wide range of measures, Māori students at years 4 and 5 are not achieving at the same levels as their non-Māori counterparts. In addition, despite the growth of Māori medium schooling, the vast majority of Māori students attend mainstream schools and are taught by non-Māori teachers. Previous policies of assimilation, integration and biculturalism have failed to significantly alter these disparities.

A number of theories have been offered as a means of explaining Māori underachievement, however, it is the discursive positions that teachers occupy that is the

key to their being able to make a difference or not for Māori students. This means that before any in-class type professional development is developed, teachers need to be provided with a learning opportunity where they can critically evaluate where they discursively position themselves when constructing their own images, principles and practices in relation to Māori students in their own classrooms. It is also important that these learning opportunities provide teachers with an opportunity to undertake what Davies and Harre (1997) called *discursive repositioning*, which means their drawing explanations and subsequent practices from alternative discourses that offer them solutions instead of reinforcing problems and barriers.

Studies reported in this literature review have described agentic positioning as teachers repositioning themselves discursively as ‘agents of change.’ This positioning allows for movement in that seemingly immutable educational disparities can be addressed and teachers can refine their commitment and responsibility for their own and their students’ outcomes. Agentic positioning is relevant to how other factors in the classroom, such as teacher expectations and the development of mutually respectful relationships between teachers and students are played out.

The fundamental changes that are needed in classroom relationships and interactions and in the culture of schools, through the institutionalisation of schools as professional learning communities focused on improving student learning, are reliant upon leaders having a sound understanding of the theoretical underpinning of the reform while simultaneously being responsive and proactive about supporting and promoting reform processes and goals. To this end, principal leadership is essential; however principal leadership at the exclusion of others is ineffective. Principals therefore need to inspire a shared vision, model the way, and enable others to act, challenge the status quo, and encourage the heart.

Successful implementation and ensuring the sustainability of reform initiatives in a school means that reform initiatives therefore need to include, as part of the reform process, a means of institutionalising the elements of the reform within the school and structural reforms at both the school and system levels need to occur to allow this to happen. The reform must commence with this goal clearly at the forefront of everybody’s mind; the reform must not be promoted or seen as an adjunct to existing systems, but rather as a means of reforming the integral elements of the structure of the school, so that they become part of the everyday life of the institution and the institution would be lesser for their removal. National policies need to be reformed to support this

occurring so that: national goals focus on raising achievement and reducing disparities; in-service and pre-service education are aligned; funding for in-school facilitators is built into staffing allocations; ongoing support for distributed leadership models is provided; collaboration between policy makers, researchers and practitioners is fostered; support is provided for integrated research and professional development; natural ownership and provision of sufficient funding and resources to see solutions in a defined period of time. In this way, the reform will include a means whereby the benefits of the reform can remain once the reforms mature and the initial energy, personnel and funding disappears.

Interview analysis

The analysis of the interviews confirm our initial analysis in that it revealed that the schools can be placed into three separate groups. School 1 is illustrative of a school that has teachers and students who understand the importance of classroom interactions and relationships and at the same time have strong support from the principal. This school represents those schools on the high end of the continuum. This pattern is supported by the overall picture generated from the interviews where it was found that the first group of schools appear to be highly active in the community and have strong and positive links to whanau who are engaged in school activities. These schools are already using data to engage in professional learning conversations within the school (with teachers and students) and within the community (with whanau). These schools have been able to target professional development specifically in areas where they need to be more responsive.

The data revealed that most of the schools (Schools 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8) overall have medium support for the importance of classroom relationships and interactions. These schools represent those schools in the middle of the continuum. This pattern is supported by the overall picture garnered from the interviews where it was found that the second group of schools concede to having a problem but are unsure about how to proceed to address the problem. These schools tend to have access to professional development that is more curriculum based.

Finally, Schools 4 and 5 are illustrative of a mismatch between teachers and students understanding of the importance of classroom interactions and relationships, with teachers having a much lower understanding than students of this understanding. These schools represent the low end of the continuum. This pattern is supported by the overall picture garnered from the interviews where it was found that the third group of

schools assert to their community being the problem and are looking for solutions that come out of community actions.

Together this continuum of results can be seen as a normal distribution, with a small number of schools at either end of the continuum and most of the schools in the middle. This would indicate that we would expect to find the same results over a range of schools. Further research is needed to test these results.

Ideal Type instrument

We then combined these two patterns; the list of important variables identified in the literature review on one axis and the continuum of schools on the other. From the literature, we then identified what each variable would look like across the three ideal school types. This detail is shown in diagram 1 below. This diagram therefore forms the working hypothesis for the next phase of this research in that through the implementation of the proposed professional development programme (see below), this ideal school type schema will provide us with both a tool for an initial “needs analysis” exercise and further evidence with which to test our initial hypothesis as we collect data in the “needs analysis” exercise. This interactive process will both address the need for further research and will also help develop a professional development approach for primary schools.

Introduction and Overview: Influences on Year 4 and 5 Māori students' achievement

Raising Māori educational achievement in mainstream schools is a major concern for educators at all levels of the education system. Numerous studies have been undertaken over recent years to identify the scope of the problem and to investigate possible solutions. However, despite much time and effort being spent, there have been few long-term, sustainable solutions identified. Whatever the case, there has been a great deal of research into what contributes to the educational differentials, both here and overseas, and this research base provides the foundation for the first part of this current investigation.

The first part of this report engages with the literature around the current generic research base that suggests that factors such as home-school relationships, pedagogy, teachers' expectations, teachers' experience and skills, schools (climate, environment, leadership), peer effects, classroom/group dynamics, transition (from intermediate, or full-primary, to secondary school), mentors, family support and socio-economic factors are some of the influences on student achievement.

Part 2 of the report then explores how these factors (among others) are experienced by Year 4 and 5 Māori students in mainstream primary schools from a series of in-depth interviews with Māori students themselves and those most intimately involved with their education; their families, principals and teachers. It also investigates how these factors manifest themselves and play a part in what happens in the classroom.

The third part of the report then draws a generic picture from the literature review that produces a set of criteria against which schools can be assessed. The results of the interviews about how the major influences on achievement are experienced by Year 4 and 5 Māori students in the classroom (and significant others in their education) are then used to produce an heuristic device, an ideal type of schools in terms of their general positioning within a range of discourses. This heuristic is then suggested as the starting point for the development of professional learning opportunities for teachers to address the problem of educational disparities experienced by Māori children in New Zealand primary schools.

Part 1: Literature review

Introduction, theoretical framework and overview

“A common question asked by practitioners is “Isn’t what you described just ‘good teaching’?” And, while I do not deny that it is good teaching, I pose a counter question: why does so little of it seem to occur in classrooms populated by African-American students?” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 484)

“Even if on the surface the quality of teaching appears to be high, when it is not assisting students to learn the teaching has failed.” (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 8)

The widely accepted educational goals for Māori established at the first Hui Taumata Matauranga held in 2001, are that Māori ought to be able to live as Māori, actively participate as citizens of the world and to enjoy both good health and high standards of living (Durie, 2001a). Together with government goals of equipping learners with 21st century skills and reducing systemic underachievement in education, these goals form the basis of the Māori Education Strategy (Ministry of Education, 2006a), which has as its main objectives:

- Raising the quality of mainstream education
- Support growth of quality kaupapa Māori education
- Support greater Māori involvement and authority in education

Unfortunately, despite such aspirations, statistical data have consistently shown that, compared to non-Māori students, Māori consistently underachieve, are stood down and are suspended at greater rates than other student populations in this country, opt out of schooling (by leaving before the official leaving age of 16 or being exempted from schooling) at greater rates than other student groups, and when they leave, are less qualified.

These outcomes stand in sharp contrast to the aforementioned goals and it is suggested that while these outcomes are most clearly exhibited in secondary schools, the foundations for these problems commences in the primary school years. Indeed there are indications (Crooks, Hamilton & Caygill, 2000; Wylie, Thompson & Lythe, 1999), that while there are achievement differentials evident on children entering primary school, it is by years 4 and 5 that these achievement differentials begin to stand out starkly.

This literature review seeks to provide evidence about the practices that will inform our knowledge base about the influences on the educational outcomes of Year 4 and 5 Māori students and focuses on those practices likely to improve the educational outcomes of these students in primary schools at classroom, school and system-wide levels. This review examines what is actually known from the literature to provide possible explanations for the current experiences of these students by reviewing educational disparities and the significance of culture to learning. It then provides a thematic review of research on the influences of classroom factors, school based influences including the importance of whanau, home, and community relationships and system-wide considerations. The review will show how education, in its many forms (teachers, schools, the system itself) and the many influences at play (such as those listed above) can make a difference in the educational achievement of Year 4 and 5 Māori students.

This review gives a theoretical and comparative context to the understandings derived from interviews carried out with Years 4 and 5 Māori children (and others involved in their education) which is described in the second part of this report. There is, however, a dearth of literature dealing with the experiences of Māori children at these levels so this review's focus is wider in demographic scope to look at the experiences of Māori children at all levels of schooling and at the educational experiences of other indigenous populations. In this way, this review and the subsequent analysis of interviews inform recommendations for professional development for primary school teachers. The review focuses mainly on sources published in the last 15 years.

a) The need for a theoretical framework.

Teachers require an explanatory theory of how different ways of managing the classroom and creating activities are related to student outcomes' (Alton-Lee, 2006, p. 618).

Hattie's meta-analyses on the influences on student achievement have led him to conclude that "almost all things we do in the name of education have a positive effect on achievement" (2003, p.4), however not all effects are equal. Wylie, et al (1999), when considering influences on achievement in the Competent Children Project warns however, that:

We are not primarily engaged in a contest to find “the best” factors. We believe that first, this takes us no closer to understanding what may be done to enhance performance; and secondly, the process is fraught with likelihoods that real effects will be obscured. A broad description of the kinds of things that appear to help and the kinds of things that appear to hinder educational achievement is likely to be much more helpful. (p. 8)

Nevertheless, with this warning in mind, recently there have been two large meta-analyses by Hattie, (1999; 2003a; 2003b) and Alton-Lee (2003) that have considered the main influences on student achievement. Both of these studies have considered the large body of research on influences such as whanau, home and community, classroom relationships and pedagogy, teachers, schools and school systems, students themselves, and a multitude of other contributing and confounding factors on learning and achievement. These meta-analyses tell us that the most important systemic influence on children’s educational achievement is the teacher and that teacher effectiveness stands out as the most easily alterable from within the school system. Further to these studies, the Te Kotahitanga study (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai & Richardson, 2003; Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh & Teddy, 2007) has identified that it is the development of caring and learning relationships between the teacher and the students that are most crucial and are the most useful sites for the provision of professional learning opportunities for teachers when seeking to change the learning culture in schools.

These somewhat ‘culturalist’ approaches stand in contrast to the more ‘structuralist’ notions of Nash (1993), Chapple, Jefferies and Walker (1997) among others, who advocate a social stratification (low social class, low socio-economic status and resource/cultural deprivation) argument that being poor or poorly resourced inevitably leads to poor educational achievement. Much research in this area looks at the associations between variables such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity and other family attributes and resulting achievement in ways that suggest that such variables predetermine achievement outcomes.

Nonetheless, both sets of arguments pose problems for educational practitioners in their search for improvement. The culturalist arguments tend to ignore or downplay the impact of structural impediments on student achievement, whereas the more structuralist positions tend to have a depressing effect upon teachers (see Bishop & Berryman, 2006) in that there appears little that they can achieve in the face of overwhelming structural impediments. The net effect of reporting on patterns of achievement strictly from these positions, while having some very useful understandings,

does little to support or advance Māori aspirations for improving their situation in regards to education (Bishop et al, 2003; Smith, 1997; Walker, 1990). In other words, in their own ways, they both provide necessary, but not sufficient conditions for educational reform. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach is needed, one that acknowledges the structural and socially constructed impediments that exist at a school-wide and systemic level and that these need to be addressed, while at the same time identifying means whereby classrooms teachers can address impediments to student achievement at the level at which they work in their classrooms. As Graham Smith (1997) identified, what is needed is a model that locates culture at the centre of educational reform in the face of deeper structural limitations in the same manner as that practiced by the Kaupapa Māori educational initiatives of Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori. To Smith (1997) these later institutions have developed "our forms of resistance and transformative praxis which engage both culturalist and structuralist concerns" (p. 222). Smith (1997) warns that neither culturalist nor structuralist analyses can satisfactorily account for Māori language, knowledge and cultural aspirations as major components of existing and developing educational interventions for Māori.

Such a model is presented here in Figure 1.1. where Coburn's (2003) model was used by Bishop and O'Sullivan (2005) as a useful starting heuristic for considering how to successfully implement and take an educational reform project to scale in a large number of classrooms, and to sustain the achievement gains made in these classrooms. The following model (Figure 1.1) was developed in a study funded by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga and the first part of the results were initially published as a monograph (Bishop & O'Sullivan, 2005).



Figure 1.1: A reform initiative must have the above elements:

The theoretical model in Bishop & O’Sullivan (2005) uses GPILSEO as a mnemonic device to aid in referencing. In order to ensure that the achievement gains made by the reform initiative will be sustainable, the following elements should be present in the reform initiative *from the very outset*. These elements need to include: a means of establishing a school-wide **GOAL** and vision for improving student achievement; a means of developing a new **PEDAGOGY** to depth so that it becomes habitual; a means of developing new **INSTITUTIONS** and structures to support the in-class initiatives; a means of developing **LEADERSHIP** that is responsive, transformative, pro-active and distributed; a means of **SPREADING** the reform to include all teachers, parents, community members and external agencies; a means of **EVALUATING** the progress of the reform in the school by developing appropriate tools and measures of progress; and a means of creating opportunities for the school to take **OWNERSHIP** of the reform in such a way that the original objectives of the reform are protected and sustained.

Addressing these aspects at the classroom level alone is not sufficient. What is necessary and sufficient is that both culturalist and structuralist issues are addressed at a variety of levels; the classroom, the school and the system. This concern can be addressed by applying the same model at a classroom; school and system-wide level (see

Table 1.1). For example, in classrooms for a reform initiative to bring about sustainable change, there must be, from the very outset: a focus on improving Māori students participation, engagement and achievement in the classroom; a means of implementing a new pedagogy to depth; a means of developing new institutions in the classroom, such as those developed through using cooperative learning approaches; a means of developing distributed leadership within the classroom; a means whereby the new classroom relationships and interactions will include all students; a means of monitoring and evaluating the progress of all students so as to inform practices; and above all, a means whereby the teachers and their students know about and take ownership of the reform, its aims, objectives and outcomes.

At a school level there needs to be: a focus on improving all Māori student achievement across the school; a new pedagogy of relations developed across all classrooms that should inform relations and interactions at all levels in school and community relations; time and space created for the development of new institutions within the school, and structures such as timetables need to support this reform; leadership that is responsive to the needs of the reform, pro-active in setting targets and goals and distributed to allow power sharing; a means whereby all staff can join the reform and for parents and community to be included into the reform; a means whereby in-school facilitators and researchers are able to use appropriate instruments to monitor the implementation of the reform so as to provide data for formative and summative purposes; a means whereby the whole school, including the Board of Trustees can take ownership of the reform. Ownership is seen when there has been a culture shift so that teacher learning is central to the school and systems, structures and institutions are developed to support teacher learning, in this way both culturalist and structuralist issues are addressed at the school level.

The third level in Table 1.1 concerns the need for system-wide reform where there needs to be: a national policy focus on raising achievement of Māori students and reducing disparities; a means whereby pre-service teacher education is aligned with in-service professional development so that each supports the other in implementing new pedagogies; a review of funding so that salaries for in-school facilitators needs to be built into schools' staffing allocations and schooling organisations to provide ongoing, interactive and embedded reform; national level support and professional development for leaders to promote distributed leadership models; collaboration between policy funders, researchers and practitioners; national level support for evaluation and

monitoring that is ongoing, interactive and that informs policy; national level support for integrated research and professional development that provides data for formative and summative purposes; national ownership of the problem and the provision of sufficient funding and resources to see solutions in a defined period of time and in an ongoing, embedded manner.

This model therefore encompasses the need to address both culturalist and structuralist positions at the three levels of classroom, school and the system by creating a means of changing the classroom, culture of the school and the education system through goal setting, the development of appropriate pedagogies to depth and the support this requires and the taking of ownership of the whole reform at each level. Structural concerns are addressed by the development of new institutions, responsive and distributed leadership, the spread of the reform to include all involved, the development of data-management systems within the school to support the reform and the taking of ownership by the teachers, school and policy makers of both the cultural and structural changes necessary to reform education to address educational disparities. Structural concerns are also addressed at a system-wide level when schools are supported to implement these structural changes.

This review now considers the situation of Māori children in years 4 and 5 and then goes on to consider how the elements of the model in Table 1.1 that pertain to classrooms, schools and the education system can be addressed in practice.

Table 1.1: Sustainability

	Sustainability/ going to scale	Classroom	School	System
G	Goal Focus to be on raising Māori student achievement and reducing disparities.	Focus on improving Māori school achievement in classroom.	Focus to be on improving all Māori student achievement across the school.	National policy focus on raising achievement of Māori students and reducing disparities.
P	The need to implement a new pedagogy to depth	Focus is on implementing a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy of Relations to depth i.e. to become habitual	A new pedagogy of relations needs to be developed across all classrooms and should inform relations and interactions at all levels in school and community relations.	Pre-service Education needs to be aligned with In-service Professional Development so that each supports the other in implementing new Pedagogy of Relations.
I	The need for new institutions in the school	Focus is on developing new ways of relating and interacting in classrooms in ways that are organised and instituted.	Schools need to make time and space for observation, feedback, co-construction and shadow coaching cycle, and restructure and timetable to support this reform.	Funding for facilitators needs to be built into staffing allocation and schooling organisations to provide ongoing, interactive reform process.
L	The need for Leadership to be responsive, pro-active and distributed	Teachers and students as leaders and initiators of learning.	The need for leadership to be responsive to the needs of the reform, pro-active in setting targets and goals and distributed to allow power sharing.	National support and professional development for leaders to promote distributed leadership models.
S	Spread : the need to include others in the reform	The need for an inclusive classroom where all students are engaged in learning.	The need for all staff to join the reform for parents and community to be included into the reform.	The need for collaboration between policy funders, researchers and practitioners.
E	Evaluation : the need to develop an on-going means of evaluating movement towards the goal	Teachers and students are able to use formal and informal formative assessments to improve their practice and learning.	In school facilitators and researchers are able to use appropriate instruments to monitor the implementation of the reform.	National level support for the evaluation and monitoring that is ongoing and interactive. Support for integrated Research and Professional Development.
O	Ownership The need for all involved to own the reform	Ownership is seen when teacher and student learning is central to classroom relations and interactions and teacher learning is based on analyses of patterns of student learning.	The whole school include BOT to take ownership of the reform. Ownership is seen when teacher learning is central to the school and systems, structures and institutions are developed to support teacher learning.	National ownership of the problem and provision of sufficient funding and resources to see solutions in a defined period of time.

b) Overview: The current picture for Year 4 and 5 students

In the longitudinal Competent Children project, Wylie et al (1999) found that between the ages of 5 and 6 there was a marked closing of the gap between Māori and Pakeha, but by age 8 (Year 4) the gap has reappeared and remained even after allowing for family income and maternal education.

Crooks et al's (2000) comparative national results for Māori and non-Māori in the 15 curriculum areas covered by the National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) between 1995 and 2000, show that Year 4 Māori students outperformed non-Māori in physical education only (at the 57th percentile). For the remaining curriculum areas Māori performed at between the 29th (reading) and 46th (art) percentiles of non-Māori students. Averaged performance across all subjects for Māori students produced an effect size of -.25 equating to performance as well as or better than 40% of non-Māori students. In an effort to reduce the confounding of socio-economic and ethnicity variables, a further analysis restricted the sample to those students attending medium decile schools, which resulted in an increase of average performance. In other words, Māori students in this sub-sample, performed as well or better than 43% of non-Māori students (Crooks, et al, 2000).

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) report for 2002-2003 places Year 5 student achievement in mathematics at about the international mean, while for science, Year 5 students are on average, significantly above the international mean (Ministry of Education, 2006b). In both these subjects, New Zealand experienced significant increases in mean achievement between the 1994-1995 cycle and 2002-2003. Significant increases in both mathematics and science occurred for Year 5 Māori students from 1994 to 2002, with significantly higher proportions of students achieving at or above the low, intermediate, high and advanced benchmarks in science over this period. Increases were also reported for maths but were not significant. However, achievement across both these subjects for Māori was below that of Pakeha/European and Asian.

Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning (asTTle) achievement in mathematics for year 5 Māori students is on average lower than that of Pakeha and this gap remains at years 11/12. Rates of acceleration are different according to ethnic group membership. Pakeha and Asian show big gains from year 7 to 8 and again from year 8 to 9. Māori students accelerated at year 9 (Project asTTle Team, 2006a). Similarities in differences by ethnicity were also found for reading, with Pakeha and Asian reaching

curriculum level 5 at year 10 while Māori did so in Year 11 (Project asTTle Team, 2006b). In writing, the gap that is present at year 5 is not so constant over time with all ethnicities reaching curriculum level 3 in Year 8 and converging at Level 4 in Year 10 (Project asTTle Team, 2006c). In other words, Māori students' achievement is lower than non-Māori at specific points in time and any gains made by Māori are made after those made their peer groups.

Results for the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) conducted in 2001, show that on average Māori and Pasifika students performed worse than Pakeha/European and Asian students. While overall New Zealand Year 5 students achieved significantly above the international mean of 500, less than half of Māori students achieved above this point (Caygill & Chamberlain, 2004)

With one exception, New Zealand is a psychologically safe place to be a student. The exception is the achievement performance of the bottom 20 per cent of our students' (Hattie, 2003b, p. 4), the preponderance of whom are Māori and poor, and are 'falling backwards – like no other country in the western world'. The size of the gap between the lowest achieving students (the fifth percentile) and those at the 50th percentile 'is a measure of relative educational disadvantage' (UNICEF, 2000). New Zealand appears one from the bottom – and this indicates that we are doing poorly in containing inequality as our lowest achieving students fall far behind the average NZ student'. New Zealand has the widest achievement gap in the OECD (Hattie, 2003b, p. 4). There is, however, a culture of denial expressed in an 'apparent under-reporting of disparities' particularly in primary schools (ERO, 2004), such that New Zealand may have 'the greatest proportion of physically present but psychologically absent students' (Hattie, 2003b, p. 6). Similarly, McKinley (2000) found that primary teachers' perceptions of Māori achievement were unrealistically positive. Yet according to Peddie and Hattie's (1998, cited in Hattie 2003b) analysis of reports to parents from over 150 schools, 98% of New Zealand children 'are performing well, putting in energy, and a pleasure to teach'. This romantic view raises questions about how much teachers actually know about what children can and cannot do. What is known, however, is that, across a wide range of measures, Māori students at years 4 and 5 are not achieving at the same levels as their non-Māori counterparts.

In spite of this negative picture Māori expectations that schooling can do better are reinforced by the Education Review Office's (2006a) claim that schools ought to be able to establish that:

- Māori students say that their school and teachers have high academic and behavioural expectations of them;
- attendance levels of Māori students are comparable to non-Māori students;
- Māori students state that they enjoy and value their school experiences;
- Māori students are meaningfully engaged in the learning process and share responsibility for setting learning goals;
- classroom teachers make tangible links between Māori student assessment data and their own classroom practice for improving student achievement;
- there are strong, positive and supportive learning relationships between Māori students and the teachers; and
- learning contexts reflect the interests, prior knowledge and experiences of Māori students.

ERO (2006a) also argues that schools should also be able to demonstrate that:

- the school is monitoring the impact of professional development on the quality of Māori student engagement in learning;
- The school is monitoring and evaluating the impact of interventions that aim to improve Māori student achievement;
- The school is using information collected through monitoring to improve interventions that aim to improve Māori student achievement; and
- The school is using information collected through self review to improve its overall responsiveness to Māori students.

This review canvasses a body of literature offering possible paths to higher expectations of schooling for Māori.

B) Influences

(a) Classroom Influences

“Our best evidence internationally is that what happens in classrooms through quality teaching and through the quality of the learning environment generated by the teacher and the students, is the key variable in explaining up to 59%, or even more, of the variance in student scores.” (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 2)

Along with Alton-Lee (2003), Hattie (1999; 2003a) maintains that excellence in teaching is the most salient and powerful influence on student educational achievement, or as Macfarlane (2004) identifies “classroom practice is perceived as so complex, yet its success stories can be stated in two words: the teachers” (p. 8). Hattie agrees. “It is what teachers know, do, and care about which is very powerful in this learning equation. And it is the one source of variance that can be enhanced with the greatest potential of success” (Hattie, 2003b, p. 9).

This section looks at classroom influences such as teacher’s theoretical positioning, why teacher agency is important, the establishment of caring and learning relationships and interactions, the impact of teacher expectations, the place of student culture in the classroom and culturally responsive pedagogies.

Theories that position teachers: from deficit to agency

Bruner (1996) identified that teaching occurs, progress is decided upon and practices modified as “a direct reflection of the beliefs and assumptions the teacher holds about the learner (p. 47). This means that “...our interactions with others are deeply affected by our everyday intuitive theorizing about how other minds work” (p. 45). In other words, our actions are driven by the mental images or understandings that we have of other people. Such understandings have major implications for teachers hoping to be agentic in their classrooms and for educational reformers for as Elbaz (1981, 1983) explains, understanding the relationship between teachers’ theories of practice about learners and learning is fundamental to teachers being agentic because the principles teachers hold dear and the practices they employ are developed from the images they hold of others. To Foucault (1972), the images that teachers create when describing their experiences are expressed in the metaphors that are part of the language of the discourses around education. That is, teachers draw from a variety of discourses to make sense of the

experiences they have when relating to and interacting with Māori students. It is what Foucault termed their “positioning within discourse”. That is, we are not *of* the explanations but rather, by drawing on particular discourses to explain and make sense of our experiences, we are positioning ourselves within these discourses and acting accordingly in our classrooms. The discourses already exist, have been developing throughout our history, are often in conflict with each other through power differentials, and importantly for our desire to be agentic, in terms of their practical importance, some discourses hold solutions to problems, others don’t.

In their Best Evidence Synthesis on community and family influences, Biddulph, Biddulph and Biddulph (2003) identify a range of discursive positions taken by the authors of studies in this area; deficit, difference or empowerment/enhancement theory. They then identify the impact that these theories have upon teachers’ abilities to engage with educational reform. Deficit theory assumes a deficiency or lack in children, paying little attention to the failings of systems to respond to children who are not performing well. The basic assumption behind deficit theories is that the child is the problem, and that in order to achieve, the child must change (Bishop, Berryman & Richardson, 2001). Morgan and Morris’ (1999) survey of teachers found 62% of their responses ascribing student failure to “something to do with the pupil or his or her home background”, while “something to do with me, the teacher” was found among 18% of the response statements (p.68). Similar patterns of blame and denial of teachers’ own responsibility were found by Bishop et al (2003), Procknow and Kearney (2002) and Phillips, McNaughton and MacDonald (2001).

In a detailed study of the origins of deficit thinking, Valencia (1997) and colleagues traced the origins of this mode of theorising and critiqued common practices such as intelligence testing, the constructs of “at-riskness” (see also Swadener & Lubeck, 2003), and “blaming the victim” (see also McLaren, 2003) as contributing to this discourse. McLaren (2003) and Valencia (1997) identify that this psychologizing of student failure amounts to blaming school failure on individuals in terms of their individual traits and characteristics that they develop as a result of their membership of a minoritized group within society. Further, as Valencia (1997) suggests, deficit thinking is a product of long-term power imbalances that need to be examined by educators in terms of their own cultural assumptions and a consideration of how they themselves might be participants in the systematic marginalisation of students in their schools and classrooms. As Shields, Bishop and Mazawi (2005) explain, moving away from deficit thinking and

the associated pathologising practices is difficult because educators who position themselves within the dominant discourses receive support from societal norms that suggest that the accommodation of minority students with (for example) differing knowledge codes will result in an attack on the very nature of society as a whole. In this way, the deficit discourse is self-justifying, and circular, and very difficult for educators to change. It also helps to shape educational policies that, in turn, provide guidelines for practice.

To this understanding, it is the discursive positions that teachers occupy that is the key to their being able to make a difference or not for Māori students, which means that before any in-class type professional development is developed, teachers need to be provided with a learning opportunity where they can critically evaluate where they discursively position themselves when constructing their own images, principles and practices in relation to Māori students in their own classrooms. It is also important that these learning opportunities provide teachers with an opportunity to undertake what Davies and Harre (1997) called *discursive repositioning* which means their drawing explanations and subsequent practices from alternative discourses that offer them solutions instead of reinforcing problems and barriers.

According to Burr (1995), we are all able to reposition ourselves from one discourse to another because, while we are partly the product of discourse, we do have agency that allows us to change the way we see and made sense of the world by drawing from other discourses. We are free agents and we have agency; it is just that some of the discourses we draw from limit our power to activate our agency.

This understanding is supported by Mazarno, Zaffron, Zraik, Robbins and Yoon (2005), who have identified that most educational innovations do not address the “existing framework of perceptions and beliefs, or paradigm, as part of the change process – an ontological approach.” (p. 162), but rather assume “that innovation is assimilated into existing beliefs and perceptions” (p. 162). They go on to suggest that reforms that are more likely to succeed are those that are fundamentally ontological in nature, providing participants with an “experience of their paradigms as constructed realities, and an experience of consciousness other than the ‘I’ embedded in their paradigms” (p. 162). Difference theory attributes disadvantage to the dominance of a majority culture over another within educational institutions, a structuralist analysis. However, as Danaher, Schirato and Webb (2000) point out, educators who position themselves wholly within structural discourses often feel just as disempowered as those

whose discursive positioning problematises the child and/or their home. In this latter case, where educators' discourses focus on deficits, this results in helplessness, frustration, or anger, the only possible solutions seem to involve changing the homes of the students or the students themselves. This "change the victim" option was identified by Ryan (1976) in the 1970s. Similarly, those who position themselves wholly within structuralist discourses believe that some structural changes must take place in their school (for example, changes in class sizes, timetables, curriculum frameworks and the like) before students will make improvements in educational performance. Danaher et al (2000) note that this discursive movement from that of the child and their home to that of structures is very common as educators, realising the futility of maintaining a deficit position in respect to the child and their home, cast about seeking an alternative set of explanations. Often however, this discursive movement results in further frustration, for there may appear to be very little they themselves can do about these seemingly necessary changes at a structural level. Both of these positions foster blame of someone or something else outside of the educator's (particularly classroom teachers') area of influence and, as a result, they attest that they have very little agency in this domain or responsibility for the outcomes of these influences.

Problematically for reform initiatives, positioning themselves in discourses that abrogate responsibility, educators such as this have removed themselves from acting as agents of change and of playing a part in the solutions. In effect, they are prepared to wait for someone else (such as parents or principals) to make a change before any change in student performance is able to occur. Indeed, their deficit theorizing has effectively removed from them the possibility of agency or influence in the situation. When educators see the problems as being outside of their own control, their discursive positioning has paralysed them, preventing them even from acting in their own classrooms, within which they are extremely powerful people. Therefore, as Bruner (1996) suggests, unless these positionings, these theorizings by teachers and others involved in the education of Māori children are first addressed, little change can occur.

The third large group of theories are termed 'empowerment theory' by Biddulph et al (2003), or agentic positioning by Bishop et al (2003, 2007) and these theories are based on the belief that teachers, parents and their children can change their own circumstances, as they have strengths that can be built upon provided they have access to knowledge in its broadest sense and support. Empowerment-oriented initiatives tend toward culturalist explanations and, for instance in Biddulph et al's. (2003) example,

obligates families and students to change their practices in such a way that compels them to engage with teachers. Further, as Perkins & Zimmerman (1995) identify, these theories also suppose a means of empowerment of teachers to make a difference. Such a position acknowledges the power of the teacher to impact upon student learning. The theories are examined below under the heading of ‘teacher agency’. However, an important caveat is that ‘empowerment’ or ‘agentic positioning’ needs to take place within a context of school and system-wide structural and systemic reform that is responsive to the changes taking place in teachers’ practice as is indicated in Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1.

Teacher agency

A number of New Zealand studies such as Bishop, et al (2003) and Bishop and Berryman (2006), Phillips, et al (2001), Timperley (2003) and St.George (1983), look at the reasons behind low educational achievement by examining the impact of the understandings and discursive positionings of teachers. These studies all identify that where teachers see the deficits of the child and their home environments or the school as being primary causes of low achievement, they are unable to offer adequate means of improving students’ achievement. In other words, discursive positions that ascribe the causes of disparities and solutions as being external to the school or within the schools systems and structures itself, restricts the capacity of teachers to act in such ways that make a difference for their students.

This finding was supported by a detailed study by Thrupp, Mansell, Hawksworth and Harold (2003) who interviewed 57 teachers, senior management, staff and Board of Trustees members from seven schools in the Waikato asking them “How much do you think teachers and principals are really able to be held responsible for their students’ achievement?” For the most part responses from participants limited their accountability as they believed other factors outside their control played a role such as family background and the responsibilities of students themselves.

In a further study involving 31 teachers, Timperley (2003) found that 82% of the reasons the teachers gave for poor performance in early reading were “external to the school... the community, the children’s homes or the children themselves” (p. 81). In the course of the school based professional development, teachers became increasingly willing to examine their professional practices as factors contributing to underachievement. However, it is interesting that without any intervention in their

discursive positioning, teachers and senior managers in schools believe they have little influence over student achievement, whereas students themselves believe that teachers do have the power to shape and influence their experiences and achievement at school (Pomeroy, 1999; Bishop et al, 2003)

Nieto (1994) is critical of deficit positioning by teachers saying that “it is too convenient to fall back on deficit theories and continue the practice of blaming students, their families, and their communities for educational failure” (p. 394). What is needed is a focus on those areas where a difference can be made (Nieto, 1994), and Hattie (2003) identifies in his meta-analysis of effect size outcomes, of the 33 most significant factors explaining variance in outcome, 21 are controlled by the teacher.

One study that epitomizes how teachers can position themselves agentially is that described by Ladson-Billings (1995) who identified exemplary teachers of African-Americans students. She found that such teachers, amongst other things, believed that all students were capable of academic success. Such teachers demonstrated this belief by refusing their students the opportunity to fail in their classrooms. Further, discourses that accentuated a deficiency on the part of students’ were absent in the classroom.

Students were never referred to as being from a single-parent household, being on AFDC (welfare), or needing psychological evaluation. Instead, teachers talked about their own shortcomings and limitations and ways they needed to change to ensure student success (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 479)

Similarly, the agentic positioning of teachers in Te Kotahitanga (Bishop, et al 2003; 2007) involves the rejection of deficit theorising as an explanation for underachievement and the assertion that teachers are themselves professionally committed to bringing about change for Māori students. Anti-deficit theorizing and agentic positioning by teachers is fundamental to this project, and evidence of such thinking was identified in the voices of the teachers interviewed, in the Teacher Participation Survey completed by 236 teachers, analysis of feedback and co-construction sessions and the analysis of student interviews. These teachers believed and demonstrated that that they have a high level of understanding about the negative effects of deficit thinking about Māori students and are applying that knowledge in their teaching practice. They also believed they have a high level of understanding of the importance of relating to Māori students from an agentic position and in ensuring that their teaching practices reflect an agentic attitude towards these target students. From this evidence, it was show that teachers taking a agentic

position gives them both the power to reject deficit thinking and its associated pathologising practices and it allows them to use the power of their own agency to see, in association with this discursive positioning, changes in Māori students' behaviour, participation, engagement and achievement in their classroom.

Such positioning is termed 'agentic' in that it is teachers positioning themselves discursively as 'agents of change' that sees movement in seemingly immutable educational disparities and increases in teacher commitment and them taking responsibility for their own and student outcomes. Agentic positioning is relevant to how other factors in the classroom, such as teacher expectations and the development of mutually respectful relationships between teachers and students are played out.

Teacher knowledge

The teacher's subject knowledge heavily influences the probability of challenging goals being set and informed feedback being provided. The *Effective Pedagogy in*

Mathematics/Pangarau Best Evidence Synthesis found that:

Sound subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge are prerequisites for accessing students' conceptual understandings and for deciding where those understandings might be heading. They are also critical for accessing and adapting task, activities and resources to bring the mathematics to the fore (Anthony & Walshaw 2007, p. 4).

ERO (2006b) has, however, found that teachers' mathematical subject knowledge is variable and in many cases seriously wanting. The Office claims that 25% of teachers do not have adequate pedagogic knowledge, and 22% lack the subject knowledge to teach the curriculum effectively. So one could conclude that it remains as Holt observed in 2001: 'the delivery of mathematics education to Māori students is still not as effective as it could be' (p. 18).

In social studies 41% of the teachers showed 'little evidence' of setting 'expectations for achievement' in social studies (ERO, 2006c, p. 18), and 35%

lacked the pedagogical expertise to encourage students to achieve in, and engage with, social studies. There was little evidence that these teachers had adapted learning programmes to reflect the students' prior knowledge and skills. Most teachers set the same learning goals for all students in the class and did not adapt

their programmes for individual or groups of students. In many of these classes, teachers did not clarify or extend students' understanding through appropriate questioning. For many of these teachers, there was a lack of focus on developing social studies knowledge, and concepts (ERO, 2006c, p. 18).

In a 2007 study ERO found that 59% of Years 4 and 8 teachers were not effectively teaching writing (ERO, 2007). The corollary of these figures is, however, that most teachers effectively teach in social studies and mathematics even if not in writing.

Teacher expectations

Teacher expectations of students reflect wider societal and ideological values that are deeply ingrained (Nieto, 1994) and anecdotal evidence suggests that expectations are sometimes based on an assumed causal link between a child's Māori ethnicity and their capacity or willingness to learn (Rubie-Davies, Hattie & Hamilton, 2006). Hill and Hawk (2000) found that expectations were not consistently high among teachers in the AIMHI project schools and that there was no consensus among teachers about what expectations were appropriate (Hill & Hawk, 2000). Such findings support Timperley's (2003) assertion that raising "expectations appears to be fundamental to reducing disparities between the highest and lowest achieving students in New Zealand classrooms" (p. 86), although, it must be noted that, on their own, high expectations are inadequate for enhancing educational outcomes when not accompanied by effective teaching (Alton-Lee, 2003).

Teacher perceptions of students' abilities and differential treatment as a result of these perceptions was summarised by Brophy and Good (1974) who looked at a number of studies which investigated treatment of students by teachers according to socio-economic status. They found that SES impacted upon teacher perceptions of students' ability in that teachers' related more easily to students from higher social classes and overestimated their ability as compared to students from lower class homes. In addition, the types of interactions that teachers were having with students of higher social class were more positive and facilitating as compared to other students. Brophy and Good (1974) also found that once students were grouped (according to ability) they were rarely given an opportunity to move, despite their potential or actual measured ability, thus "socioeconomic status predicts both teachers' perceptions of their children and their treatment of them in the classroom." (Brophy & Good, 1974, p. 9). It is interesting to

contrast these findings to studies such as Nash, (1993) and Chapple, et al (1997) that ascribes student outcomes to student SES background. These latter studies fail to consider the impact of the relationship between the teacher and the students on students' outcomes.

Other studies have shown that teachers' expectations vary according to the ethnic and cultural background of the students. St. George (1983) investigated teacher perceptions of 90 Year 5 Polynesian (Māori and Pacific Island children were combined) and Pakeha students in five classrooms across four schools. Point biserial correlations between students' ethnicity and teachers' ratings on 15 student attributes were significant for 12 of the attributes as they were negative. This means that teachers perceived Polynesian students less favourably than Pakeha in terms of their engagement and participation in class, and as coming from homes with poor parental attitudes to school and less stimulating home environments (this is despite the fact that teachers had not always met the parents or visited students' homes). Over half the Polynesian students were designated to the low expectation group compared to one quarter of Pakeha students. In this study, class observations revealed that student ethnicity appeared to have little effect on patterns of interactions between teachers and students; however differences were experienced according to expectation group and this is where half the Polynesian students were located. That is, similar to findings from Brophy and Good (1974), teachers interacted differently with high and low expectation groups, with high expectation students receiving significantly less criticism. While standardised achievement results matched student expectation groups, this may be attributed to the different interactions experienced by high, middle and low expectation groups. St. George suggested a shift away from stereotyped perceptions about factors beyond the control of the teacher, such as perceived attitudes about parents and home environments, would likely improve outcomes as well as acknowledgement of cultural differences between the child and the school.

Timperley (2003) summarised teachers' expectations of students prior to and after professional development around literacy. Participants in one study believed that the causes of low literacy for their Year 3 students were due to poor student skills upon entry to school and the amount of time they had to teach these early skills. Guided by the researcher, these teachers developed a list of 25 skills considered to be essential prior to school entry. Forty new entrant students were tested on their mastery of these skills and teachers were then asked to estimate the percentage of skills accomplished by

students. One teacher estimated mastery at 70% to 80% of skills, while the remaining teachers estimated much lower at 30% to 40% of the skills. Actual results revealed that average percentage of skills mastered was in fact 74%. By looking at actual achievement of students it was found that the one teacher who estimated higher skill mastery achieved the highest reading outcomes for students indicating that low literacy in this school was a problem of teacher expectations. In a separate study, Timperley (2003) showed how low teacher expectations directed teachers towards providing children with reading material at too low a difficulty level.

The impact of teacher expectations upon outcomes for Māori students in classrooms has also been demonstrated by Rubie-Davies et al (2006). In their study, twenty one primary school teachers at 12 Auckland schools were surveyed in relation to their 540 students about their expectations for their students' achievement in reading. Teacher expectation for end of year achievement, teacher judgement of achievement at end of year, actual achievement for the beginning of the year and actual achievement for the end of the year were compared. This study found that teacher expectations for Māori were lower than their expectations of Pacific, Asian and NZ European students. Not only were teacher expectations lower for Māori, their expectations were significantly lower than the actual achievement of Māori students, despite the fact that at the beginning of the year there were no statistically significant differences between actual achievement of Māori and any other ethnic group. Māori achievement levels were on par with other groups. However by the end of the year, the achievement of Māori and Pacific students was significantly below that of Asian and NZ European (despite teachers judging Pacific students to be achieving at similar levels to Asian and NZ European). Effect size gains for reading achievement were lower for Māori than any other group.

Rubie-Davies et al (2006) suggest that teachers' expectations and judgements adhere to ethnic stereotypes where Asians are diligent students who are supported by parents who value education; Pacific students are disciplined by and guided by both church and home, whereas Māori students come from homes where parents are not supportive and do not value education. They then go on to suggest that such stereotyping by teachers affects the types and frequency of teachers' interactions with different groups of students for whom they have different expectations, and this results in differential outcomes.

Thus the evidence identified here is that teachers' expectations have a major impact upon Māori students' opportunities to learn in the classroom. This is seen in the

way that curriculum and skills are prioritised given that teachers' estimates of students' abilities are based on factors that are social characteristics rather than on student ability. However, as Alton-Lee (2003) warns, high expectations are necessary but insufficient when not supported by quality teaching that focuses on learning and the raising of achievement. We now turn to consider what constitutes quality teaching.

Caring relationships and interactions

The association between caring and positive teacher-student relationships in the classroom and improvements in academic achievement have been identified by many researchers, teachers and especially by students (Bishop, et al, 2003; 2007; Gay, 2003; Hawke, et al, 2001; Nieto, 1994; Noddings, 1988; Pomeroy, 1999; Tuuta, et al, 2004; Wentzel, 1997)

The teacher/student relationship is an unequal one in terms of power distribution in the classroom which has implications for the way this is manifested for students through their experiences of teacher interactions (St George, 1983). Importantly, though, the inequality of this relationship does not justify interactions which convey messages of disrespect, de-valuing or disempowerment and nor should, as Pomeroy (1999) suggests, inequality preclude a dialogic relationship. Pomeroy (1999) cites the work of Rudduck, Chaplain and Wallace who have identified six principles as being essential to the creation of a positive classroom environment: respect, fairness, autonomy, intellectual challenge, social support and security. These ideas are not, in themselves, controversial or difficult to understand, yet from students' perspectives in many studies (Bishop, et al, 2003; Bishop et al, 2007; Hill & Hawk, 2000) these types of mutually respectful relationships are not practiced in a number of classrooms. In fact, ERO (2004) in its *Māori Student Achievement in Mainstream Schools* report, have identified that in connection with Māori student achievement, professional development for teachers needs to focus on teacher/student relationships. Nationally and internationally it becomes resoundingly clear that indigenous students, students of colour and diverse students explain their levels of achievement in terms of what their teachers do (and do not do) in classrooms in terms of the quality of the relationships in the classroom.

Wentzel (1997) examined the role of 'pedagogical caring' with middle school students in the US and found that students' perceptions of teachers who were caring were significantly related to motivation as students were more likely to engage if they felt valued and supported. Supportive teachers were characterised as those who cared about

teaching, used non-threatening modes of communication, focused on the individuality of students and their unique abilities as learners and provided feedback.

Therefore, this study adds to this work by suggesting that perceptions of supportive and caring relationships with teachers are important regardless of students' race or family background. (p. 417)

In a small UK study of excluded secondary students, Pomeroy (1999) found three key factors that were problematic to their experiences of school; relationships with teachers, relationships with peers and external factors such as home life and criminal activity. However it was relationships with teachers that proved to be the most consistent and powerful feature of students' schooling experiences. Similarly to students in Wentzel's study, these students also described confrontational and humiliating communication styles as indicative of their not being valued as students or liked as individuals. Not being listened to, discriminatory interactions based on race, and not providing attention and assistance connected to learning all impacted negatively on students perceptions of their teachers. Such perceptions affected students' ability to engage in work and learn. While students wanted their teachers to establish meaningful relationships with them, Pomeroy points out that students' in this study were not expecting their teachers to become 'surrogate parents.' What students wanted was a "unique relationship in which their non-child status is recognised and responded to accordingly while, at the same time, their pastoral needs are met." (p. 477)

Pomeroy (1999) also noted a further criticism from students about the lack of care by teachers being evident when the teacher is either unable to unwilling to maintain classroom discipline, and/or engages in what they understood to be poor teaching. This did not necessarily however, translate into students in this study believing that they should take more responsibility for controlling their own poor behaviour, or that of their peers. However, had these students experiences of schooling been different, that is, had they experienced the positive relationships they sought, it was suggested that the students may have taken more responsibility for their learning. As can be seen in the work of Ladson-Billings (1995), and Bishop, et al (2007), the creation of safe contexts for learning needs to be led by classroom teachers.

Lee (1999) focused on "capturing diverse students' perceptions of the causes of their own achievement levels." (p. 219). In one San Francisco high school where 90% of the population were students of colour, students were trained as interviewers. Forty

interviews were conducted with low achieving students who felt that school factors, that is, perceptions of schooling and the influence of classrooms, were the primary influence on their levels of achievement. The discourse of students were categorised according to home factors, peer factors, but overwhelmingly school factors, that is teacher-centred classrooms, perceived racism and discrimination directed towards students by teachers, and a lack of personal teacher-student relationships. Such an example is exemplified by a 17 year old Latino student who bluntly drew the connection between care and achievement: “they don’t give a fuck about students. If they did, they would have all these fuckin’ students graduating.” (Lee, 1999, p. 229) Students in Lee’s study described teachers unwavering and negative perceptions of students based on their behaviour, being carried over to learning contexts as an example of lack of care:

I think they should help us out a little more instead of just thinking that if we’re doing bad already, that we can’t improve. You know that they just don’t care about us. But I think they should help us out more and do more things to keep us on track even though that’s my responsibility, too. But they don’t make the class interesting and it seems like they don’t care about me. (p. 229)

Similar experiences were found among Māori students in New Zealand mainstream secondary schools in Te Kotahitanga (Bishop & Berryman 2006), where interviews were conducted among year 9 and 10 Māori about their experiences of schooling. Among a wide range of experiences, students in this study described themselves as being singled out as troublemakers:

Yeah- when the reliever comes and they call the roll and they say “P” and I go “Yeah” and they say “Oh, so you’re the kid that the teacher doesn’t like.” (p. 50)

In identifying major influences on their achievement, these students identified the primary importance of caring and learning relationships and interactions in the classroom (Bishop, et al, 2003; Bishop & Berryman, 2006). Students in this study did identify that home and structural factors influenced their learning, but overwhelmingly their recounting of experiences focussed on what happened in classrooms between them and their teachers; when negative they did not achieve, when positive they were able to achieve. These Māori students identified that their being Māori was problematic; they reported getting into trouble more than Pakeha kids, perceived their teachers as having lower expectations of them, grappled with racist and negative stereotypes and had poor

relationships with their teachers despite believing positive relationships to be vital to their learning, in short, their very identities were under threat on a day-to-day basis.

The...teacher said- I don't want to invest my time on you, 'cause you're too dumb... I just sit there and yell at him...Just sit there and purposefully annoy them. Or we walk out before we get a detention. (p. 48)

Something that helps students get along is having a good teacher that you respect and get along with. Like in a teacher/student relationship. You like and respect them and they like and respect you. (p. 49)

When asked what would make a difference for their achievement, the overwhelming responses from the Māori students were associated with teachers demonstrating on a daily basis that they cared for Māori students as Māori, that is, as culturally located individuals, having high expectation of Māori students as learners and of creating well-managed and organised culturally-responsive contexts for learning within their classrooms. These understanding were fundamental to the development of the Te Kotahitanga Effective Teaching Profile that, when implemented in classrooms of project teachers, alongside changes in teacher interactions with students, increased range of strategies used and student outcomes being used to inform practice, has seen significant improvements in Māori student participation in classrooms, engagement with learning and achievement across a range of measures (Bishop et al 2007).

In 2004 and 2005, following the effective implementation of Te Kotahitanga in a range of teachers' classrooms, a number of Māori students were interviewed to ascertain how their schooling experiences had changed following the intervention. They stated that;

*You can connect to her pretty easy, like on camp we pretty much all connected with her like a big whanau class
She's brought our class together quite good eh...
Well we just see each other as good friends and help each other out when we can.
(School 3: Group 2, 2005)*

*She's a good teacher
We look after each other as if we were a little family. We're close to each other in class, when we play other classes in sports we stick together. (School 3: Group 1, 2005)*

*Yeah it's like whanaungatanga.
Know each other better.*

Help one another.

We're just, it feels like a real family.

Yeah we're like brothers and sisters.

Everybody looking after everybody.

We wouldn't be like this in other classes, we'd be sitting way apart. (School 10: Group 3, 2004 (Bishop et al 2007))

In Hill and Hawk (2000), students gave examples of caring teachers as those who engage in such behaviours as giving personal time, supporting with personal problems, following up after difficult times, buying them things such as rewards and gear, listening to their ideas, supporting them in co-curricular activities, arranging tutorials, marking and returning work quickly and listening to their ideas. Like the excluded students in Pomeroy's (1999) study, and the Māori students in the Bishop et al (2003) study, these students expected to have a unique relationship with their teachers that involves both their learning and pastoral needs. In addition, one of the key findings from the *Effective Pedagogy in Mathematics/Pangarau: Best Evidence Synthesis* (Anthony & Walshaw, 2007), is that effective teachers demonstrate care for their students, care about engagement and create opportunities and spaces for students to develop their thinking, proficiency and cultural identities.

It is significant that children tend to be able to identify easily the positive characteristics of their relationships with teachers, and the pedagogical characteristics of teaching that they find effective. This suggests that making space for and valuing student voice can have positive benefits for classroom pedagogy, especially for Māori children. Student voice initiatives have helped teachers and students to identify one another as individuals rather than as stereotypes and create opportunities to build positive relationships (Mittra, 2003), particularly for those students whose voices have been silenced due to the marginalisation and racism directed towards minority and indigenous groups (Lee, 1999). Nieto (1994) believes that educational reforms cannot take place without including students' voices. Cook-Sather (2002) advocates that by authorising and legitimating students perspectives teachers can redirect their actions in response to what they hear. Significantly, however, Ruddock, et al, (cited in Pomeroy, 1999), Lee (1999) and Nieto (1994) point out that the voices least likely but most important to be heard are those who are considered to be the least successful. In New Zealand these students are disproportionately Māori. When student perspectives are excluded it is common for schools to blame individual students for their lack of achievement (Mittra, 2003). And yet, the process of consulting students

offers schools very important means towards their own improvement. It cannot tenably be claimed that schooling is primarily intended to benefit pupils if pupils' own views about what is beneficial to them are not actively sought and attended to (McIntyre, Pedder & Ruddock, 2005, p. 150).

In Te Kotahitanga (Bishop et al 2003, 2007) student voices (and those of their significant others) were used in the project in four main ways. Firstly they were used to identify a variety of discursive positions pertaining to Māori student achievement and the potential impact of these positions on Māori student learning. Secondly, the narratives were used to give voice to the participants (students, parents, principals, and teachers) in a manner that addressed issues of power relations pertaining to issues of initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation and accountability. Thirdly, the narratives were used in the professional development phase of the project to provide teachers with a vicarious means of understanding how students experienced schooling in ways that they might not otherwise have access to. This experience provided teachers with a means of critically reflecting upon their own discursive positioning and the impact this might have upon their own students' learning. Fourthly the narratives provided the research team with evidence from which to construct the Effective Teaching Profile, the practical representation of what constitutes a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy of Relations. This latter model identifies the importance of the culture of the child as being central to the conversation that is learning.

Carpenter, McMurchy-Pilkington and Sutherland's (2004) study of the distinguishing characteristics of 9 highly effective teachers in low decile primary schools shows that effective teachers are necessarily caring and share these attributes: they are goal driven, personally and publicly reflective, they consistently seek professional development opportunities, they are not judgemental about children, they have high expectations of every child, they 'love' the children and try to understand their perspectives and perceptions, they have strengths in the 'core basics' and have interactive teaching styles, their classrooms extend into and draw from the wider community, the model successful learning and social interactions, and 'empower children by reinforcing an internal locus of control' (p. 97)

The centrality of culture to learning

One of the most significant outcomes of Phase 3 of Te Kotahitanga was the identification of how important it was that Māori students were able to be Māori in classrooms; that is, through a series of interviews, Māori students told about the centrality of culture to learning. They told of this important understanding through the movement in students' concerns from being about their identity in the pre-intervention classrooms in 2001, to concerns about learning in the classrooms of effective implementers of the project's intervention in 2004/5. In other words, as students' culture became central and integral to classroom relationships and interactions, and it was acceptable to be, act and make sense of the world as Māori, then concerns about identity were replaced by positive attitudes to learning (Bishop et al, 2007).

Culture has always been central to student achievement in New Zealand, a fact that is very clear from the introductory analysis to this review, where culture and ethnicity distinguish progress within the education system in New Zealand and have done so for decades. In other words, children in specific cultural groups achieve at different levels when other variables are taken into account (Alton-Lee, 2007). Further, from Hood's (2007) study of MOE and NZQA statistics, it is clear that Māori males and females have more in common with each other in terms of negative educational indicators than they do with their gender counterparts. This is no surprise to Māori people, as from the early colonial period to the present day, being Māori has had dire consequences in terms of health, economics and education (Walker, 1990; Durie, 2001b).

Such an analysis stands in contrast to an earlier and very influential groups of theorists (Chapple, et al, 1997; Harker & Nash, 1990; May 1994; Nash, 1993; Poata-Smith, 1996) who suggest that ethnicity and gender can be "controlled for" in such a way that reveals socio-economic (SES) positioning as having the dominant effect on educational achievement. Harker & Nash (1990) stated that their research indicated that within the present school structures "Māori children under-achieve when compared with Pakeha children because of quantitative differences in the cultural, that is literary, resources possessed by their families" (p. 39).

This analysis is supported in a detailed analysis of Māori educational achievement by Chapple, et al (1997), who acknowledge that many factors may affect school performance, but suggest that there is strong evidence "that the relative family resource position of Māori is a significant and substantial cause of educational

disparities" (p. x). They suggest factors such as fewer material resources in Māori homes, larger numbers of children and lower levels of parental education and literacy levels as the evidence for SES deprivation. They conclude from what they see as the single most sophisticated work seeking to explain educational disparities, (Nash, 1993) that "family resources, both material and cultural, are the key transmission mechanism of educational disadvantage, rather than the structures of the education system" (p. 124). On this basis and considering other factors, Chapple et al 'conservatively' estimate that "currently perhaps a minimum of two thirds of the gap can be put down to family resource factors, leaving the other explanations - the most plausible of which is the interaction of peer pressures and the influence of the school system - to deal with the balance" (p. xi).

In contrast, Ranginui Walker (1990) suggests that Māori educational failure is a product of an unjust social order that has arisen out of the colonial experience. Through the process of colonisation, Māori history, knowledge and ways of being have been devalued and replaced with that of the coloniser, with educators often ignoring or denying Māori a voice or a place within the education system and education itself serving to reproduce the cultural practices and values of the dominant group (Tuuta, Bradnum, Hynds, & Higgins, 2004).

Such a situation means that schools allow for the transmission and reproduction of validated and socially approved knowledge and cultural practices, typically of the dominant social group, while excluding or negating knowledge and cultural practices of minority, indigenous or diverse groups (Bertenees & Thornley, 2004; Bishop & Glynn, 1999). Durie (2005) suggests that;

it is illusory to develop policies, programmes and practices that purport to be 'blind' to race and ethnicity when for an increasingly large number of people an ethnic orientation underlies both personal and collective identity, provides pathways to participation in society, and largely influences the ways in which societal institutions respond to their needs (p. 1).

Denying Māori culture and ethnicity a significant place in New Zealand educational theorising has been common and as Bishop and Glynn (1999), suggest, is the result of the marginalisation of Māori cultural aspirations, preferences and practices in education that occurred alongside the economic and political subordination of Māori. Denial of the lived realities of Māori people and the effect of the education system and the role education has played has also been a common feature of educational theorising. G Smith

(1997) and L Smith (1999) sees the consistent underachievement of Māori as a struggle between Māori rejecting a schooling system that does not fit them and the persistence of educators' attempts to convert Māori to the mainstream way. This struggle is represented as that between educational institutions as agents of social reproduction also being seen as places that can achieve social change.

The centrality of culture to learning has been identified by a number of authors (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Gay 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2006; Macfarlane 2004) when they identified how the dominant culture plays a major role in supporting the learning of children of this culture. These authors suggest that a necessary part of the paradigm shift that is needed in education is a means whereby the previously marginalised cultures can be allowed a place in contemporary classrooms. This paradigm shift calls for a movement towards more culturally responsive pedagogies. This is because the experiences of a Māori and a non-Māori child in a Year 4 or Year 5 classroom may well not be the same in spite of the same teacher, the same teaching resources, the same curriculum and even the same positive relationship with the teacher for the simple reason that learning is mediated through culture.

Culturally inclusive, relevant and responsive pedagogies of relations

There is an increasing realization that learning involves constructing knowledge socially and through interacting with, rather than receiving it from others. There is also an increasing realization that knowledge is situational and not gender or culture free and that it is always created and promoted for a specific defined purpose and often these purposes promote the language, culture and values of those in power.

Teachers retain power and control over what knowledge is legitimate in their classrooms by constructing what Australian educationalist Robert Young (1991) terms the traditional classroom as a learning context for children. Young states:

The [traditional] method [classroom] is one in which teachers objectify learners and reify knowledge, drawing on a body of objectifying knowledge and pedagogy constructed by the behavioral sciences for the former and empiricist and related understandings of knowledge for the latter. (p. 78)

To Young (1991), in the traditional classroom, teachers see their function "as to 'cover' the set curriculum, to achieve sufficient 'control' to make students do this, and to ensure that students achieve a sufficient level of 'mastery' of the set curriculum as

revealed by evaluation” (p. 79). The learning context these teachers create aims to promote these outcomes. In these classrooms it is teachers who are ‘active’ and who do most of the ‘official’ talk (classroom language). Technical mastery of this language and the language of the curriculum (which is generally one and the same thing) are pre-requisites for pupil participation with the official ‘knowledge’ of the classroom.

The learning context that is created in traditional classrooms is such that there is a distinct power difference between teacher and learner which, as Smith (1997, p. 178) suggests, may be reinforced ideologically and spatially. Ideologically, the teacher is seen as the ‘font of all knowledge’; the students, in Locke’s terms, the ‘tabula rasa’, the empty slate; where the teacher is the ‘neutral’ and objective arbiter and transmitter of knowledge. Knowledge however, is selected by the teacher, guided by curriculum documents and possibly texts that are created from within and by the dominant discourse; in colonial and neo-colonial contexts, from outside the experiences and interests of the very people it is purported to educate. Far from being neutral, these documents actively reproduce the cultural and social hegemony of the dominant groups at the expense of marginalised groups. The spatial manifestation of difference can be seen in “the furniture arrangements within the classroom, in the organisation of staff meetings, and by holding assemblies with teachers sitting on the stage and so forth” (Smith, 1997, p. 179). Children who are unable or who do not want to participate in this pattern are marginalized and fail. Teachers will then explain the children’s lack of participation in terms of pupil inabilities, disabilities, dysfunctions or deficiencies, rather than considering that it may well be the very structure of the classroom that mitigates against the creation of a relationship that will promote satisfactory participation by students.

Nieto’s (2004) study on student voice in the United States found that children were most interested in pedagogy and were “critical of teachers’ reliance on textbooks and blackboards” (p. 405), as this encouraged passivity, and were equally “critical of the lack of imagination that led to boring classes” (p. 405). They were also critical of classrooms in which the answers to students’ questions were “in the book’. And if you asked the question and the answer *wasn’t* in the book, then you shouldn’t have asked that question!’ (Nieto, 2004, p. 405).

In contrast, what Young, (1991) terms a discursive classroom is one where new images and their constituent metaphors are able to be present to inform and guide the development of educational principles and pedagogies in order to help create power-

sharing relationships and classroom interaction patterns within which young Māori and other minoritised peoples can successfully participate and engage in learning.

Discursive classrooms that are created by teachers who are working within kaupapa Māori reform projects, such as Te Kotahitanga, suggest new approaches to interpersonal and group interactions that have the potential to move Aotearoa/New Zealand educational experiences for many children of diverse cultural backgrounds from the negative to the positive. Te Kotahitanga practices suggest that where the images and the metaphors we use to express these images are holistic, interactional and focus on power-sharing relationships, the resultant classroom practices and educational experiences for children of other than the dominant group will be entirely different.

New metaphors are needed in teaching and teacher education that are holistic and flexible and able to be determined by or understood within the cultural contexts that have meaning to the lives of the many young people of diverse backgrounds who attend modern schools wherever they may be situated in the world. Teaching and learning strategies which flow from these metaphors need to be flexible and allow the diverse voices of young people primacy. In such a pedagogy, the participants in the learning interaction become involved in the process of collaboration, in the process of mutual story-telling and re-storying (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), so that a relationship can emerge in which *both* stories are heard, or indeed a process where a new story is created by all the participants. Such a pedagogy addresses Māori people's concerns about current traditional pedagogic practices being fundamentally monocultural and epistemologically racist (Scheurich & Young, 1994). This new pedagogy recognizes that all people who are involved in the learning and teaching process are participants who have meaningful experiences, valid concerns and legitimate questions.

The implications of this understanding for teaching and teacher education is that there is an increasing realization that teachers have the agency to construct contexts wherein students are able to bring their cultural experiences to the learning conversation, despite the teacher not knowing about these experiences and ways of making sense of the world. At the same time, teacher educators need to create learning contexts where their student teachers can experience such relationships and interactions.

Culture is central to effective pedagogy because learning new concepts is aided by 'creating associative links'. That is, connecting prior knowledge or familiar ideas and experiences to new classroom learning (McIntyre et al, 2005) to counter the proposition that substantial amounts of "classroom time is wasted because the instructional

experiences do not match children's memory processes" (Alton-Lee, 2006, p. 618). Inclusive pedagogies, therefore, become all the more important the greater the distance between the world of the teacher and the world of the child. Further "all students should be able to expect that the learning process will recognise their unique potential and play a constructive part in preparing them for the years ahead" (Durie, 2006, p. 11). Bishop (2003) suggests that what children know, and how they know it, should form the foundation of classroom interactions. But as he notes, this position contrasts with traditional perspectives where knowledge is determined by the teacher alone.

Being included in curriculum and pedagogy in culturally meaningful ways is something many students have asked for, when they have actually been considered as important people to include in such discussions (Cook-Sather, 2002). In Bishop and Berryman (2006) a group of Māori students give an example of an occasion when their experiences could have contributed to the curriculum:

We do a unit on respecting other' cultures. Some teachers who aren't Māori try to tell us Māori what to do about things like tangi. It's crap! I'm a Māori. They should ask me about Māori things. I could tell them about why we do things in a certain way. I've got the goods on this, but they never ask me. I'm a dumb Māori I suppose. Yet they asked the Asian girl about her culture. They never ask us about ours. (p. 76)

Ladson-Billings (1995) cautions us that notwithstanding the possibility of misguided attempts leading to superficial outcomes, classroom pedagogy needs to be 'culturally relevant'. That is, it should "not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (p. 469). It follows that Māori children are unlikely to learn in contexts where the authenticity of Māori experiences and voices is denied by others' control over curriculum and pedagogy and the dominant images and metaphors of learning. This has been especially so when control has been assumed for coercive political objectives (Bishop, 2003). In a similar manner Rubie, Townsend & Moore (2004) call for educators to use

theoretically informed teaching practices in a culturally relevant way. The findings point to the need for schools and teachers to demonstrate their acceptance of cultural values and to take an active role in promoting structured classroom

activities that provide successful and valued ownership of learning for indigenous minority students. (p. 158)

All too often the cultural experiences of students are more aligned with exclusion and negation as sadly typified by students in Nieto's (1994) study. Her descriptions of the experiences of ten successful students and what it means to be from a particular background, highlighted how students from different ethnic, racial, linguistic and social backgrounds were expected to assimilate into 'mainstream' US culture. Students talked of their exclusion from the curriculum when their experiences were so obviously relevant. A Lebanese American student gave examples of the omission of the Arabic language and Lebanese people from a language fair, a multicultural festival and the production of a school cookbook. A Native American student recalled trying to correct a teacher about some historical reasons behind scalping, but gave up trying as she faced a teacher unwilling to be convinced and the authenticity of a textbook to contend with. Students also shared that the disconnection between the curriculum and their real lives created a division between school and homes lives.

In her observations of eight exemplary teachers of African-American students Ladson-Billings (1995) noted that a culturally relevant pedagogy emphasized students' academic success, cultural competence and the ability to critique social inequalities. Common beliefs and ideologies observed among these culturally relevant teachers were conceptions of self and others, the creation of a context for social relations in the classroom, and a dynamic view of knowledge. These teachers' conceptions of themselves and others included the belief that all students were capable of academic success; they saw their pedagogy as art, saw themselves as members of the community and saw teaching as a way to give back to the community. The context for social relations in the classrooms of these teachers were maintained by fluid student-teacher relationships that demonstrated a connectedness with all students, developed a community of learners and encouraged students to learn collaboratively and be responsible for one another. Conceptions of knowledge for these teachers were that knowledge is not static, knowledge must be viewed critically, teachers must be passionate about knowledge and learning and teachers must scaffold to facilitate learning culminating in multifaceted assessment that incorporates multiple forms of excellence.

Similarly, Alton-Lee, (2003) in a detailed analysis of what constitutes quality teaching for diverse students identified that quality teaching is focused on student

achievement (including social outcomes) and facilitates high standards of student outcomes for heterogeneous groups of students; Pedagogical practices enable classes and other learning groupings to work as caring, inclusive, and cohesive learning communities; Effective links are created between school and other cultural contexts in which students are socialised to facilitate learning; Quality teaching is responsive to student learning processes; Opportunity to learn is effective and sufficient; Multiple task contexts support learning cycles; Curriculum goals, resources including ICT usage, task design, teaching and school practices are effectively aligned; Pedagogy scaffolds and provides appropriate feedback on students' task engagement; Pedagogy promotes learning orientation, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies and thoughtful student discourse; Teachers and students engage constructively in goal-oriented assessment.

Seeking out solutions by incorporating the perspectives of students can serve as a catalyst for change in schools (Mitra, 2003). The students in Lee's (1999) study identified dimensions of effective teaching as offering challenging curriculum and high expectations, interactive learning, and closer relationships between teachers and students. These findings parallel those of Bishop, et al (2003) in that dimensions of effective teaching offered from the perspective of students were assembled into an effective teaching profile that seeks to create a culturally responsive context for learning in classrooms by firstly required teachers to consider their discursive positioning; then how in their classrooms they included care for the student, care for performance, good classroom management, effective interactions, a range of strategies and a focus on improved achievement outcomes.

This effective teaching profile was implemented in classrooms of 12 secondary schools with the aim of improving Māori student achievement. During the third phase of the study (Bishop et al, 2007), interviews were conducted with Māori students in the classrooms of teachers implementing all components the effective teaching profile to a high degree. Students' reports of those teachers (identified as effective) again emphasised the importance of relationships and the unquestionable connect to learning as far they were concerned. By discussing what students experiences were in the classrooms of these exemplary teachers, students were able to give examples that related directly to the effective teaching profile. Students described having their own cultural experiences as Māori validated by these teachers:

*And I think she was interested in the culture as well.
Yeah, and its genuine interest not just an act.*

*She treats us all the same.
Just the way she talks.
She's not racist.
She's really positive towards Māori students.
But she treats us all the same. (Bishop et al, 2007, p. 167)*

Importantly students also attributed improved outcomes in their engagement and achievement to the classroom contexts created by their teachers where students felt respected and included in culturally meaningful ways. Students described such changes as confidence in their ability to achieve, improved attendance, improvements in their behaviour, and improvements in their achievement. All this was achieved without students feeling like they had to stop being Māori at the classroom door: "...I found that you come to school, and be your self but learn at the same time too..." (Bishop, et al, 2007, p. 167).

A pedagogy that is responsive to the culture of the child provides learning relationships wherein learners can bring who they are to the classroom in complete safety that their knowledge's are acceptable and legitimate. This is in contrast to the traditional classroom where the culture of the teacher is given central focus and has the power to define what constitutes appropriate and acceptable knowledge's, approaches to learning and understandings, and sense-making processes. This model suggests that when the learner's own culture is central to their learning activities, they are able to make meaning of new information and ideas by building on their own prior cultural experiences and understandings. The visible culture of the child need not necessarily be present but may well become present as a result of co-constructing learning experiences with their teachers, in this way addressing the potential imposition of the teacher displaying cultural iconography. Such contexts for learning also teach learners how to critically reflect on their own learning, how they might learn better and more effectively and ensure greater balance in the power relationship of learning by modelling this approach in class. In other words, raise expectations of their own learning and how they might enhance and achieve these expectations engages students actively, holistically and in an integrated fashion, in real-life (or as close to) problem-sharing and questioning and use these questions as catalysts for on-going study; this engagement can be monitored as an indicator of potential long-term achievement. This shift from traditional classrooms is

important because traditional classroom interaction patterns do not allow teachers to create learning contexts where the culture of the child can be present, but rather assume cultural homogeneity (Villegas and Torres, 2002), which in reality is cultural hegemony (Gay, 2000). Discursive classrooms have the potential to respond to Māori students and parents desires to “be Māori”, desires that were made very clear in their narratives of experience (Bishop & Berryman, 2006). However it must be stressed that fundamental to the development of discursive classrooms that include Māori students, is the understanding that deficit theorising by teachers must be challenged. Deficit theorising will not be addressed unless there are more effective partnerships between Māori students and their teachers within the classrooms of mainstream schools. This understanding applies equally to those parenting Māori students. Once these aspects are addressed, the culture of the child can be brought to the learning context with all the power that has been hidden for so long.

This model constitutes the classroom as a place where young people’s sense-making processes are incorporated and enhanced, where the existing knowledge’s of young people are seen as ‘acceptable’ and ‘official’, in such a way that their stories provide the learning base from whence they can branch out into new fields of knowledge through structured interactions with significant others. In this process the teacher interacts with students in such a way (storying and re-storying) that new knowledge is co-created. Such a classroom will generate totally different interaction patterns and educational outcomes from a classroom where knowledge is seen as something that the teacher makes sense of and then passes onto students and will be conducted within and through a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations (Bishop, 2006), wherein self-determining individuals interact with one another within non-dominating relations of interdependence

(B) School and System wide influences

Introduction

This section of the review seeks to identify how Māori student achievement can be improved at both school and system-wide levels. The model (see table 1.1) suggests that, at the school level, there needs to be: a focus on improving all Māori student achievement across the school; a new pedagogy of relations developed across all classrooms that should inform relations and interactions at all levels in school and community relations; time and space created for the development of new institutions

within the school, and structures such as timetables need to support this reform; leadership that is responsive to the needs of the reform, pro-active in setting targets and goals and distributed to allow power sharing; a means whereby all staff can join the reform and for parents and community to be included into the reform; a means whereby in-school facilitators and researchers are able to use appropriate instruments to monitor the implementation of the reform so as to provide data for formative and summative purposes; a means whereby the whole school, including the BOT can take ownership of the reform. Ownership is seen when there has been a culture shift so that teacher learning is central to the school and systems, structures and institutions are developed to support teacher learning, in this way both culturalist and structuralist issues are addressed at the school level.

The third column in Table 1.1 concerns the need for system-wide reform where there needs to be: a national policy focus on raising achievement of Māori students and reducing disparities; a means whereby pre-service teacher education is aligned with in-service professional development so that each supports the other in implementing new pedagogies; a review of funding so that salaries for facilitators needs to be built into schools' staffing allocations and schooling organisations to provide ongoing, interactive and embedded reform; national level support and professional development for leaders to promote distributed leadership models; collaboration between policy funders, researchers and practitioners; national level support for evaluation and monitoring that is ongoing, interactive and that informs policy; national level support for integrated Research and Professional Development that provides data for formative and summative purposes; national ownership of the problem and the provision of sufficient funding and resources to see solutions in a defined period of time and in an ongoing, embedded manner.

This section of the review now considers how such a pattern of factors can be implemented at school and system-wide levels.

The New Zealand Government and Ministry of Education's Goals for Education.

The association between ethnicity and achievement has long been considered one of the most significant challenges facing the education system (Biddulph, 2003; Brash, 2004). The New Zealand government and the Ministry of Education have set out in their strategic agenda document for the next decade (Ministry of Education, 2004), a means whereby the New Zealand education system will be able to address this challenge through their strategic educational aims of improving student achievement and reducing

disparities. The New Zealand position is concerned that international achievement studies such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), (among others e.g. TIMSS, PIRLS), indicates that while New Zealand has a good education system where students exhibit high average achievement by international standards, New Zealand has one of the world's widest gaps between our highest and lowest achievers. That is, "we have a system in which too many students, especially those from low socio-economic backgrounds or who are Māori or Pasifika, are not receiving the value from education that they should, and are not doing as well as they should" (Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 5). As a result, the New Zealand government's policy, as stated by the Ministry of Education, "is to raise achievement and reduce disparity across the whole education system on a sustainable basis" (p. 5). It is argued that in addressing the central concern for educational disparities, we will create the conditions whereby New Zealand citizens will be able to exhibit tolerance and respect for others, both here and overseas.

The Ministry of Education (2004) has identified three areas that will receive special support and attention over the next decade in order to address these aims of raising achievement and reducing disparity. The first is quality teaching. "The research is unambiguous – effective teaching is the single biggest influence over a student's learning and success. Good teaching is powerful and can offset many factors that can exert a negative influence in a student's life" (p. 5). The second is to support families and communities to play a greater part in the education of their children. "Supportive families and communities are also powerful influences on learning outcomes. The better the formal learning environment respects and affirms the learner's home environment and community, and incorporates this into the learning process, the higher the level of likely achievement" (p. 5). The third means of improving learning outcomes is to support quality providers that are first and foremost, focused on student achievement. "We need to help create a culture of professional debate and provide professional support that helps make a real difference for students" (p.5).

The MOE statement of intent continues to identify that ensuring achievement levels are maintained and improved we need an education system which: has a broad view of quality and relentlessly strives to increase the achievement and learning of all learners throughout their lives; recognises the importance of rapid increases in new knowledge, new technologies and the ability to use and apply that knowledge and technology; encompasses growing global influences; better prepares people to keep investing in their

own learning and personal development in a society that will change and become more diverse.

In particular, reducing disparity means reducing the gaps between our highest and lowest achievers while raising overall levels of achievement. It is about every individual being given the encouragement, support and opportunity to realise their education potential regardless of their social or cultural background, their location or individual needs.

The gaps between our highest and lowest achieving students are evident in: truancy, suspension and participation rates which identify groups who are disengaged from our education system; young children missing out on the opportunity to participate in quality early childhood education; too many learners leaving schools and tertiary education without qualifications; Māori and Pasifika learners and people from low socio-economic backgrounds receiving less value from education and being over represented among students who underachieve; learners with special education needs and people for whom English is a second language are other groups which evidence suggests are achieving at a lower level than they ought to.

Primary schools' focus on improving Māori achievement: Setting school-wide goals

At the school level, to the Education Review Office, this means that schools, as one of the major change agents in society, need to address this national imperative, in particular noting that “[t]he level of Māori student achievement is the ultimate measure of how effectively schools are responding to the needs of Māori students” (Education Review Office, 2006, p. 7).

According to Timperley (2003), if the improvement of Māori student achievement is the desired objective, then it is vital that clear goals pertaining to improving Māori student achievement are set at a school level, that measurable targets are set and that any professional development is judged as effective according to measured improvements in achievement of the target group. Timperley, Fung, Wilson and Barar (2006) elaborate on this point by emphasising that professional development needs to incorporate specific achievement goals that use achievement information as a basis for guiding teaching practice and the development of what they term ‘positive professional learning environments’. This statement is based on a detailed synthesis of best evidence of what constitutes effective professional learning opportunities that will deepen teachers’ understandings and refine their skills. Based on their preliminary

synthesis of 30 studies showing positive outcomes of professional development for student achievement, Timperley et al (2006) have identified the importance of developing explicit and shared focus and goals at a school level. Guskey (2002) also explains that schools must commence teacher professional development with the desired result, improved levels of achievement for all children, firmly to the fore. The nature of that achievement must be clearly defined, for example, to improve children's reading comprehension.

Effective use of formative assessment is essential to the development of suitable child-centred goals. Formative assessment involves the teacher systematically acquiring the information that is needed to help children advance their learning from one point to the next. For example, in their book *Unlocking formative assessment* Clarke, Timperley and Hattie (2003) describe practical classroom techniques especially applicable to the New Zealand primary school classroom.

Having effective means of gathering and recording results, according to Schmoker (1999), is necessary because being able to see the achievement patterns of students is the major motivator for both teachers and students to continue to pursue educational attainment. In a New Zealand context Timperley and Parr (2004) draw the connection between formative assessment and student achievement. They argue that, in fact, "the evidence teachers collect should drive the teaching process". It is not, therefore, surprising that they caution against a perceived tendency "for teaching to become curriculum driven, rather than being driven by what the students know and are able to do, and what they need to learn next" (p. 96). As Earl and Katz (2006), explain, it is the development of schools and classrooms as "data-rich" environments that is one of the major keys to school improvement. Indeed, as Hall and Hord (2006) identify, data management is at the centre of the major paradigm shift that is currently occurring in education, from the situation in the past where decisions were based on best judgments by teachers, where according to Earl and Katz (2006) "[t]hey did so using a combination of political savvy, professional training, logical analysis, and intimate and privileged knowledge of the context. " (p. 1). The shift now is towards a situation where Guskey (1986), explains, for most teachers, becoming better at the job is measured by improvements in the achievement levels of the children whom they teach and probably more importantly, by teachers knowing how they got there. This means that schools need to develop systematic and standardised means of gathering appropriate data about student achievement levels and improvements over time. Specific goals should be set

with reference to what is already known about children's capabilities, and knowledge and skill gaps. This is the connection between assessment of what has been and what ought to be taught next. One should then establish, on the basis of authoritative research evidence, the teaching practices most likely to be conducive to reaching the desired outcome.

However, it is somewhat problematic for the achievement of the government's goals to improve Māori student achievement and reduce disparities that ERO found in 2004 that only 35% of primary schools had engaged in teacher professional development aimed specifically at improvements in Māori achievement. Further, in 2006, ERO found in their evaluation of how effectively mainstream schools were meeting the needs of Māori that the weakest area of performance for schools was evaluating the impact of programmes focused on improving Māori student achievement, and that only a quarter of schools were using achievement data for Māori students effectively. These findings support Hill's (2002) contention that "in many classrooms the drive to collect school-wide information overpowers the use of assessment to improve learning" (p. 113). Equally problematic, Hill points out, is the tendency to confuse assessment with monitoring by way of ticking off curriculum objectives on a checklist suggesting that perhaps many teachers have difficulty prioritising "assessment for formative purposes" in an environment where "technicist and accountability discourses" are especially influential (p. 120).

b) Supporting the Institutionalisation of the reform within the school

Reform elements must be institutionalized within school structures in order for the reform to be initiated and to be sustained for as Coburn (2003) suggests "schools that successfully implement reforms find it difficult to sustain them in the face of competing priorities, changing demands, and teacher and administrator turnover" (p. 6).

Coburn (2003) identifies that this challenge is especially strong for externally developed reforms where initial implementation typically involves short-term influxes of high-energy professional developers, extra resources and funding along with high levels of interest from neighbouring schools. However, once the initial thrust and interest dies down it is essential that a means whereby the reform is sustained has been built into the reform from the very outset; an essential task for schools participating in attempts to address educational inequalities. As was identified in Part 1 of this review, it is important

initially that the project contains a means of transferring the knowledge that is fundamental to the reform to sufficient depth because teachers who have a deep understanding of the pedagogical principles of a reform

are better able to respond to new demands and changing contexts in ways that are consistent with underlying principles of reform, thus sustaining and, at times, deepening reform over time. (Coburn, 2003, p. 6)

However, while this may be a necessary condition for sustainability, it might not be sufficient because while classrooms are the most effective sites for educational reform, (Alton-Lee, 2003) it is also vital to remember that classrooms are situated in and inextricably linked to the broader school and its systems and are also agents of the wider society. However, while patterns of discrimination and inequality that exist in the wider society may well be reflected in the arrangements of the school (McLaren, 2003), this need not necessarily be an absolute limitation on the teacher's or the school's potential for change. It does however, suggest the need for reform to include the systemic level for, as Coburn (2003) suggests that teachers are better able to implement and sustain change when there are "mechanisms in place at multiple levels of the system to support their efforts" (p. 6). That is, teachers are further strengthened in their ability to sustain change if it is supported by a broader systemic focus on reform at school and this is reflected further at national levels. This is because organisational structures can at once support and guide teachers towards a desired outcome and numerous studies illustrate how in this way, seemingly immutable circumstances can be overcome.

As a result, reform initiatives need to include, as part of the reform process, a means of institutionalising the elements of the reform within the school and this must be supported and where necessary funded by national agencies and national policy. The reform must commence with this goal clearly in the forefront of everybody's mind; the reform must not be promoted or seen as an adjunct to existing systems, but rather as a means of reforming the integral elements of the structure of the school, so that they become part of the everyday life of the institution and the institution would be lesser for their removal. In this way, the reform must include a means whereby the benefits of the reform can remain once the reforms mature and the initial energy, personnel and funding disappears.

This chapter will now consider a means of institutionalising reform in schools: the creation of a culture of change within the school through the development of and institutionalization of professional learning communities.

The development of a culture of change through institutionalization of professional learning communities.

An important aspect of implementing and sustaining reform is the development of a culture of change so that the reform is accepted by teachers as a core aspect of the school's daily routine (Elmore, Peterson & McCarthey, 1996). In this way, school-based professional development can develop capacity to respond immediately to newly identified classroom needs. Structural impediments to change can be more quickly identified and solutions determined where the professional development is located at the point of implementation.

School organization, while by no means the only influence on how teachers teach, is seen by many advocates of teaching for understanding as a key variable in determining teachers' capacities to engage in new, more ambitious practices. (Elmore, et al, 1996, p. 6)

The New American Schools project found that the potential for sustained change is enhanced when the 'culture of school systems' is integrated with the objective of change and when the focus of professional development is not on 'the quick fix of the day' but on 'practices driven by results and continuous improvement' (Berends, Bodily & Kirby, 2004).

The linking of all professional development to the school's annual plan with the reform at the core of the plan would signal its importance to teachers and its priority to those responsible for allocating the professional development budget. All other professional development should support the reform and be linked to its objective: the increased achievement of the selected children. Successful implementation and sustainability are further dependent on the diversion of national financial support for traditional forms of professional development from those short-term focused activities towards the long-term reform. There are however many stakeholders with potential interest in the perpetuation of traditional professional development. These people also

need to be brought into the conversation to ensure sustainability and to reduce future resistance.

The three main lessons offered by New American Schools are that successful implementation and sustainability depends on continuous evaluation and dissemination of best practice ideas, that schools and teachers need assistance and help in changing, and that investing in schools is a ‘necessary but not sufficient’ requirement for sustained improvement (Berends, et al, 2004). National regulations, guidelines and policies must also be aligned with these objectives.

The reform must also contain within itself a means of enhancing systemic capacity to sustain and motivate high-quality teaching throughout a teacher’s career. This requires ‘norms of continuous improvement’ (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991) to entrench themselves in the school culture.

The culture of the school can tend towards the encouragement of ongoing teacher learning and the rejection of the view Rosenholtz (1989) found in ‘learning impoverished’ schools where teacher learning is ‘terminal’, culminating in the acquisition of a set of easily defined skills and an easily defined stagnant knowledge base. In contrast, reforms need to encourage teachers “to define professional growth as sustained, where new skills and practices may be filed into an ever-expanding portfolio that pliantly accommodates diverse student needs as contextual differences arise.” (Rosenholtz, 1989, p. 98).

The influence of the individual teacher is profound. They have the power to promote or to obstruct change. Professional development must therefore be relevant to the specific needs of teachers. Yet sustainable professional development is not just an individual process. It requires a momentum of its own: a momentum that is more powerful than the individual and that is not dependent solely on any one individual for its success. The influence of any professional developers from within the school is therefore significant and succession planning for any such position is fundamental to sustainability.

In particular, the school environment must support the professional development objectives. “The key is to find the optimal mix of individual and organizational processes that will contribute to success in particular contexts” (Guskey, 1994, p. 46). Professional development must also recognise that ‘teaching challenges do not remain static’ (Timperley et al, 2006, 2) and that teachers need to be willing to become professional learners (Timperley, et al, 2006).

The three main outcomes of a professional development programme ought to be “change in the classroom practice of teachers, changes in their beliefs and attitudes, and change in the learning outcomes of students” (Guskey, 1986, p. 6). Changes in teaching practice and teacher beliefs should be enduring. Teachers need to be convinced of the need for change. While new practices and ideas can be taught, they need to be believed if they are to have an on-going impact on classroom practice. Professional development is a ‘deliberate activity’ planned to alter teachers’ beliefs about specific pedagogic or subject related points (Guskey, 1986). Often, however, teachers’ beliefs will not change until after they have seen positive impact on children’s achievement (Guskey, 1986). Teacher beliefs and attitudes are shaped by classroom experiences. Their “views of their potency or otherwise in relation to student achievement often stem from years of experiencing the day to day triumphs and disappointments of teaching and from justifying their continuing role in schools” (Thrupp et al, 2003, p. 473). This represents an ideological barrier to the success of school reform projects.

Teacher’s beliefs, and sense of self-efficacy are, however, likely to change in the event that success is enjoyed following a professional development intervention (Guskey, 1986; Schmoker, 1999). This view was borne out in the Ministry of Education’s *Te Kauhua* project, for example, where 69% of participation teachers believed that their involvement in this professional development had better equipped them to help raise Māori achievement (Tuuta, et al, 2004).

Effective professional development should recognise that change can be a difficult process and that it best takes place gradually. Teachers need to receive regular feedback on the impact of their new learning on children’s achievement. There should be ongoing support to teachers, to recognise that learning is a process, not a single event (Guskey, 1986). Guskey argues that teachers need to be provided with regular feedback on the progress of the children they teach. Huberman explains, with respect to a professional development reading programme, that:

the first six months of program implementation were characterized by high anxiety and confusion among most teachers. Then came a period in which anxiety was reduced but teachers continued to have problems relating specific teaching behaviours to the underlying rationale of the new. After six months, the majority of teachers had cognitively mastered the individual pieces of... [the program], but still had “little sense of integration of separate parts or, more globally, why certain skills or exercises are related to specific outcomes. Concern for understanding the structure and rationale of the program grew as

behavioural mastery over its parts was achieved (Huberman, cited in Guskey, 1986, p. 8).

McIntyre, Pedder and Rudduck (2005) integrated pupil consultation into classroom practice for teachers of Year 8 classes in three British secondary schools. Six teacher case studies were completed using pupil interviews as a forum for providing ideas to teachers. The dominant themes in students' interviews about what was conducive to learning included an interactive approach to teaching that provided variety to account for the various ways in which students learn, contextualising learning in ways that connect prior experiences and knowledge to new ideas and learning, fostering student agency and ownership and creating contexts for collaborative learning. Interviews were also conducted with teachers in response to pupil ideas. Teachers' responses to students' suggestions ranged from enthusiastic to defensive, for the most part, ruling out suggestions that were judged to be inaccurate, impractical or would not benefit all students learning; and selecting suggestions to implement that mostly reaffirmed things they already did or extended practices that were already part of their teaching repertoire.

Data was gathered over a six week period from teachers and pupils to see whether pupil ideas had been implemented in the classroom and follow up interviews with teachers were conducted approximately six months later to see what practices had been sustained. Teachers implemented students' suggestions with varying degrees of success and endurance. Those who did this most successfully saw consultation as a valuable opportunity to learn from students, were willing to extend their teaching practice and attempted to integrate consultation into everyday practice. McIntyre et al (2005), propose that innovations and reform will be accepted and implemented more effectively when they are supported either from within or outside the school and where there is real commitment to the innovation. McIntyre et al (2005), also posit that any consultation depends on respect, trust and collaboration between students and teachers.

Sustainable professional development begins with the individual, but also requires organisational change to ensure that school routines do not simply accommodate the professional development, but that the reform instead becomes a central component of routine. Yet organisational change alone is not a guarantee of teacher change and improved learning outcome for the child because evidence is scant that such structural change leads in any reliable way to changes in how teachers teach, what they teach, or how students learn (Guskey, 1995). This reinforces the need for the reform to encourage

the agency of teachers to focus on what they, themselves, can do in their classrooms to improve Māori children's achievement, whilst at the same time institutionalizing means of supporting teacher change.

Leithwood, Jantzi & Fernandez (1994) argue the importance of teachers setting and working towards personal goals to the likelihood of sustainable reform. The implication of this for reform schools is that there must be an alignment of staff goals with the reform pedagogy and that sustainable implementation of the project requires the recruitment and retention of staff who can provide such alignment. Schools need to institutionalize their recruitment and retention programmes to meet this end. Their research also concludes that the reform goal is more likely to be achieved if it is clearly understood and if teachers are convinced that it is achievable. The extent to which the school's goal setting process is perceived as 'participatory' and 'dynamic' is also a useful predictor of sustainable change (Leithwood, et al, 1994). The entrenchment of the reform into school culture in this way is also likely to strengthen the goal of improving for example Māori achievement against changes in government policy, and resistance from outside. Strengthening the capacity of teachers to set the agenda for change is necessary because it is intended that eventually the primary source of professional advice is not from the outside, usually government funded expert, but the teacher's professional colleagues in the workplace.

However, there are warnings about undertaking too much in the way of reform at any one time. Guskey (1995), for example argues that "there is no easier way to sabotage change efforts than to take on too much at one time" (p. 119). He warns that

the magnitude of change persons are asked to make is inversely related to their likelihood of making it. Professionals at all levels generally oppose radical alterations to the present procedures. (p. 119)

Therefore the sustainability of the reform depends in part upon teacher willingness to engage seriously in ongoing development of new pedagogic knowledge. It requires sound and deep theoretical understanding of different approaches to classroom practice and a commitment to ongoing professional interactions. If the reform and its associated meetings and commitments are peripheral to every day school life, then the project will never be sustainable. If however it is the centre of school routine then it is well placed to have significant impact. It is therefore essential that when considering the schools into which the reform might expand that primary consideration is given to the

school's capacity and willingness to organise its administration and adopt a culture around the project. Central to this consideration is the quality of leadership within the school and within its Board of Trustees.

Initially, however the translation of newly learned concepts into classroom practice under “unique on-the-job conditions is an uneven process that requires time and extra effort, especially when beginning” (Guskey, 1995, p.123). Guskey (1995) argues that during this transitional phase:

Support coupled with pressure... is vital for continuation. Support allows those engaged in the difficult process of implementation to tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures. Pressure is often necessary to initiate change among those whose self-impetus for change is not great. (p. 123)

He continues:

What makes the early stages of implementation so complicated is that the problems encountered at this time are often multiple, pervasive, and unanticipated... regardless of how much advanced planning or preparation takes place, it is when professionals actually implement the new ideas or practices that they have the most specific problems and doubts (p. 123).

There is a danger that teachers will see the reform as just another fashion which like all other perceived fashions will be short-lived and soon replaced by another. This is because:

More so than any other profession, education seems fraught with innovation. Each year new programs are introduced in schools without any effort to show how they relate to the ones that came before or those that may come afterward. Furthermore, there is seldom any mention of how these various innovations contribute to a growing professional knowledge base. The result is an enormous overload of fragmented, uncoordinated, and ephemeral attempts at change (Guskey, 1995, p. 124)

Collaborative approaches to school change can reduce resistance because teachers are less likely to feel detached or isolated from change. Nevertheless Guskey (1995) cautions that “elaborate needs assessments, endless committee and task-force debates, and long and tedious planning sessions often create confusion and alienation in the absence of any action” (p.121). Therefore it is important that support provided to teachers is “linked to established norms of continuous improvement and

experimentation, and these norms then guide professional development efforts” (Guskey, 1995, p. 121).

Implementation and sustainability are enhanced where structures and procedures are explicitly and demonstrably focused on supporting change. This requires policy makers and administrators/leaders, at both school and national levels, to adopt a broad and long-term approach to project implementation and evaluation because although there is not a causal link between the length of a professional development programme and its effectiveness, there is a substantial body of evidence to suggest that ‘sustained and intensive professional development is more likely to be of high quality, as reported by teachers, than is shorter professional development (Garet, Birman, Porter, Desmoine & Herman, 1999).

The recent evaluation (Higgins, 2007) of the role of in-school facilitators in effectively implementing professional development found that these skilled and knowledgeable people are essential to support the implementation and sustainability of two educational reform programmes, Te Kauhua and Te Kotahitanga. Indeed, the ongoing and seemingly immutable nature of the educational disparities that these programmes seek to address makes it of national importance that they remain active and productive in schools. Higgins (2007) found that at the school level, it is essential that a permanent position of professional development facilitator becomes confirmed within project schools so as to sustain the gains made so far in these schools. Implications of this finding for policy makers at a system level are those proposed by Fullan (2005), Hall and Hord (2006) and Hargreaves (2006) who clearly understand from their considerable experience and analyses that policy makers should identify effective reform initiatives through robust qualitative and quantitative means and then continue to support these initiatives on an ongoing basis so that they become normal and embedded into the system and culture of the schools. For example, just as schools are funded for maths teachers and guidance teachers, because presumably there is agreement that such positions are necessary, so there needs to be an allocated fund for professional development facilitators so that the reform remains in the school. The evidence is clear from Hall and Hord (2006) among others, that removal of the funding for example from the professional development facilitators will mean the end of the project and the waste of all the money expended on the project to date.

A further study, at a national level, by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education argues that successful implementation, sustainability and going to scale

requires the use of all policy levers available to the state to promote and give incentive for participation in the professional development initiative, for example, connecting it to teacher remuneration, promotion, registration and re-registration, and formal higher qualifications. There is a need for a range of initiatives to recruit and retain talented teachers, increase teachers' knowledge and skills, and motivate greater effort, more learning, or different practices on the part of teachers (Darling-Hammond, Cobb & Bullmaster, 1998).

Smylie, Wenzel and Fendt (2003), in Chicago, support this analysis by suggesting that sustainable school development is more likely where there is a "coordinated focus on multiple essential supports", for example "school leadership, teacher professional community, parent and community involvement, student-centred learning climate, high-quality instruction, social trust, and instructional program coherence." (p. 146)

Whatever the case, the message for national policy makers is that, once a reform project is proven to be successful in addressing the goals that were established in the first place, then it is important to see it as an integral part of schooling and no longer as an adjunct. The project becomes a programme, and then becomes a normal part of what schools are funded for. The message is clear, unless this essential step takes place, unless the project becomes funded as part of the normal part of school's ongoing core business, then the project and its goals will always remain peripheral to the schools' business and the national goals of addressing educational disparities will always remain as goals and not be realised.

Some warnings are necessary about the type of programmes that are to be funded in this ongoing manner. Policy makers and educational reformers need to be mindful that developing reform projects in schools, while seeming to address improving student achievement, may well result in the development of what Timperley, Wiseman and Fung (2003b) term *professional communities of teachers* who solely focus upon themselves and their teaching. If for example, the preoccupation of the project is solely with sequence and working with teachers and the contexts for learning they create, there is no guarantee that student's educational achievement will improve. Timperley et al (2003b), caution that

teachers' levels of motivation to implement new programmes, satisfaction with student achievement and feelings of success are unreliable indicators of the realities of student achievement. (p. 128)

Further, they identify that high quality professional development can assist teachers to acquire new skills and knowledge “but it is the school-based factors that determine whether that knowledge will be focussed on bringing about significant changes in student achievement” (p. 128). In short, a context of an organised, school-wide system for improving teachers learning and classroom practice is a necessary condition for the development of what Timperley et al (2003b) and Nieto (2000) among others term *professional communities of learners* where evidence-based learning, participation and achievement are the goals and that the former does not outweigh the latter.

Schools are traditionally dominated by norms of privacy, therefore the cultural change from schools being a collectivity of relatively isolated practitioners to one of a collegial, professional learning community is significant and requires systematic and ongoing attention to have effect. In addition, the procedures for the institutionalization of the school as a professional learning community must contain their own means of being self-sustaining so that teacher learning becomes continuous and not remain dependent on the ‘outside expert’.

Timperley et al (2003a) found the following characteristics were instrumental in the development and the sustaining of effective professional learning communities.

1. Communities engage in reflective dialogue whereby teachers examine research and link this to practice, developing a shared language, deepening their instructional knowledge and using this research to evaluate and challenge their own assumptions, practices and their consequences. Such communities acknowledge that what we think will effect what we do, and how well we will do in the future.
2. Communities maintain a collective focus on student learning and achievement where data are used to reflect on the effectiveness of teaching, to discuss individual rates of progress, to bench mark and to make decisions about the next learning steps;
3. Communities collaborate and teachers share expertise in order to critically examine practices, evidence of student participation and achievement and develop skills and knowledge to engage in joint planning of future goals and strategies.
4. Practices are de-privatised, teachers learn from peer coaching, structured observations and the sharing of classroom data, that is from dialogue, interaction and feedback from colleagues.

5. Values and expectations about learning and achievement are shared. That's collectively agreed to professional beliefs so that there is a collective vision of where they are going, what is important, how to achieve what is important and who is responsible for achieving those goals.

In effect therefore,

a professional learning community is one in which teachers update their professional knowledge and skills within the context of an organised, school-wide system for improving teaching practices. In addition, teachers' efforts, individually and collectively, are focused on the goal of improving student learning and achievement and making the school as a whole become a high-performing organisation. (Timperley, et al 2003a, p.3)

The ongoing nature of the professional learning community allows it to support sustainable professional development and to take a long term view of achievement. Successful professional learning communities are also characterised by their ability to identify clear indicators of children's progress, to create and sustain a culture of meeting achievement goals within the school and to ensure that it is achievement (Timperley, et al, 2003a), not fashion or assumptions that determine pedagogy. Successful learning communities make 'achievement the touchstone' of a professional development initiative. (Timperley et al, 2003a)

Another compelling argument for basing teacher decision-making on student data is that, as Timperley (2003) and Rubie-Davies, et al (2006) show, teacher estimates of students' abilities can often be inaccurate and based on factors other than ability. It therefore should follow that the use of assessments in schools should provide information which will inform teaching and assist with improving achievement outcomes to avoid subjective bias.

The professional learning community gives the teacher a context for evaluating and improving his or her practice in a fashion that is more widely informed by a range of evidence, rather than just the teacher's own experience. A strong professional community is also a context where there can be stronger professional accountability.

Teachers who keep themselves up-to-date on current research in their areas of expertise, and who do their best to apply known best practices, are, in an important sense, more accountable to their profession than teachers who shut the door and teach what they have always taught, as they have taught it. Similarly, professional accountability is at play when teachers share their knowledge with others, invite

review of their instructional strategies, and willingly speak out when their professional judgement tells them they must. (Goldberg & Morrison, 2003, p. 79)

In a professional learning community one pedagogic style cannot be preferred over another because achievement is the sole criterion for the determination of teaching method. In Timperley et al.'s (2003a) study, data were used to prompt change in teaching practice where it was found that a particular teaching method was not working for a child.

In their research on sustaining a programme for the improvement of the teaching of reading to 5 and 6 year olds Timperley et al (2003) found that achievement information was used by classroom teachers to inform their teaching practice by assisting them to monitor constantly the effectiveness of that practice. When necessary, teachers were then able to adjust their teaching methodology to ensure that the learning needs of the child were being addressed. By using both formative and summative assessment to guide the single objective, improving children's achievement, teachers received timely and regular information on the effect of their efforts.

In this way, like Schmoker (1999) explains, if teachers are able to see a direct positive impact of new approaches to teaching on achievement outcomes then the prospect of sustainability is enhanced because "successful actions are reinforcing and likely to be repeated... practices that are new and unfamiliar will be accepted and retained when they are perceived as increasing one's competence and effectiveness" (Guskey, 1995, p. 121).

The reform initiative also needs to incorporate training in the collection and analysis of student achievement data as part of the overall professional development programme for teachers. Part of this approach would see the school providing opportunities to learn in collegial fashion that is "linked to solving authentic problems defined by the gaps between goals for student achievement and actual student performance" (Hawley & Valli, 1999, p. 127)

Pre-Service Teacher Education.

Elmore and Burney (1996), and Bishop (2007) suggest that pre-service teacher education programmes need to emulate those practices outlined for implementation in schools, that is pre-service teachers should be organised into professional learning communities so that they are able to become familiar with formative assessment in a way

that they are able to collaboratively analyse the multitude of data that are routinely collected about children to inform their practice. Indeed, the paradigm shift that Hall and Hord (2006) speak of requires of teachers and teacher educators that they understand how to engage in critical reflection on student learning that is evidence-based rather than assumption-based. That is, there is an expectation that data in a variety of forms will inform educators' problem-solving in a manner that enables them to change their practice in response to evidence of student learning.

As Bishop (2007) suggests, the implications of this position for teacher educators is that they need to ascertain if they and their students are able to use data to identify how minoritized student's participation and learning is improving; data such as students' experiences of being minoritised, student participation, absenteeism, suspensions, on-task engagement and student achievement. Such data is then able to be used in a formative manner so that appropriate changes can be made to teachers' practice in response to students' schooling experiences and progress with respect to learning.

Pre-service programmes that are conducted at universities are well placed to support ongoing teacher learning and to overcome reluctance to use data and undertake the paradigm shift identified by Hall and Hord (2006) by developing a programme and culture of teacher research because teacher research "is a way of organising professional development in such a way that it remains closely related to what teachers acknowledge as their domain of professional autonomy" (Tillema & Imants, 1995, p. 142).

Introducing such practices at both the pre and in-service levels would allow the reform and its associated paradigm shift to become self-monitoring on a day-to-day basis. The research may also enhance the status of the reform because it would be "closely related to meaningful school development in which there is a close connection among development, reflection, professionalization, and school renewal" (Tillema & Imants, 1995, p. 146).

It is known that 'teaching consists of a repertoire of behaviours or teaching methods and... student learning follows more or less directly from the frequency with which teachers use specific behaviours or apply a specific method' (Nuthall, 2004, p. 286). There is, therefore, a need to 'translate... outcomes-linked evidence into policy and into teacher education in ways that fairly represent what is actually known from the research and attends to the needs of teachers and policy-makers' (Alton-Lee, 2006, p. 623).

By way of caution however Goldberg and Morrison (2003) warn that these potential benefits do not come automatically and that harmful effects of using for example standardized tests can offset them, if these are not managed. They warn that teachers must understand the statistical concepts necessary to interpret test results, must be able to interpret results within the context of other data, and they must work in an environment in which such results are taken seriously. They argue that the judicious use of standardized testing is more likely to occur where there exists a strong professional community which examines data “with a good mix of curiosity and scepticism” (Goldberg & Morrison, 2003, p. 73).

In response to these notions, Bishop (2007) notes that there is an increasing demand from various sectors of the profession for increased relevance between pre-service education and in-service education, professional development, teaching practice and research. This is further exacerbated by international research that identifies that there is little if any linkage between pre-service teacher education and in-service practice and by the perceived hierarchies within the education sector (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005).

Bishop (2006) also reports that from experiences in Te Kotahitanga, an added problem is that teacher educators, teacher support staff, school teachers, and educational researchers tend to suggest that what they are doing is sufficient, necessary and adequate, in contrast to the functioning of those people in every other sector. In other words, what is happening in their patch is fine; it is all those other people who are not doing a good enough job. Similar findings have been made by Prochnow and Kearney (2002) in a study they conducted about the effect of suspensions on student learning. They found that all the groups of people involved with the students tended to blame others for the problems the students faced and were less likely to implicate themselves in the problem identification process.

To make matters worse, these notions are supported by the process that teacher educators have devised to review their programs, that is, by peer review. These reviews do not usually include their client groups, or if they do, it is in a prescribed manner thus limiting the type of critique that would be useful in reforming teacher education programs so that their graduates would be able to address the learning needs of minoritised peoples.

Other problems that are voiced about teacher education by those in other sectors include the increasing concern about the frailty of the ‘silo’ model for preparing pre-

service teachers and the continued criticism of tertiary teacher education providers from their graduates, their profession, the public and the media. A means of addressing these criticisms is needed urgently.

One example of the problematic response to criticism is found in a recent survey of teacher preparedness that was conducted by the Education Review Office (2004). The report, which was critical of the preparedness of beginning secondary and primary teachers, was met with criticism by teacher educators and researchers alike about the process whereby this finding was attained, rather than the finding itself, or at least the problems that the survey was indicating could be present. What is of concern is that this reaction did not reenergize the debate, but rather killed the conversation, despite many teachers and schools voicing concern. Recent observations of 422 teachers in Te Kotahitanga (Bishop et al, 2007), 60% of whom had been to teacher education institutions in the past five years, showed that while they wanted to teach in ways they had learnt while at their college of education, they were in fact teaching in a very traditional manner in their first year of teaching. When surveyed, these teachers stated that they were keen to implement a wide and effective range of interaction types. That is, to actively engage their students in the lessons use the prior knowledge of students, use group learning processes, provide academic feedback, involve students in planning lessons, demonstrate their high expectations, stimulate critical questioning, recognize the culture of students and so on. However, detailed, measured observations of their classrooms showed that 86% of their interactions were of a traditional nature where they were engaged in the transmission of pre-determined knowledge, monitoring to see if this knowledge had been passed on and giving behavioural feedback in order to control the class. Only 14% of their classroom interactions allowed them an opportunity to create learning relationships to which they initially aspired. In short, despite their aspirations to the contrary, the dominant classroom interactions remained active teacher and passive students. This might signal the pervasiveness of transmission education, in which case we could blame the schools and their insistence on transmitting a pre-set curriculum. However, it might also indicate the lack of student preparedness and the reliance upon the school for practical training, in which case teacher educators could well take notice of the ERO survey and Te Kotahitanga results as a warning that their graduates may be facing problems of classroom implementation of interactive approaches. In other words, these findings might signal the need for pre-service teachers to integrate the theory and practice of teaching and learning (using evidence of behaviour as teachers and student

achievement for formative purposes) in a systematic manner so that they can practice what they learn.

One way this might happen is for pre-service teachers to receive objective analysis and feedback of their classroom interactions in an ongoing manner upon which they critically reflect in a collaborative, problem-solving setting. This means that pre-service teachers will need to learn to use evidence of student participation and achievement to inform their practice, (to change classroom interaction patterns for instance) and the relationship between teacher education institutions and schools will need to change dramatically.

Structural support

Little (1999) argues that “teacher learning is supported in schools that institutionalise teachers’ individual and collective responsibility for student achievement and well-being, and make inquiry into student learning a cornerstone of professional development” (p. 235) For Timperley et al. (2003a) these schools held regular structured meetings to focus on teaching strategies for children whose progress was not at the expected rate. These meetings were held with a sense of urgency and were supported and facilitated by senior teachers working with other teachers in their classrooms to assist them in developing new strategies for these children. School wide commitment to the urgency and centrality of structured and focused meetings of the professional learning community was found to be essential.

Rosenholtz (1989) identified facilitated goal setting at both the individual and at the group (PLC) levels as being central criteria for improving school performance and as essential to teachers’ learning. Goal setting and learning are inextricably linked because clearly articulated goals “underscore norms of school renewal; that teachers are expected to learn on a continuous basis” (p. 72).

In this context, teacher learning is guided by children’s needs and teachers should use data that are available to them about children to guide their own professional learning needs, thus creating learning as the focus of schooling at all levels, so that goals direct teacher learning towards identified gaps in effective practice.

To Rosenholtz, structured teacher collaboration is essential for the organisation of teachers’ learning opportunities. Collaboration is important because it helps teachers overcome what can be a ‘professionally orphaned life’ which is detrimental to teacher learning as

with norms of self-reliance militating against requests for, and offers of, assistance, teachers' opportunities for growth in isolated settings are limited almost entirely to trial-and-error learning (Rosenholtz, 1989, p. 73).

Currently, without structured intervention teachers' "opportunities for learning are circumscribed by their own ability to discern problems, develop alternative solutions, choose among them and assess the outcome" (Rosenholtz, 1989, 73).

Sustained whole-school improvement in teaching cannot therefore be an individual enterprise, nor can it be the sum of each teacher's individual enterprise. Instead, "analysis, evaluation, and experimentation in concert with colleagues are conditions under which teachers improve instructionally" (Rosenholtz, 1989, p. 73).

Rosenholtz also identified that school-wide goal setting for teacher learning is beneficial because it establishes for each individual the direction of his or her improvement efforts. Goal setting activities provide a context for review and reflection and for the creation of a unity of purpose. Such an approach also supports and is supported by the professional learning community because "shared goals about teaching render legitimacy, value and support, or, if need be, collective pressure to conform to school norms" (p. 79).

Rosenholz identified a positive correlation between schools that demonstrated 'learning-enriched conditions' and teacher identification of colleagues as their most important source of new teaching ideas. Conversely teachers in 'learning impoverished' environments did not see their colleagues as useful sources of new ideas. Professional reading and participation in professional conferences were further characteristics of 'learning-enriched' schools, which contrasted with the reliance on more easily accessible professional development such as workshops and short courses favoured by teachers in 'learning impoverished' environments.

Where professional development is given a structured, institutional collegial context and focus it can support whole school development because it is capable of involving a substantial, if not the total, number of school staff in problem-solving, student-learning focused professional learning community meetings. For sustainability and taking a reform to scale, it is clear that administrative arrangements conducive to an ongoing professional learning community are a non-negotiable requirement for the sustained implementation of the reform in any school.

Professional development opportunities created to support such innovations at a school level must offer a coherent set of practical ideas which can be implemented in an on-going fashion.

'If professional development efforts that focus on the implementation of innovations are to succeed, they must include precise descriptions of how these innovations can be integrated. That is, each must be presented as part of a coherent framework for improvement' (Guskey, 1999, p. 47).

Ideas for a one-off lesson, or even set of lessons, will not enhance children's achievement over a period of time and over a range of performance measures. Professional development programmes do not effectively occur if they are isolated from the teacher's day-to-day classroom experiences and practices (Guskey, 1986).

Knowledgeable and supportive school leadership

As was noted earlier, the classroom, teachers and teacher-student relationship and interactions are crucial sites for change when attempts are made to improve student achievement and reduce disparities. Similarly, institutional development and structural change are necessary within schools to create contexts wherein student learning can be enhanced. However, if schools are to undergo fundamental change, and that is what is required in order that we address the ongoing disparities in educational outcome, then school leaders must play a key role. As the focus of the reform needs to be on achievement and improving learning, it is necessary that as Hargreaves and Fink (2000) identify

the primary responsibility of all school leaders is to sustain learning. Leaders of learning put learning at the centre of all they do. They put student learning first, and everyone else's learning is directed to supporting student learning. (p. 693)

In this context then, it is incumbent upon school leadership to a) understand what is being promoted by such a reform process and b) be simultaneously responsive and proactive in promoting and supporting the reform through institutional and structural change, and proactively leading the development of a common goal of making the school into a high performing institution in terms of student achievement and learning. However, the realisation of this aspiration is not straightforward. Shields (2003) suggests that in order to create contexts wherein such circumstances can develop, leaders must

exhibit a range of leadership styles; transactional, transformational and above all, transformative leadership. Transactional leadership is that which focuses on the need for organizational transactions, those ‘bargains’ or agreements that staff enter into in order to support the leader’s agenda, in effect the finding of a balance between individual and collective interests so that an effective leader “in today’s complex organizations will pay attention to competing interests and find ways to help each person and group achieve some benefit” (Shields, 2003, p. 11). Transformational leadership is generally concerned with the collective interests of the group, for example in

developing an identifiable shared vision, fostering consensus, setting high performance standards, developing an intellectually stimulating climate, building a productive school climate, and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions. (Shields, 2003, p. 19)

However, while Shields (2003) suggests that both of these stages of leadership are necessary for quality school organisation they do not automatically address issues of equity or social justice. Transformative leadership therefore is that which focuses on the leader’s ability to create the conditions or contexts that release the power of those whom s/he is leading for self-determination. In many ways then, models of reform which seek to realize the power of self-determination of students and teachers in today’s classrooms, and in the relationships between the teachers and the professional developers, also needs to be present in the practices of the leaders in the project as well as within the relationships of those leading the reform initiative and the organization at every level.

Principals as Leaders

Kouzes and Posner (2002) identify five activities that will simultaneously produce transactional, transformational and transformative practices. These activities include: inspiring a shared vision; modelling the way; enabling others to act; challenging the process; encouraging the heart.

1. Inspiring a Shared Vision means communicating the leader’s image of the future. This image may be a specific goal or mission, or general direction for the future. Gaining the prior commitment of students, staff, Board of Trustees, parents and community groups before involvement in the reform is an essential first step. Fundamental to this position is communicating the vision, why it is important, and to

demonstrating personal enthusiasm and commitment to involvement. For example, the use of data on the situation facing Māori students in the school would be used to create a 'sense of urgency' for change and to focus the reform, and taking every opportunity to articulate the vision and to show personal commitment in both formal and informal settings, within and outside of the school.

2. Modelling the Way involves the leader in setting an example by giving clear expression to values and beliefs and demonstrating consistency between values and behaviours. The alignment between the underpinning principles of the reform and the actions of the leaders will strongly affect the success of the implementation of the project and its success in the school.

Modelling the way can include: being an active participant in all aspects of the reform, including teaching; accepting that the leader is also a learner; using reform approaches in settings other than the classroom; building positive learning relationships with staff, students and parents; recognising that everyone learns at a different pace and needs support to do so.

3. Enabling Others to Act involves creating contexts wherein the self-determination of others is able to be realised. It includes involving team members in planning and creating a co-operative and trusting culture of change in the school, one that not only focuses on transformation but also on issues of equity and power relations. Such practices will include the means of choosing other project leaders in the school, how meetings with these other leaders are conducted and how the reform is handled by the collective. In other words, leadership is needed that is capable of creating a context so that other leaders and participants in the reform can demonstrate and implement the leadership and participation that is necessary for the project to run on a daily basis, in such a way that they will realize their own self-determination.

4. Challenging the Process involves a leader challenging the status quo, taking a risk, experimenting, and being creative and innovative. All of these imply risk-taking in that the reform is seeking to change teachers' philosophical positionings and their behaviours over time.

Leaders also need to consider that staff will respond to the reform initiative in a variety of ways. Some will be adapters (those willing to take on the challenge and to begin their own process of exploration and risk-taking), others, adopters (those willing to try providing they get a recipe and support), or laggards (those who want to wait and see

if this is really necessary, and recalcitrants (those who believe the reform does not relate to them. Indeed, they tried it once and it did not work.)

Staff who are committed to the project will want to take risks, they will want to try new approaches, new resources. They will need encouragement and support to be creative and innovative.

The reform will also necessarily question the school's values and culture; and will provide an opportunity to develop some cultural norms which are embraced by staff, students and community focused around a common collaborative vision. It is well to remember that Boards of Trustees and community groups will also need to be involved in this process.

Above all, dramatic change will not occur overnight; an appropriate and acceptable means of identifying incremental change will be a very useful collaborative exercise.

5. Encouraging the Heart involves giving positive feedback to others and taking opportunities to celebrate team achievements. When people feel good, they work at their best; they feel more optimistic about their ability to achieve a goal; they are more creative and their decision-making skills are enhanced. They will also be much more prepared to work co-operatively.

This aspect brings together many of the elements identified in previous sections, for example, demonstrating commitment to the project, working collaboratively and showing trust in the in-school leadership such as an in-school facilitator, providing support. These all contribute to that feeling of well-being. As staff become more confident, and see the positive benefits of involvement in the project emerging, professional satisfaction will improve, the sense of well-being will be enhanced, they will become more creative and prepared to take risks, and the focus of their discussions and work will be increasingly on improving learning within the school. In other words, success breeds success. Principals and other leaders need to identify and celebrate successes as they occur such as changes in student achievement and their behaviours, staff attitudes and practices, and parents' interest and involvement. (Shields, 2003, p. 11)

In the New American Schools project (Berends, et al, 2003), it was found that principal leadership was the single most significant contributing factor to project implementation by the classroom teacher. Among the characteristics of effective principal leadership were the clear expression of expectation, supported by adequate resources, a personal interest in the project's professional development and a willingness

to engage in pedagogic discussion with teachers. The project found a positive correlation between teacher implementation and teacher perception of principal leadership. There were further positive correlations between these factors and improved levels of children's achievement. Implementation was however impeded by high principal turnover even where the new principal was supportive of the new project (Berends, et al, 2003).

In this project principal leadership was enhanced and implementation levels increased where other teachers were included in leadership roles in particular as leaders in the implementation of the professional development. These positions were often credited with the speed with which the project was implemented because they ensured that there was immediate and accessible advice available to teachers (Berends, et al, 2003). Teachers reported that the in-school professional development facilitators were more likely to gain professional respect from their colleagues than were outside advisers because as immediate colleagues they had already demonstrated their professional credibility. Teachers were more likely to accept their advice and also regarded them as a source of motivation (Berends, et al, 2003).

Similarly Farrell (2003) found that in his Comprehensive School Reform programme, Expeditionary Learning, the single most significant predictor of success was the principal's understanding and commitment to the programme, thus underlining the essential role of the school's leader in sustaining the reform in this school. In successful schools that commitment was demonstrated by a willingness to remain in the school and lead the project for five years or more. However, the Chicago Annenberg Challenge found that while principal leadership is critical, principal leadership at the exclusion of all others was ineffective. This project also found that teacher professional learning communities foster successful project implementation where they provide opportunity for reflection, inquiry, collaboration and productive 'intellectual tensions'. Successful schools exhibit orderly conduct, strong school-community relationships, well-placed and coordinated curriculum that extends beyond basic skills to "challenging intellectual work", and where 'instructional time is protected from interruption' (Smylie, Wenzel & Fendt, 2003, p. 142-143). Schools that take a loose attitude towards the protection of instructional time and too readily allow classes to be interrupted for non-urgent and often trivial reasons need to reverse such practices. In Copland's (2003) words, they must

craft a vision, establish school goals, provide intellectual stimulation, offer individualised support, model best practices and important social values, demonstrate high-performance expectations, create productive school culture, and develop structures to foster participation in school decisions. (p. 160)

Copland further suggests that the enormity of this task requires “rethinking leadership in schools... [as] a crucial first step in moving toward shared, ongoing, and sustainable school improvement” (p. 160).

In-school leadership is therefore best not left to just one person, but rather distributed. Leadership is especially important within specific parts of the overall professional learning community, collaborative problem-solving meetings for example, which if thoughtfully led, can increase the school’s capacity to generate its own answers to problems and to become less dependent upon external advice and less vulnerable to changes in the capacity of external sources to provide timely and focused advice. “Giving up the futile search for the [external] silver bullet is the basic precondition for overcoming dependency and for beginning to take actions that do matter” (Fullan, 1998, p. 8)

The professional learning community is necessarily a product of leadership because it will not arise of its own accord. It must be consciously created and thoughtfully and systematically sustained. Goldberg and Morrison (2003) identify a number of ways in which the principal can lead the development and sustainability of a professional learning community: ensure the accessibility to teachers of appropriate professional reading; timetabling meetings of staff as a professional learning community such that these become integral parts of the school’s routine; ensuring that all professional development is directed towards the functioning of the staff as a professional learning community; by providing opportunities for structured observation of highly skilled teachers.

DuFour (1998) argues that sustainable school change, towards a collaborative model of work, such as professional learning communities, requires principals to incorporate those meetings into school routine without additional cost and without closing the school for the duration of the meeting. There are a number of obvious ways of achieving this outcome: ask teachers to spend more time at meetings, reduce the number of meetings or reorder the priorities given to meetings. The former option is likely to meet resistance and may well be inefficient. The second and third requires the placement of the reform at the centre of school routine such that the necessity of each

school meeting might be assessed against its contribution to the reform before placing it on the school's regular meeting cycle. Schools might then consider prioritising meeting agendas for their contribution to reform goals. Such an approach is supported by the growing body of literature which demonstrates that ad hoc professional development does not work, while ongoing systematic collaborative professional development focused on children's achievement is likely to work.

Copland (2003) in The Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC) in San Francisco identified the need for a collaborative focus on leadership. Initially the researchers had found that a missing dimension of school culture was "evidence-based decision making centred on a focused reform effort" (p. 163). Yet the project was able to increase 'moderately or substantially' the usage of evidence data in 92% of its schools.

BASRC's theory of action holds that the important work of reforming schools must be done primarily by schools themselves. Theory suggests a model for leadership less dependent on the actions of singular visionary individuals, but rather one that views leadership as a set of functions or qualities shared across a much broader segment of the school community that encompasses principal, teachers, and other professionals both internal and external to the school. BASRC's overall strategy for promoting leadership uses a school-based cycle of inquiry to inform school reform efforts, and marshals diverse forms of knowledge to support teachers' learning and change (Copland, 2003, p. 163)

Nevertheless, principals remain as significant leaders in certain areas, for example, it is through their influence on staff appointments that principals are able to counter the emergence of anti-reform factions within the school. They can protect and promote the work of reform teachers and ensure that their successes are widely known. Clearly thought out and focused staff selection criteria and procedures are essential to counter resistance and to strengthen and sustain a culture conducive to reform. The expectation that new teachers will participate in the reform and that they will be supported in doing so needs to be explicit before appointments are made. Principals in the BASRC project went so far as to dismiss teachers who obstructed the reform agenda, while those not fully committed to reform were encouraged to leave (Copland, 2003). As the reform expands there develops a cohort of reform focused teachers which could constitute a pool from which principals seriously committed to the programme's success might fill vacancies in their schools. The larger this pool of teachers becomes, the greater contribution it will make to sustainability. Ongoing sustainability would be further

enhanced if the reform is also able to influence pre-service teacher education programmes.

Home-school relationships

The quality of the home-school relationship is a significant factor in influencing student achievement (Anthony & Walshaw, 2007; ERO, 2004), provided that parents have opportunities to participate (ERO, 2004; Mortimore et al, 1989), access to information about their children's learning (ERO, 2004), and that collaboration is focused on student learning (Alton-Lee, 2003). Parental involvement or home-school collaboration provokes a sense of partnership or the sharing of collective values towards a common goal. Schools engaging with families to develop a common set of goals tends to ensure that all children benefit from schooling (Bishop et al, 2003). This position is supported by Durie (2006) who argues that: “[a]lthough many factors influence outcomes, whanau have the power to unleash or alternately diminish potential” (p. 14). Children are not, however, ‘passively shaped by family influences’ (Biddulph et al, 2003, p. 67), meaning that they can also contribute to their own development and as researchers such as Wylie (2001) and Nieto (1994) have pointed out, students can overcome immense personal obstacles and become successful when given opportunities in schooling systems that are culturally inclusive and provide the sorts of relationships and interactions that students find supportive. It is commonly suggested that poverty, abusive or neglectful parents, and various other factors external to the school impede achievement. Again, in terms of systemic impediments, these are certainly significant factors, but they do not make achievement impossible. Indeed, “schools that have made up their minds that their students deserve the chance to learn do find the ways to educate them successfully in spite of what may seem to be overwhelming odds” (Nieto, 1994, p. 394).

In interviews conducted with the whanau of year 9 and 10 students, Bishop, et al, (2003) found that parents were very clear about the importance of good relationships between themselves and the schools.

It is about respect and relationships. Respect and relationships between the staff of the school and the families whose children come here (p 61).

Biddulph (2003) highlights a pattern whereby there are ethnic and socioeconomic differences in parental involvement, that is, the families of students', who might benefit the most, are the least involved. In 2002, ERO reported that parents of students in bilingual or immersion units are more willing to be involved than parents in the mainstream. Parents of Māori students in mainstream classrooms explain this in their own understandings that;

Our children are expected to learn in a school system that has hardly changed from the 1850's, when Māori were given an education based on schools in England...Secondary schools have hardly done anything to involve parents...because the secondary schools think they know what is best for the education of the children there. (Bishop & Berryman, 2006, p. 61)

Parents in these interviews also indicated they were aware that external causes were often used by schools to explain Māori student underachievement and knowing that the blame was usually directed towards the home, made parents feel unwelcome at the school. These interviews also confirm that Māori parents often felt unsure about how to get involved in their child's schooling.

Biddulph et al (2003) concluded that genuine home-school partnerships can improve student achievement significantly; however the success of such collaborations depends upon families being treated with dignity and respect, with such collaborations adding to family practices, not undermining them. As shown by Edwards and Warin (1999), it may be that schools are imposing their values on parents rather than valuing real contributions they can make.

Edwards and Warin (1999) examined whether parental involvement, at worst operated as a guise for "asserting school values over those of parents and at best concerted efforts at whistling in the dark. If it is the latter, why do schools bother?" (p. 328) After four years in an initiative focusing on raising literacy and numeracy achievement through parental involvement, 60 past and present participants from 46 schools were interviewed in order to examine the rationales offered by primary schools for the time they have invested in parental involvement.

Thematic responses in schools' rationales for parental involvement were predominantly school led, in the order of asking parents to act as agents of the school, to support what schools are doing, to support the ethos and values of the school, to make parents aware of the demands on teachers. A second theme consisted of developing self

esteem of parents as educators, making students and parents feel valued but with an emphasis on changing parents. Involvement from the schools' perspective had little to do with partnership or parental contributions; they were in effect expecting parents to support school-based activity. Edwards and Warin (1999) posit the idea that involvement in this way was another form of "colonisation rather than collaboration" (p.332), as this type of communication was effectively about gaining entry into the home in order to "ease the one-way flow of information and materials which carried school values into pupils' homes" (p.335). Importantly, very few schools were gathering assessment data upon which to evaluate the effectiveness of this initiative aimed at improving achievement by involving parents

Wylie, et al (1999) found that students of parents who had no involvement in their child's schooling scored less on assessments for mathematics, literacy, communication, perseverance, and fine motor skills. Wylie et al (1999) also reported that:

'The particular kind of parental involvement which seemed to make a difference for children was voluntary work at the school, but not being a school trustee, or taking part in the Parent-Teacher Association' (pp. 125-126).

Similar findings were also reported by Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis and Ecob (1989). Help in classrooms and on excursions from parents proved to be a positive influence on students' progress, yet participation in Parent-Teacher Associations was not. Mortimore et al (1989) consider the formal structure of this organisation as too intimidating to be a factor.

St George (1983) found that teachers perceived that Polynesian parents had negative attitudes to schooling and education, spoke poor English, did not provide an intellectually stimulating home environment for their children, and were less interested in the world around them than Pakeha parents. From the teachers' perspectives this explained poorer academic performance and decreased engagement for Polynesian students. Nevertheless, St George (1983) argued that it is factors other than ethnicity that influence teacher expectations, but when these factors are associated with ethnic group, expectations have the effect of preserving the status quo in Polynesian underachievement. The consequence, she argues, is that teachers see little prospect of their teaching making a difference and they come to attribute responsibility for school-

related problems to the home 'and little to themselves, while by contrast parents held teachers primarily responsible for their child's school problems (p. 56).

Hill (2001) also identifies an association between teachers' perceptions of parents and the achievement of their children. In particular, where teachers believed that the parents valued education the children were inclined to achieve more highly in pre-reading. Notwithstanding the deficit assumptions in this view, there is some evidence that improving parental skill levels can have positive effects on children.

Hawk and Hill (1996) argue that an important conflict between teacher and parental expectations is where parents expect their children to learn only during school time, and without parental involvement. They expect the school simply to make learning happen. Teachers, on the other hand, see academic achievement as a function of additional factors such as homework and after school study, and tangible interest and support from parents. In this context, 'tangible interest and support' is defined solely from the teacher's perspective. Teachers and parents also perceive the other's communication efforts differently and have different preferences over how to communicate. Teachers tend to use institutional methods of communication, while parents 'prefer more personal, individual invitations for involvement'.

Pomeroy (1999) found children perceive contact with the home as a positive preventative disciplinary measure, and a sign of teachers' caring for the child. Lee (1999) also argues that students endorse home/school collaborations, while Hawk and Hill (1996) found that student 'gatekeeping' undermines parental capacity for involvement in schooling. Students will, for example, withhold school newsletters with the details of parent interviews. Other reasons for withholding information from parents include protecting their parents from embarrassment because of a lack of money, protecting parents from feeling embarrassed by having to go to the school, preventing themselves from being embarrassed in front of their peers or protecting themselves from parental disappointment and/or anger.

Ownership

Coburn, (2003) argues that for a reform to be seen as sustainable, in both the initial and subsequent schools, ownership of the reform must shift from the external originations (if indeed it has an external origin) to a situation where the authority over and the responsibility for the reform shifts to be within the institution and is supported by policy makers. One of the key considerations therefore of reform is the creation of

conditions within the very project itself that will ensure that knowledge and authority of the project and responsibility for and commitment to the project aims shifts from external actors to teachers, schools and the national authorities; this shift in ownership ensuring the reforms become self-generative and continue to meet the agreed aims of the project.

This condition for sustainability; that is, developing staff, school and systemic capacity to maintain the reform in the face of competing and changing priorities, stands in contrast to those reforms concerned with creating conditions that promote staff “buy-in” or how the professional developers might continue to provide professional development. However, Coburn identifies that there is little on this topic in the literature, and yet this issue raises some of the most important strategic issues to do with successful implementation of reform and for taking reforms to scale in the long and medium term. For example, what strategies are effective for attaining this goal? Are they different at different levels in the system? How is such a procedure located within the reform initiative and how is the integrity of the project maintained once the reform is ‘handed-over’; indeed, is ‘handing-over’ an appropriate metaphor? Are there more appropriate metaphors to conceptualise such a process? Indeed, is there a need to talk of the project itself or of a new normative behaviour, a new ‘business as usual’, within the school?

Currently, Coburn (2003) and others identify that there are a number of indicators of shift of reform ownership that need to be incorporated into reform initiatives: there needs to be an ongoing and institutionalised means of supporting teacher learning and critical reflection; there needs to be a means whereby the leadership of the reform in the school is knowledgeable to a sufficient depth about the project to maintain the integrity of the reform; leadership of the project needs to be able to refresh constantly its understanding of what constitutes the best approach to use; there needs to be a means of generating ongoing funding for the reform; national organizations need to take responsibility for the reform; the reform needs to be supported from beyond the school through a supportive evaluative model such as that proposed by Patton (2000); there needs to be evidence of use being made of reform-centred ideas and structures at school, district and national decision-making processes.

In short, shifts in the ownership of the reform means that within the reform there needs to be a means of developing the capacity of in-school teachers, professional developers and other leaders, including the school’s principals and national and regional education leaders in order that they can maintain the integrity and progress of the reform

within the school/s, generate funding and ongoing supportive professional development and research associated with the reform. Such a process should be designed to overcome the problems created by ongoing staff and administrator turnover as well as be designed to provide ongoing support for the new institutions that have been developed within the schools as part of the reform.

Coburn (2003) also identifies the need for the reform to transfer the substantive and strategic decision-making from the reform organization to the local level. Further, leaders with an in-depth understanding of the reform principles are better able to interrogate new policy initiatives to ascertain their degree of coherence and potential for support for the central reform initiative. Again, as Hargreaves and Fink (2000) identify, there is no external answer that will substitute for the complex work of changing one's own situation, this complexity meaning that gradually there is a need to focus on people and principles, rather than on actual strategies.

In addition, schools and national authorities need to fully understand the value and impact of the reform so that they are able to allocate funding appropriately or creatively seek new funding sources once external research-generated funding is no longer available.

C) Summary

Overall, across a wide range of measures, Māori students at years 4 and 5 are not achieving at the same levels as their non-Māori counterparts. In addition, despite the growth of Māori medium schooling, the vast majority of Māori students attend mainstream schools and are taught by non-Māori teachers. Previous policies of assimilation, integration and biculturalism have failed to significantly alter these disparities.

A number of theories have been offered as a means of explaining Māori underachievement; however, it is the discursive positions that teachers occupy that are the key to their being able to make a difference or not for Māori students. This means that before any in-class type professional development is developed, teachers need to be provided with a learning opportunity where they can critically evaluate where they discursively position themselves when constructing their own images, principles and practices in relation to Māori students in their own classrooms. It is also important that these learning opportunities provide teachers with an opportunity to undertake what

Davies and Harre (1997) called *discursive repositioning*, which means their drawing explanations and subsequent practices from alternative discourses that offer them solutions instead of reinforcing problems and barriers.

Studies reported in this literature review have described agentic positioning as teachers repositioning themselves discursively as ‘agents of change.’ This positioning allows for movement in that seemingly immutable educational disparities can be addressed and teachers can refine their commitment and responsibility for their own and their students’ outcomes. Agentic positioning is relevant to how other factors in the classroom, such as teacher expectations and the development of mutually respectful relationships between teachers and students are played out.

The fundamental changes that are needed in classroom relationships and interactions and in the culture of schools, through the institutionalisation of schools as professional learning communities focused on improving student learning, are reliant upon leaders having a sound understanding of the theoretical underpinning of the reform while simultaneously being responsive and proactive about supporting and promoting reform processes and goals. To this end, principal leadership is essential, however principal leadership at the exclusion of others is ineffective. Principals therefore need to inspire a shared vision, model the way, and enable others to act, challenge the status quo, and encourage the heart.

Successful implementation and ensuring the sustainability of reform initiatives in a school means that reform initiatives therefore need to include, as part of the reform process, a means of institutionalising the elements of the reform within the school and structural reforms at both the school and system levels need to occur to allow this to happen. The reform must commence with this goal clearly at the forefront of everybody’s mind; the reform must not be promoted or seen as an adjunct to existing systems, but rather as a means of reforming the integral elements of the structure of the school, so that they become part of the everyday life of the institution and the institution would be lesser for their removal. National policies need to be reformed to support this occurring so that: national goals focus on raising achievement and reducing disparities; in-service and pre-service education are aligned; funding for in-school facilitators is built into staffing allocations; ongoing support for distributed leadership models is provided; collaboration between policy makers, researchers and practitioners is fostered; support is provided for integrated research and professional development; natural ownership and provision of sufficient funding and resources to see solutions in a defined period of time.

In this way, the reform will include a means whereby the benefits of the reform can remain once the reforms mature and the initial energy, personnel and funding disappears.

Part 2: Interviews: Procedures and Findings

Overview

The second part of the research project consisted of a series of interviews which, along with the critical review of the literature, were intended to inform the development of a professional development programme. The purpose for this professional development programme outline is to support teachers, schools and communities to collectively work towards raising Māori student achievement in primary school classrooms and also to contribute to ongoing policy development. This research involved the collection and analysis of data in the form of one-on-one and focus group interviews of Years 4 and 5 Māori students, their parents, whānau and Māori communities, their teachers and their principals.

The purpose of the interviews was to generate hypotheses about influences on educational achievement for Years 4 and 5 Māori students in mainstream primary schools and how those influences were experienced in the classroom. This study was based on participant's experiences and their understanding of these experiences. The Ethics Committee of the School of Education at the University of Waikato granted approval to conduct this research.

The research process involved the initial selection of schools, a series of one-on-one and focus group interviews and scientific analysis of the data using the NVivo, a computer assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) software programme.ⁱ A grounded theory approach was used in conducting this study (Creswell, 2005). A grounded theory approach is one where major themes and findings emerge from the data through a process of collaborative coding and analysis of the interviews. The actual procedure used is detailed in the appropriate section below.

Sources of evidence

a) School selection

The initial process for selecting schools was to contact iwi education spokespeople as identified by Ministry of Education iwi liaison staff. Representatives from four iwi groups were identified and asked whether they would like to contribute to the project by helping to select schools and by sharing their own experiences, hopes and aspirations for young Māori students from an iwi perspective. If they agreed to participate, iwi members were asked to select up to six schools in their area that would

be suitable for this project. Once schools were identified, Education Review Office (ERO) reports were used by the research team to describe schools according to a range of different variables. Two schools were then chosen from each rohe to represent a range of variables that included; school size, decile, Māori student population, and location. If the schools met the criteria and agreed to take part, principals were then given the task of ensuring their school's participation. If a school did not want to participate another school was chosen from the original list of six for each rohe.

Using this process eight schools consented to take part in the interviews. The student populations of the eight schools ranged from 65 to over 900, with the percentage of Māori students ranging from 17% to 99%. In five of the schools Māori students were the majority population. Four of the schools were decile 1, the remaining four ranged from decile 4 to 6. (See Table 1. The number of participants for each school is listed in Table 2.)

Table 1. Demographic information for eight participating schools.

Name	School type	School roll	Decile	Percent Māori*	Percent Pākehā*	Iwi	Region
1	Contributing	427	1	53	3	Ngāti Whatua/ Tainui	Northland
2	Contributing	326	1	65	11	Tainui	Auckland
3	Contributing	910	1	58	3	Ngāti Whatua/ Tainui	Auckland
4	Contributing	599	6	17	80	Ngapuhi	Waikato
5	Contributing	508	5	42	52	Ngaiterangi/ Ngati Ranginui	Bay of Plenty
6	Full primary	203	1	99	1	Tūhoe	Bay of Plenty
7	Contributing	374	5	30	66	Tuwharetoa	Waikato
8	Full primary	65	4	51	49	Tūhoe	Bay of Plenty

Table 2. Number of participants by school.

School	Engaged students	Non-engaged	Whanau	Teachers	Principal/DP	Iwi
1	11	0	3	3	1	0
2	12	5	7	10	1	0
3	16	4	10	11	2	0
4	5	0	5	5	1	0
5	5	5	3	5	1	5
6	5	5	3	8	1	2
7	8	6	6	16	1	0
8	5	0	2	2	1	*
Total	67	25	39	60	9	7
*Schools 6 and 8 come under the same rohe						

b) Focus group and one-on-one interviews

Focus group interviews were the primary method of data collection. Focus group interviews are structured conversations with a specific purpose. Once the topic of the interview is introduced, participants are encouraged to comment individually and as part of a dynamic group dialogue (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

This data source was used so researchers could collect a shared understanding from the people interviewed. The primary purpose of these focus group interviews was to identify influences on Māori student achievement as seen from the particular positions of the focus group participants. The groups were asked to consider a wide range of issues that covered external and internal influences. However, of primary importance was the need to consider issues to do with classroom tasks, interactions, relationships and social and physical environments. They were also asked to recount and to consider specific incidents in order to help the research team specifically identify how influences might affect achievement.

Focus group interviews were conducted with:

- Engaged and Non-Engaged Māori students
- Teachers
- Whānau members
- Iwi

School principals were interviewed using one-on-one interviews. This form of interview was appropriate for principals because we wanted to interview principals separate from other groups. Generally principals are articulate speakers who are not hesitant to speak and are comfortable sharing ideas (Creswell, 2005).

c) Interview schedule/protocol

Interviews were broadly guided by the theme of our seeking *Māori students' experiences in education* but also delved into more specific questions depending upon which group was interviewed and how the conversation proceeded. An interview protocol (See Appendix A) was used, and interviewers were expected to cover each of the points in the protocol during the interview. The interviews were audio taped and interviewers were asked to ensure the tapes were all clearly labelled with the date, school and group or person being interviewed. Where more than one person was being interviewed, the interviewer was instructed to ask each person to say their name at the start of the interview, so as to help the person transcribing the tape to recognise the speakers.

The interview as a tool for addressing researcher imposition.

The interview has become a very common tool used by researchers to enable participants' experiences to be represented in a manner which they would legitimate. In other words, to address researcher imposition. However, the interview itself can be a strategy controlled by the researcher and repressive of the position of the informant/participant. In a critical review of the literature of the previous decades, Oakley (1981) concluded that

the paradigm of the social science research interview promoted in the methodological textbooks does, then, emphasise (a) its status as a mechanical instrument of data collection; (b) its function as a specialised form of conversation in which one person asks the questions and another gives the answers; (c) its characterisation of interviewees as essentially passive individuals, and (d) its reduction of interviewers to a question asking and rapport-promoting role (p. 36).

Oakley (1981) is critical of the prescriptive nature of an approach to interviewing that focuses on gathering data from essentially passive informants who are led through a series of pre-determined questions by a 'neutral' interviewer. She is also critical of the

prescriptions laid down for the interviewer to be a recorder, not a debater, and that the interviewee must be treated as an "object" or as a data producing "machine."

Developments in interviewing have been toward mediating the tensions identified by Oakley (1981) and developing what could be termed an *enhanced research relationship*. Oakley (1981) suggested that finding out about people through interviewing "is best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship (p. 41)." Corbin & Morse (2003), develop this notion of reciprocity further and suggest an orientation that is "interviewee guided" so that subtleties are identified and reacted to, and that the meaning being expressed/sought by the interviewees becomes paramount and mutual trust is developed. Reinharz (1992) suggests that the interview process needs to explore people's views of reality (p. 18), and needs to encourage openness, trust between participants, engagement and development of potentially long lasting relationships, in order to form strong bonds between interviewer and interviewee.

Semi-structured or unstructured interviews, (Corbin & Morse, 2003), 'interviews as conversations' (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) 'in-depth' interviews (Patton, 2002) and co-structured interviews (Tripp, 1983) are procedures designed for interviewing research participants in order to operationalise the *enhanced research relationship*. It is claimed that this procedure addresses the tendency for researcher imposition by offering researchers more than just people's ideas encapsulated within the words and ideological frameworks of the researcher. To Reinharz (1992, p. 19), semi-structured interviews offer access to people's ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words. Lather (1991) suggests in-depth interviews offer means of constructing what experiences mean to people. Tripp (1983) adds that these meanings can be constituted in terms of what people mean to say rather than simply the words they said.

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews promote free interaction and opportunities for clarification and discussion between research participants through the use of open-ended questions rather than closed questions. Focus groups allow this interaction to be taken to a greater depth. In-depth interviews will "more clearly reveal the existing opinions of the interviewee in the context of a world-view than will a traditional interview where the interviewer's role is confined to that of question-maker and recorder (Tripp, 1983, p. 34)" as in survey research (Burgess, 1984; Eisner, 1991). Further, reflection of meaning rather than asking an interviewee to choose from a range of

options predetermined and presented by an interviewer will better promote an interaction of ideas between the people participating in the interview

Analysing the interviews

The treatment of research participants as objects for whom meaning and recommendations are unilaterally constructed by the researcher is rejected by post-positivist researchers. Therefore, when deciding how to present an analysis of data "the problem of finding a focus and selecting and organising what to say is crucial" (Eisner, 1991, p. 189). How do you reduce events occurring in "real time" to a "portrait" that represents the salient features of an experience? Eisner suggests the use of an inductive approach similar to that of Glaser and Strauss's (1967) "Grounded Theory" which is described in Burgess (1984), Delamont (1992) and further developed in Strauss & Corbin (1994). In this process, there is an assumption that semi-structured interviews as conversations, by relying on induction rather than deduction, will address issues of imposition, participation and power sharing by the formulation of themes, those recurring messages construed from the events observed and the interviews transcribed. In the process of formulating themes, researchers are required to "distil the material they have put together" (Eisner, 1991, p. 190). The notes, interviews, ideas, comments, recollections, reflections can be used to "inductively generate thematic categories" (p. 189). Eisner (1991) comments that

all these categories represent efforts to distil the major themes that would provide a structure to the writing. Within this structure authors select material, which they then use to illustrate the theories they have formulated. To do this well, authors must construct what is essential and use enough description to make the thematic content vivid. Themes also provide structures for the interpretation and appraisal of the events described (p.190).

He continues by considering that the

thematic structures derived inductively from the material researchers have put together and from the observations they have made can provide hubs around which the story can be told. The stories told around these thematic situations can then be used as material for a summary account of a story as a whole (p.191).

However, Tripp (1983) warns of qualitative accounts that intersperse interview quotations from the interviews of a dozen informants among the author's own narrative. The danger is that this approach may impose "particular interpretations over which any one interviewee has absolutely no control (p. 35)." Qualifying or countering statements may be omitted, statements may be taken out of context and used to support the views, assumptions and aspirations of the author. There may be an opportunity later in the research project when the researcher sets out what has been learnt from the research experience. However, to claim this is a strategy promoting power sharing and self determination is leaving too much to chance. Hence the decision taken in this project to produce overall patterns rather than specific incidents.

In addressing the problem of researcher control over what happens to the "data" Opie (1989) describes a common practice that has emerged in recent years.

In order to minimise appropriation through misrepresentation and stereotype, to expand the researcher's appreciation of the situation as a result of discussion and reworking the text with the participants, and to realign the balance of power in the research relationship, a practice has developed, which crosses disciplinary boundaries, of giving a draft of the report to participants and asking them to comment on its validity (p. 8/9).

Returning the script to the co-participant is a necessary part of the ongoing dialogue. However, it is emphasised that engagement should be with the text and not with the analysis done by the researcher. This will maximise opportunities for reciprocal negotiation and a collaborative construction of meaning by the participants.

Furthermore, depiction of the actual words of the research participant is often insisted upon. However, there is a danger that this strategy may replace the search for meaning through engagement in sequential discourse with a concentration on literal representation. Often, the actual words used at a particular time may not convey the full meaning that the person wanted to express. They may be able, on reflection, to express themselves in a manner that further explains or advances their position and understanding and it is then up to the researchers to use a means to capture this depth of meaning.

The interviewing procedures

At the commencement of the project, principals and/or senior management were given information leaflets to be distributed to teachers and whānau. Consent forms and

interviewing processes for the various groups were also distributed so that each school was responsible for organizing when the interviews would be conducted. The research team carried out the interviews with students, teachers, whānau and the principal, usually within a two-day period.

At the beginning of each interview the researchers introduced themselves and explained the purpose of the interviews. Anonymity, consent to participate and right to withdraw were explained prior to the interview proper. The number of participants in each group ranged from 2 to 10, with usually two interviewers present at each interview.

After transcripts of the interviews were completed, they were sent to participants (excluding student groups) for verification and additional annotation. Such annotation reflected participant's right to change their original text to better match what they wanted to say.

Initial thoughts emerging from the interviews painted a complex picture of difference. Schools appeared to be quite different from school to school and to a lesser extent, within schools. What was also interesting was the extent to which Te Kotahitanga and other existing professional development were being identified by school staff as impacting upon their ability to respond effectively to raising the achievement of Māori students.

d) Data Analysis Process

Once the interview data had been verified as an accurate representation of the interview participants' experiences, the research team used an iterative data analysis process to analyse the interviews. Using the agreed-to versions of the transcriptions, the researchers prepared the data for analysis using by reading through the transcriptions to become intimately familiar with the data. Then, the researchers worked together, with the assistance of NVivo, to attach coding labels to all text in the transcripts by attaching a label to each unit of meaning. Finally, the coding labels were analysed for inclusion in this research report (Creswell, 2005).

NVivo is a qualitative data analysis computer programme that essentially allows researchers to undertake a 'grounded theory' analysis of interview data. Researchers in this study used NVivo to store and organize data, assign coding labels, facilitate searches of the data, locate specific labels and text, and create coding reports (Creswell, 2005). The analysis of the interviews was coded according to idea units of meaning and the number of times those units were repeated both across and within each school. In this

way we were attempting to develop a picture from across all the schools, and from within the schools so that any preconceived ideas of the researchers were not able to impose themselves on the data analysis. The frequency counts of unit ideas were then listed according to the discourse they illustrated (see below) and ranked according to the number of times such idea units were mentioned in the interviews.

As detailed above, primacy in the interviewing approach was given to acknowledging the self-determination of the interview participants so they were able to explain their own experiences in their own culturally constituted terms. In other words, the interviews were undertaken as in-depth, semi-structured interviews as conversations that sought to minimize the imposition of the researchers own sense-making and theorizing on the experiences and explanations of the interview participants. As a result, in the coding exercise, emphasis was given to the meanings that interview participants had ascribed to their experiences and in this way produced a representation that the participants would legitimate.

When coding the interviews, the research team were particular to refer to the meaning that the various participants ascribed to their experiences, that is, coding was based on what the experiences meant to the speaker rather than what it meant to the researchers. On the surface, such an approach may appear to be inconsistent; however, the collaborative means used in determining coding categories meant that a group of researchers, who were intimately familiar with the content of the interviews, were reading the interviews widely so as to identify the meaning that the interview participants had attributed to that particular issue. Further, coders error-checked with each other on a regular and ongoing basis to ensure that their coding was consistent with each other.

The coding was undertaken by a small number of the research team who were both familiar with the process of coding and who had developed a common agreement as to what constituted idea units, themes, sub themes and more importantly how participants positioned themselves in relation to the various discourses. However, as this analysis of the interviews came from only a small number of schools, and at particular times of the year, it is also important to emphasise that such rankings came from a “snapshot in time” only. As a result, we are not suggesting that these tables and graphs (see below) represent firm generalisations. Rather, they provide a means of ascribing a rough weighting to each discourse and are indicative of patterns and trends that one may

well find in other, similar settings. Indeed, as will be suggested later, they provide a very useful basis for future research.

The interpretative process, which drew on both qualitative and quantitative means of measurement, provided frequency bars for all four interviewee groups. When viewed together as in Figure 1.3 in Bishop et al (2003, 2007), they provide a clear picture of coherence and/or conflict in theorizing about the lived experiences of Māori students. In addition, while it may be tempting to attribute significance to some minor differences in numbers or percentages, it is the overall pattern of differences that is of importance. It is also important to note that the frequency figures refer to the number of interviews where such a factor was found; these are frequencies from groups of students (and later of groups of parents and of teachers) rather than of individual responses. Only in the principals' narratives are there individual responses.

e) Classification of Data

Classification of interview data was accomplished by dividing data into units of meaning for analysis by groups (i.e., students – engaged and non-engaged, teachers, whanau, and principals) and then attaching coding labels to these data.

First, interviewers were asked to become intimately familiar with interview data they collected at one school (except for one researcher, who was advised by the interviewer). NVivo training was held for one-half day for all interviewers/researchers at once by the same trainer. The facilitator of NVivo training also facilitated the collective coding label process by problem solving and removing barriers to the process. NVivo was used to assist researchers to work collectively in analysing the data using a common set of coding labels.

Following the NVivo training a coding label tree was developed collectively. Based on the researchers' intimate knowledge of the data, this collaborative coding label framework was created using a whiteboard so all researchers/interviewers could see and participate. This coding label tree formed an a priori framework for the researchers' data analysis.

Coding label tree

1. Whanau/Māori students home and community

- Socio economic

- Whanau routines
- Cultural practices
- Role models
- Other

2. Outside classroom

- Curriculum and resources
- Management
- Structure
- Other

3. Inside classroom

- Pedagogy
- Relationships
- Make up and movement
- Other

These coding labels closely aligned with the themes presented in the literature review: (a) child home and community, (b) school structures and policies, and (c) the classroom and are the same discussions that were identified as being used by interviewers in Bishop 2003 to explain their experiences with the education of Māori students.

Collective and collaborative data analysis

Inter-coder reliability was accomplished through re-analysis of the data by another researcher/interviewer to confirm coding labels. An exemplar was developed for those researchers who were not able to attend the collective coding label process. Analyses were then checked by other team members and found to be reliable.

Analysis and interpretation

All of the interview transcripts were analysed by placing coding labels on each unit of meaning. After coding was completed NVivo Coding Summary Reports were produced for each school to show the number of times each coding label was “referenced” for each group interviewed. For purposes of analysis researchers ranked levels of importance placed on a coding label by the group interviewed as: above 50% -

high, 35-49% - medium, and below 35% -low. The overall results for the eight schools where data were collected are illustrated in Figure 1. The results for each of the eight schools individually are illustrated in Figures 2-9. The results for iwi are not included because the small sample (n=7) was thought not to be large enough to be representative of the iwi population.

The Figures demonstrate the distribution of coding labels in each of the three major themes by interview group. The three major themes identified in the literature and later emerging as the data coding label tree created by the researchers were:

- Home
- School
- Classroom.

The groups that participated in the interviews and are illustrated in the Figures were:

- Students
- Whanau
- Principals
- Teachers.

The Figures demonstrate the percentage of coding labels in each of the three areas by each group interviewed. The sum total in each of the three coding labels may add up to more than 100% because researchers were allowed to place more than one coding label on an individual unit of meaning.

Figure 1 shows the analysis results for the eight schools overall. This figure demonstrates that the results of greatest note occur under the theme of classroom. Under that theme students (69%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions, while the teachers (44%), as well as principals (36%) and whanau (39%) have medium level support for the students' positionⁱⁱ.

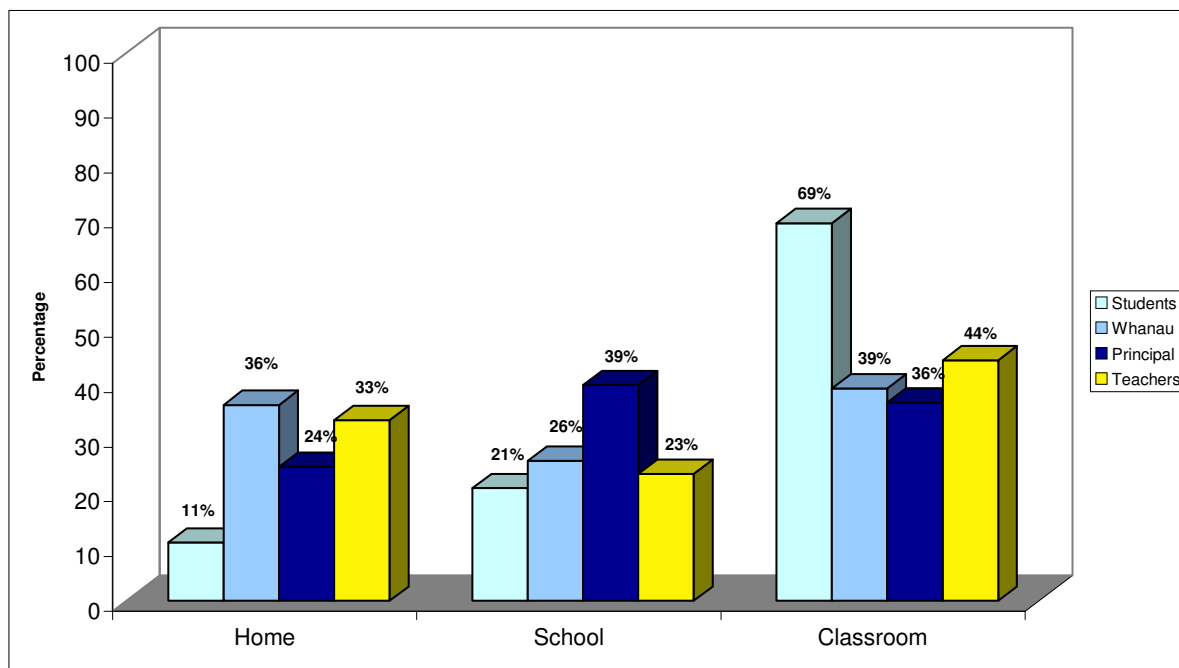


Fig. 1. Eight schools overall coding summary report.

Figure 2 shows the analysis results for School 1. Results of most practical importance are occurring under the themes of school and classroom. This figure demonstrates that students (69%) and teachers (68%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions, with strong principal (69%) systemic support. Whanau (34%) have a low level of support for the students' position.

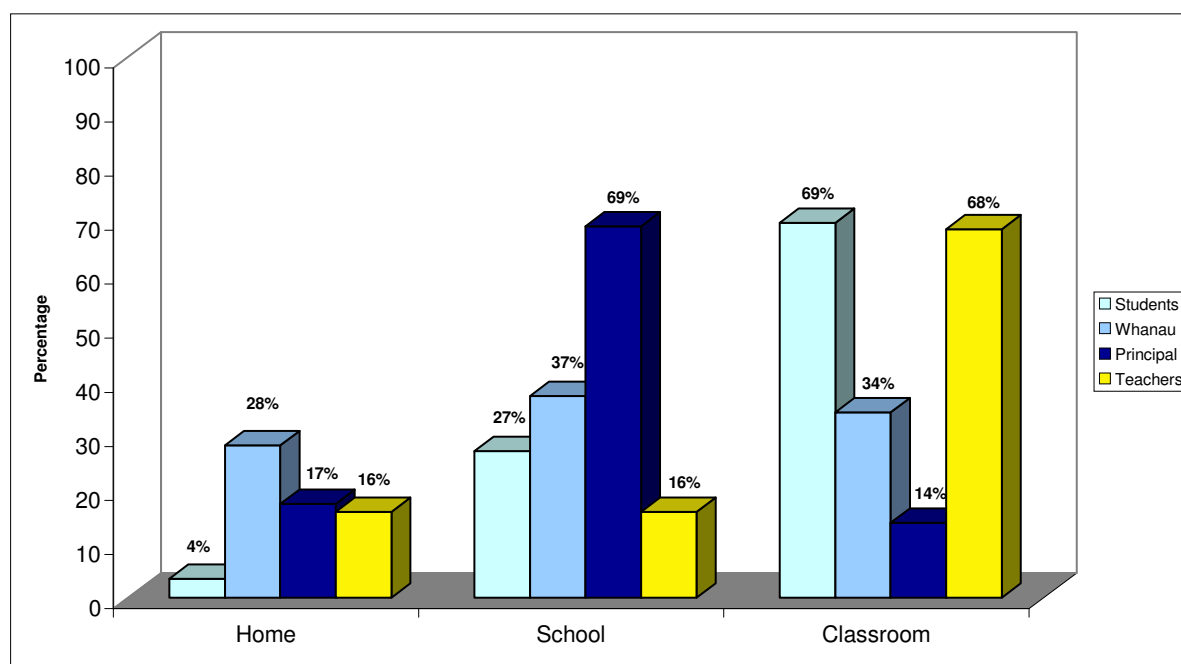


Fig. 2. School 1 coding summary report.

Figure 3 shows the analysis results for School 2. This figure demonstrates results of note are occurring under the themes of school and classroom. Students (72%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions, while teachers (47%) have medium level support for the students' position. It also illustrates strong principal (52%) systemic support for the students' position. Whanau (32%) have a low level of support for the students' position.

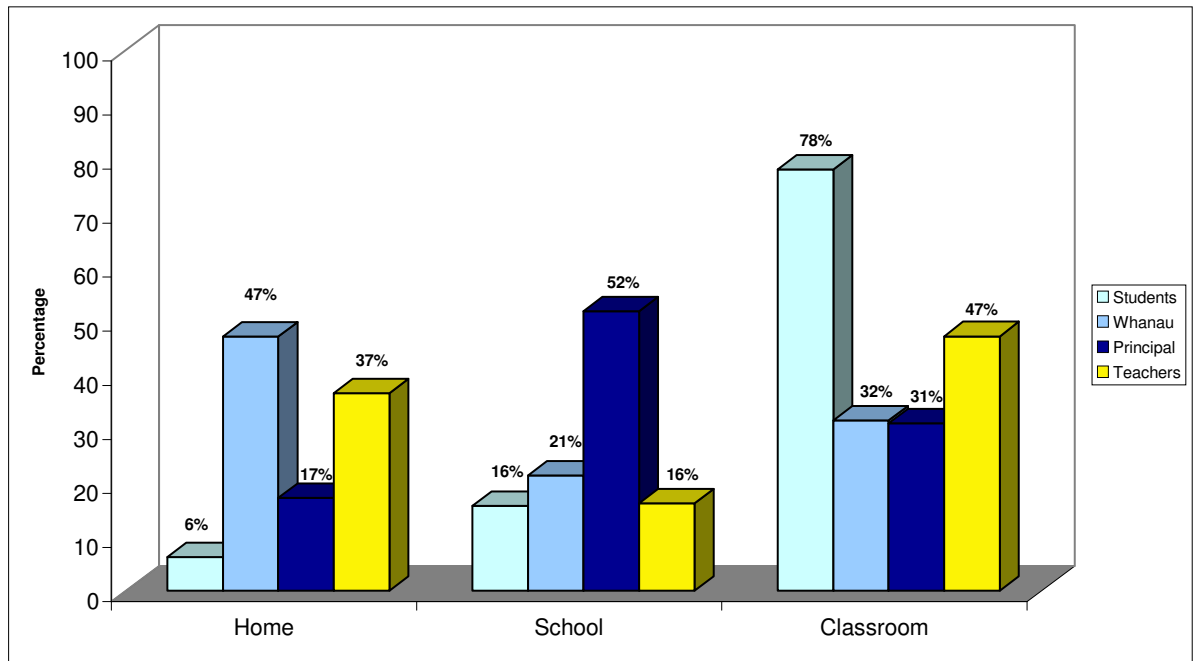


Fig. 3. School 2 coding summary report.

Figure 4 shows the analysis results for School 3. The most important results are occurring under the themes of school and classroom. This figure demonstrates students (64%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions, while teachers (46%) have medium level support for the students' position. In addition, Figure 4 shows that the principal (67%) has strong systemic support for the students' position. Whanau (20%) have a low level of support for the students' position.

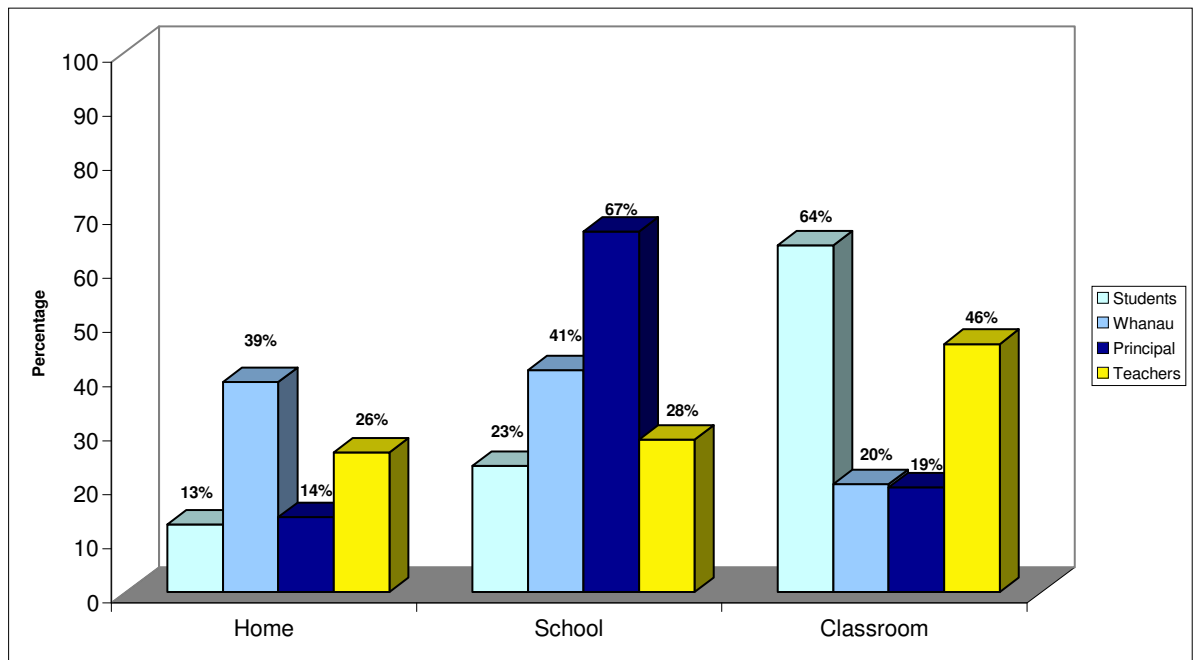


Fig. 4. School 3 coding summary report.

Figure 5 shows the analysis results for School 4. The results of most note occur under the themes of home and classroom. This figure demonstrates students (51%) and principals (50%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions. The teachers (41%) have a medium level of support for this position, and whanau (25%) place a high level of emphasis on the home.

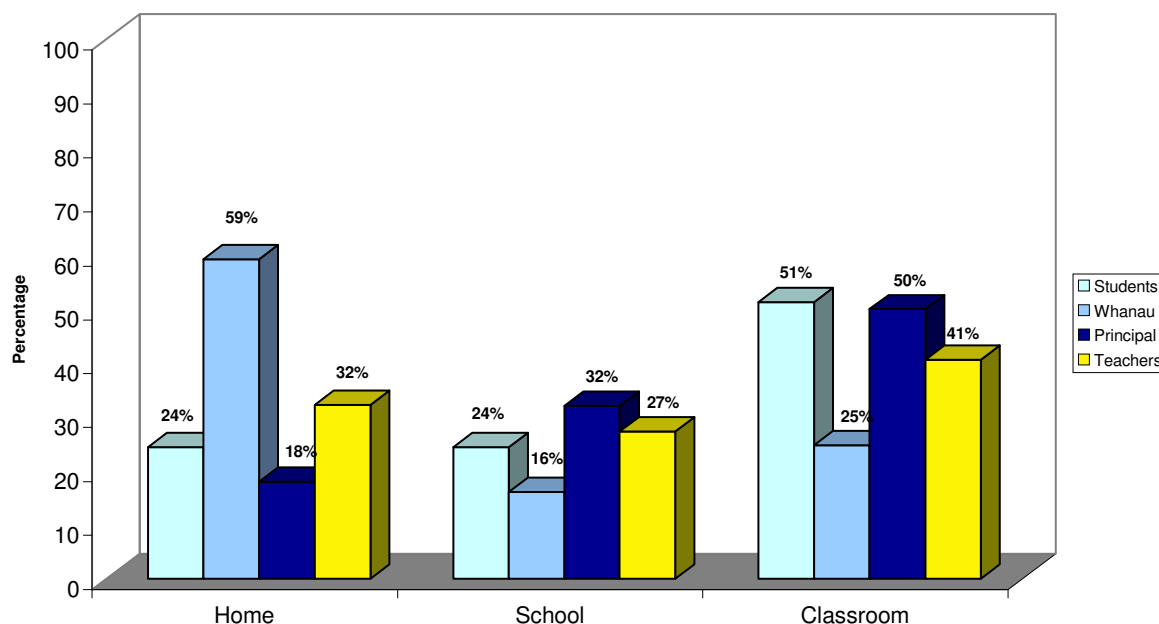


Fig. 5. School 4 coding summary report.

Figure 6 shows the analysis results for School 5. Results of note occur under the themes of classroom and home. This figure demonstrates students (76%) and principals (63%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions, while whanau (49%) have medium support for this position and teachers (32%) place greatest emphasis on home.

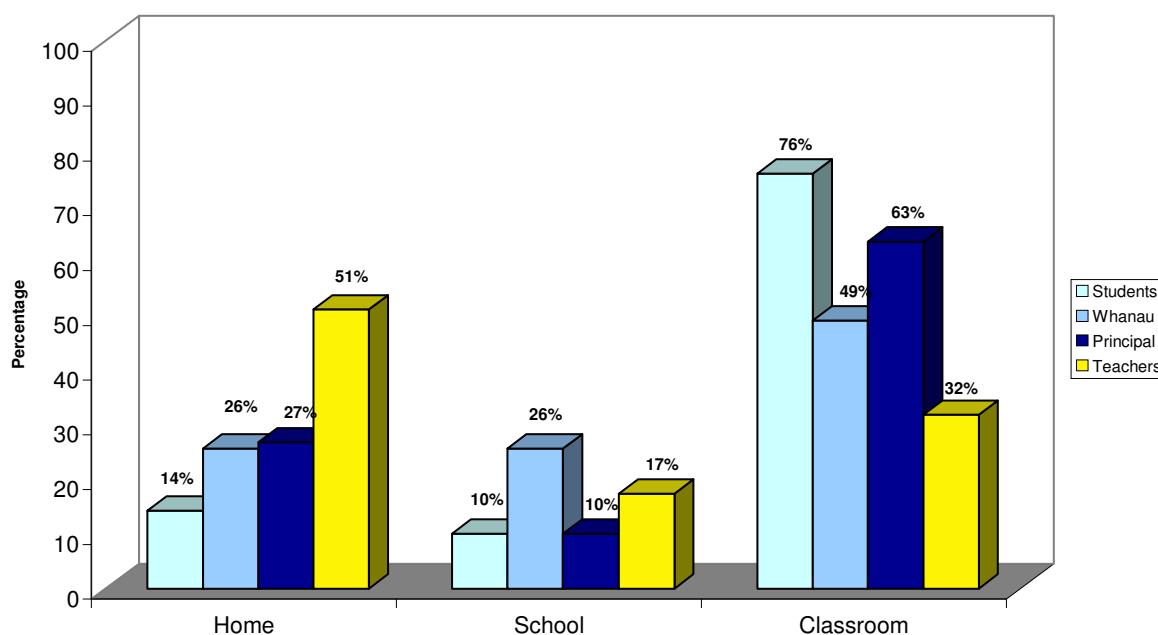


Fig. 6. School 5 coding summary report.

Figure 7 shows the analysis results for School 6. Results focus greatest emphasis on the theme of classroom. This figure demonstrates students (75%) and whanau (65%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions, while teachers (49%) and the principal (44%) have medium level support for this position.

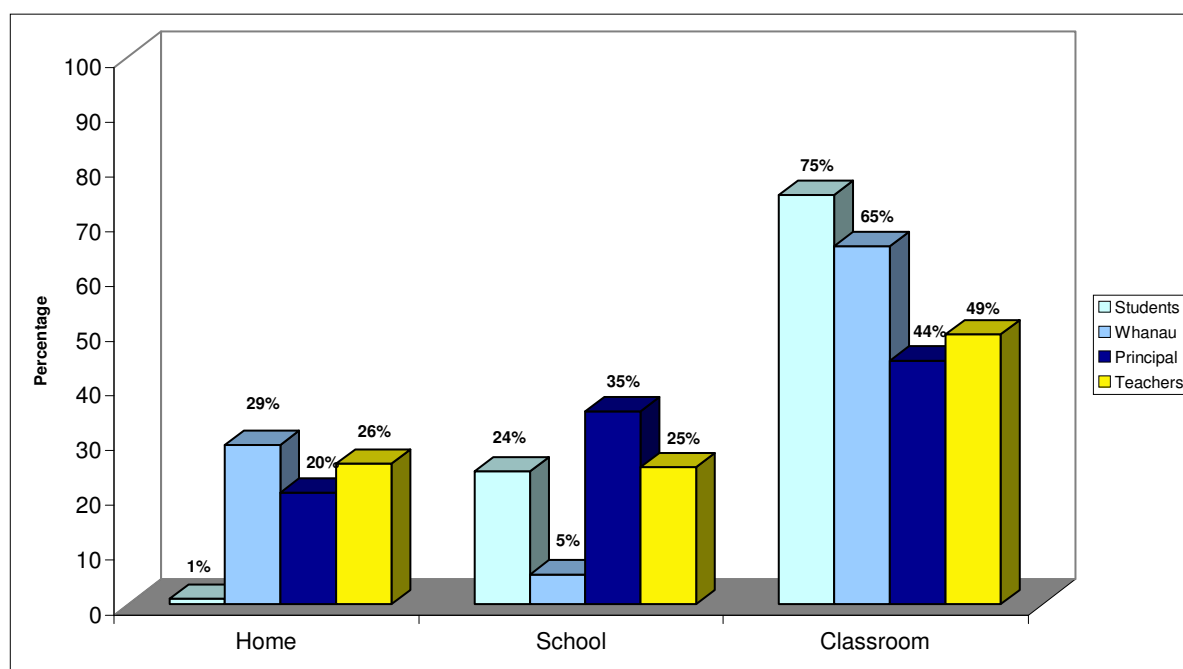


Fig. 7. School 6 coding summary report.

Figure 8 shows the analysis results for School 6. The theme of classroom shows results of practical importance. This figure demonstrates students (78%) and whanau (64%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions, while teachers (45%) and the principal (44%) have medium level support for this position.

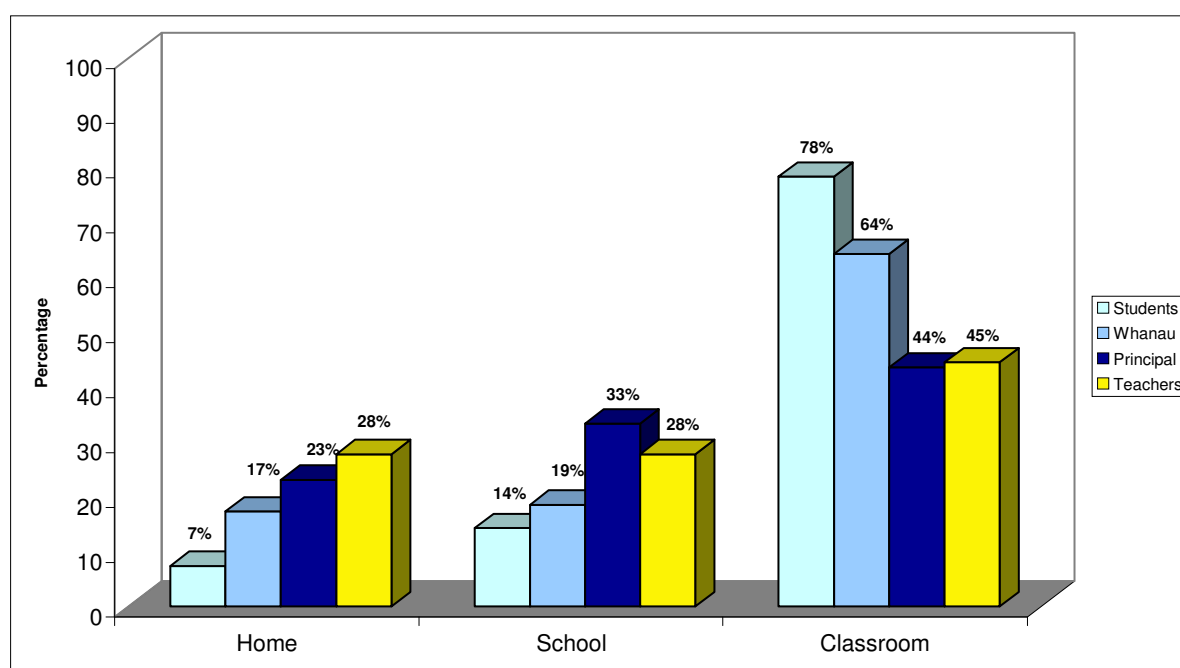


Fig. 8. School 7 coding summary report.

Figure 9 shows the analysis results for School 8. Again, emphasis of note is placed on the theme of classroom. This figure demonstrates students (74%) place a high level of importance on classroom relationships and interactions, while teachers (46%) have medium level support for the students' position. The principal (34%) and whanau (28%) have a low level of support for the student's position.

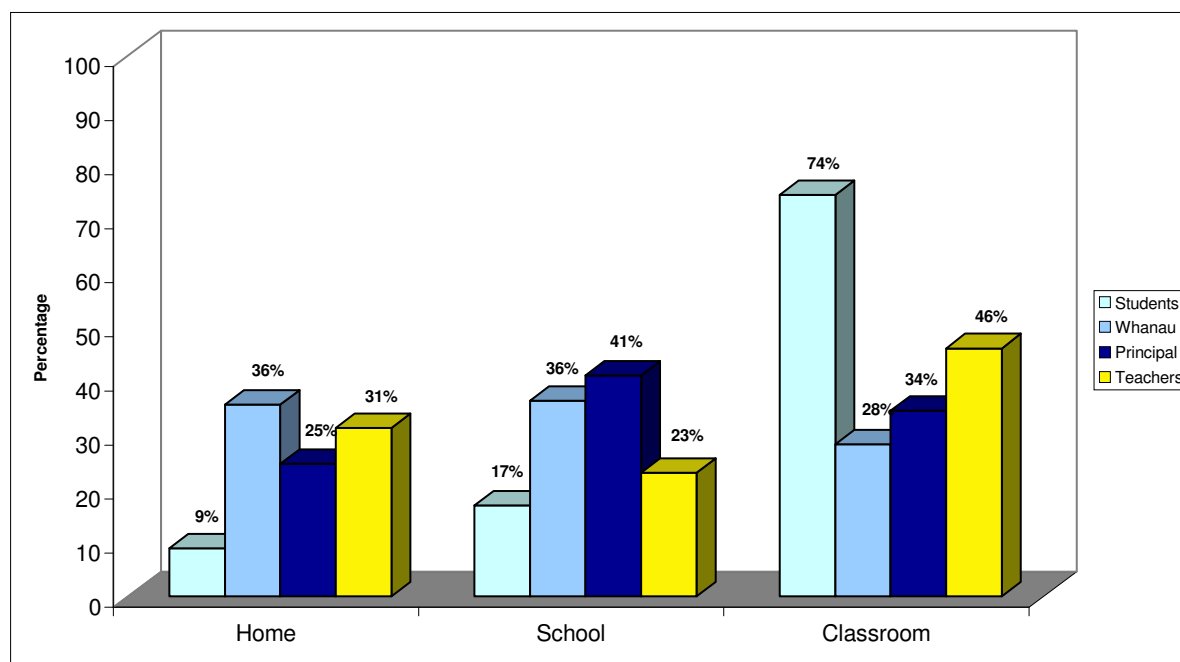


Fig. 9. School 8 coding summary report.

Summary of Findings

These results suggest that the eight schools can be placed into three separate groups based on their collective discursive positioning regarding the influences on Māori student achievement. Such a grouping is a useful 'ideal type' heuristic for future reference and analysis.

School 1 is illustrative of a school that has teachers and students who understand the importance of classroom interactions and relationships and at the same time has strong systemic support from the principal. This school represents those schools on the high end of the continuum. This pattern was supported by the overall picture generated from the interviews in the eight schools, where it was found that this school appeared to be highly active in the community and to have strong and positive links to whanau, who were engaged in school activities. This school was already using data to engage in professional learning conversations within the school (with teachers and students) and

within the community (with whanau). This school was able to target professional development specifically in areas where there was a need to be more responsive.

The interpretation of findings revealed that most of the schools (Schools 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8) had medium support for the importance of classroom relationships and interactions. Students in these schools placed high importance on classroom interactions and relationships, while principals either supported that emphasis or placed high importance on systemic support. However, in all these schools teachers placed medium importance on classroom interactions and relationships. Therefore, these schools represented those schools in the middle of the ideal type heuristic. This pattern was supported by the overall picture garnered from the interviews in the eight schools, where it was found that the second group of schools conceded to having a problem but were unsure about how to proceed to address the problem. These schools tended to have access to professional development that was more curriculum based.

Finally, Schools 4 and 5 were illustrative of a mismatch between teachers and students' understanding of the importance of classroom interactions and relationships, with teachers having a much lower understanding than students of the importance of classroom interactions and relationships. These schools represented the other end of the continuum. This pattern was supported by the overall picture garnered from the interviews in the eight schools, where it was found that the third group of schools asserted to their community being the problem and were looking for solutions that came out of community actions, rather than their own actions

Together this continuum of results can be seen as a normal distribution, with a small number of schools at either end of the continuum and most of the schools in the middle. Based on this interpretation, we would expect to find the same results over a range of primary schools across New Zealand. However, further research is needed to test these results.

Part 3: Towards a Professional Development Programme

This part of the report considers the main messages that can be gleaned from the literature, the continuum derived from the interviews and how the two patterns can be combined into an ideal-type instrument that can be used both as an hypothesis for further research and as a “needs analysis” instrument for professional development. This part of the report then outlines a suggested pattern for professional development for primary schools.

Literature Review

A close analysis of the literature review identified that there are a number of critical factors that need to be considered when addressing influences on Māori students’ educational achievement and developing a reform initiative. Fundamental to the development of such a reform model is that the evidence herein shows that professional support for teachers in the “one source of variance that can be enhanced with the greatest potential of success.” (Hattie, 2003, p. 9)

The factors that appear to be essential for making changes to teachers’ practice indicate the need for:

- Teachers and schools to establish measurable GOALS for Māori students’ educational achievement across a wide range of measures, and where student achievement outcomes are able to be used for both summative and formative purposes.
- Māori students’ EXPERIENCES to be at the centre of any attempt at reform in terms of current and preferred experiences.
- Teachers discursive POSITIONING to be identified in a way that teachers are able to critically reflect upon the potential impact of their positioning on student outcomes.
- The identification of current PEDAGOGY and for reform to implement new pedagogies to depth so that they become embedded as normal teacher practice.
- There to be daily evidence of caring and learning RELATIONSHIPS in the classroom such as evidence of teachers caring for the students as culturally-located individuals, having high expectations of students and developing well-managed and organized classrooms.

- Teachers to enter into classroom INTERACTIONS in a way that creates culturally responsive contexts for learning in their classroom.
- Teachers to use a wide range of teaching strategies that involves students in problem-solving and cooperative decision-making.
- PLANNING to be detailed, collaborative and focused on student learning rather than knowledge transmission.
- New INSTITUTIONS to be developed at the school and system level to support the new pedagogy and professional development in the school and outside the school.
- LEADERSHIP to be distributed, transformative and understanding of the need for infrastructural support that promotes self determination.
- The benefits and scope of inclusion of the reform needs to be SPREAD to include all staff and to develop strong links to whanau and to the wider system.
- Schools and the education system to develop effective SYSTEMS to provide schools and teachers with quality data/evidence for formative purposes.
- The need for OWNERSHIP of the goals and process of the reform by all involved.

Interviews

A close analysis of the interviews revealed that while there was an overall emphasis by all interviewed on the importance of classroom relationships, an interesting pattern of difference between the schools emerged.

These results confirm our initial analysis in that it revealed that the schools can be placed into three separate groups. School 1 is illustrative of a school that has teachers and students who understand the importance of classroom interactions and relationships and at the same time have strong support from the principal. This school represents those schools on the high end of the continuum. This pattern is supported by the overall picture generated from the interviews where it was found that the first group of schools appear to be highly active in the community and have strong and positive links to whanau who are engaged in school activities. These schools are already using data to engage in professional learning conversations within the school (with teachers and students) and within the community (with whanau). These schools have been able to

target professional development specifically in areas where they need to be more responsive.

The data revealed that most of the schools (Schools 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8) overall have medium support for the importance of classroom relationships and interactions. These schools represent those schools in the middle of the continuum. This pattern is supported by the overall picture garnered from the interviews where it was found that the second group of schools concede to having a problem but are unsure about how to proceed to address the problem. These schools tend to have access to professional development that is more curriculum based.

Finally, Schools 4 and 5 are illustrative of a mismatch between teachers and students understanding of the importance of classroom interactions and relationships, with teachers having a much lower understanding than students of this understanding. These schools represent the low end of the continuum. This pattern is supported by the overall picture garnered from the interviews where it was found that the third group of schools assert to their community being the problem and are looking for solutions that come out of community actions.

Together this continuum of results can be seen as a normal distribution, with a small number of schools at either end of the continuum and most of the schools in the middle. This would indicate that we would expect to find the same results over a range of schools. Further research is needed to test these results.

Figure 3.1 Continuum of Primary School Effectiveness for Producing Effective Outcomes for Māori Students.



Ideal Type instrument

We then combined these two patterns; the list of important variables identified in the literature review on one axis and the continuum of schools on the other. From the literature, we then identified what each variable would look like across the three ideal school types. This detail is shown in Table 3.1 below. This diagram therefore forms the working hypothesis for the next phase of this research in that through the implementation

of the proposed professional development programme (see below), this ideal school type schema will provide us with both a tool for an initial “needs analysis” exercise and further evidence with which to test our initial hypothesis as we collect data in the “needs analysis” exercise. This interactive process will both address the need for further research and will also help develop a professional development approach for primary schools.

Table 3.1 Professional Development needs analysis instrument

	“Traditional”	“Transforming”	“Effective”
Goal	Limited or no student achievement goals, no evidence and poor results.	Tends to be more focused on improving curriculum knowledge of teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Māori students achievement is known and is a primary goal ▪ P.D. is targeted to areas of need
Experiences	Māori student experiences are not known.	Māori students’ experiences are not known	Māori students’ experiences guide the deliberations of Professional Learning Communities
Positioning	Non-agentic – most teachers are deficit theorizing.	Teachers would like to be non-agentic but need support to make the commitment	Agentic – most teachers exhibit agentic positioning on a daily basis
Pedagogy	Traditional	Traditional and discursive	Mostly discursive
Relationships	Little evidence of caring or expectations	Some evidence of caring relations and teacher expectations	Exhibit caring relationships and high expectations on a daily basis
Interactions	Transmission and behaviour focus	Moving to discursive but still much transmission	Mostly discursive/focus on learning
Strategies	Limited number	Limited number	Great variety
Planning	Isolated/transmission focus	Isolated/curriculum focus	Detailed and collaborative – learning focus
Institutions	Isolated/practitioners	Professional communities that focus on teachers’ needs	Professional Learning Communities are active, data driven
Leadership	Top down, transactional	Transformational, shared decision-making	Distributed, transformative, understands need for infrastructure, promotes self-determination.
Spread/Whānau	Community as seen as the problem	Attempts are being made to include the community	Strong links to whānau/engaged in school activities/data driven relationships
Systems	Non-existent	Emerging systems	Quality systems in place to provide teachers/school with formative evidence
Ownership	Schools/teachers deny responsibility for the problem	Emerging	Teachers/schools are clear that they own both the problem and the solution
Change/classrooms	GEPRISP	GEPRISP PSIRPEG	PSIRPEG
Change / schools	GPILSEO	GPILSEO	GPILSEO

Recommendations

Suggested Professional Development Process

The following is the procedure we are suggesting that should be followed to develop the professional development model:

1. A project team is established from parties most involved with the outcomes.
2. The project team undertake an intensive advertising campaign to introduce the idea to schools and to elicit their participation. Emphasis being on their commitment to the kaupapa above. Schools are asked to indicate their interest in taking part in the project
3. The project team appoint a national professional development team who are currently effective leaders in effective schools.
4. Following in-depth training with the project team, the professional development team visit schools who have indicated their interest in participating in the project for an initial site visit to:
 - a. explain the process
 - b. elicit participation
 - c. get the school to sign up their commitment and begin a goal setting exercise
 - d. assist with the selection of an in-school facilitation team who will be responsible for conducting the professional development.
5. The second site visit by the national professional development team will be to undertake the assessment activity, a “needs analysis”, using Diagram 1 as a guide and the following questions:
 - i) What is the goal of the school? Teachers?
 - ii) What are the experiences of Māori students in the school? Who knows about it? What are the achievement stats like? How do they compare? What use is made of this information?
 1. Are teachers aware of their own positioning in relation to Māori students? How common are deficit explanations?
 2. What is the dominant form of pedagogy in the schools?

3. What evidence is there in teachers caring for Māori students as being culturally located?
 - (b) What evidence is there of teachers having high expectations of the learning performance of their students? Of the behavioural performance?
 - (c) What types of interaction patterns are common in the classrooms?
 - (d) What range and type of strategies are used?
 - (e) What evidence is there of teachers providing a well-managed learning environment?
 - (f) What is the focus and purpose of teacher planning?
 - (g) Do teachers know and understand how to bring about changes in Māori students' educational performance and achievement?
 - (h) What use is made of student outcomes? By teachers? By students?
 - (i) What institutions have been developed – the school and support/promote professional learning? What happens in these institutions?
 - (j) Is the leadership transactional, transformational, or transformative? Evidence?
 - (k) Describe the relationship with the Māori community.
 - (l) What systems does the school have for managing student participation, engagement and achievement outcomes and what use is made of this evidence?
 - (m) What evidence is there of the school and the teachers owning both the problems and the solutions?
- A. The results of the needs analysis are then discussed with the Principal and a specific professional development programme for the school is selected from the following menu/categories. Note: that whatever the case, school-based professional development facilitation teams will be needed to be appointed to implement the following.
 - i) If the school is “effective” then the professional development should concentrate upon ensuring that the existing professional learning community structures are working properly and that Māori students are the focus. It is important to note that professional learning communities should incorporate ongoing challenging of deficit explanations.

- ii) If the school is “transforming” or is “traditional” then the professional development should focus on the following activities:
 - 1. an activity to address teacher positioning regarding their theorizing about Māori students. For example, students’ experiences from their school.
 - 2. an observation and feedback activity designed too support teacher transformation from a dominance of traditional to discursive pedagogies.
 - 3. the development of Professional Learning Communities that focus on collaborative problem-solving based on systematic analyses of Māori student outcomes to inform ongoing practice.

- B. The National Professional Development Team will periodically bring together “their” schools facilitation team members for formal professional development in the skills necessary to conduct professional learning communities, observations and feedback sessions and other transformation activities.

- C. A further activity the National Professional Development Team will carry out from time to time is an evaluation of the potential sustainability of the programme using the GPILSEO model as a guide.

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Appendix A

A. Interview schedule for Māori students

Remember we are trying to illicit responses to these questions from the students' own experiences/perspective:

1. How is school going for you?

What things do you like about school? Why?

What things don't you like about school? Why?

2. What affects your learning? How does this happen? Why do you think this?

3. Do you think school is different for Māori kids? How is it? Why do you think this?

Tell me about something you really liked. What made it so good? Do others of you agree? Why?

Tell me about something you didn't like. Why didn't you like it? What would have made it better?

4. Could teachers make school better for you? How would they do this? What would you tell them?

5. Who else could make school better for you? How would they do this?

B. Interview schedule for their whānau

From your own experience/perspective:

1. How would you describe your experiences of education?

What were your experiences of school?

What positive experiences do you recall?

What negative experiences do you recall?

2. What influences had the greatest impact on your education?

Social/cultural
Teachers
Parents/friends

3. In your experience, how did being Māori affect your education?

Positive/negative

4. How do you think your children's educational experiences are different to and are the same as yours?

In what way do you influence your children?
What expectations do you have for your children?
What expectations do you have of their teachers/school?

5. What advice would you give to others for improving the educational experiences of Māori students?

C. Interview schedule for the Teachers

From your own experience/perspective:

1. What are the experiences of Māori students in this school?

What are the areas where Māori students experience the most success in this school? Why do you think this is so?

What are the areas of challenge for Māori students? Why do you think this is so?

What do you do to improve the experiences of Māori students? What works best? What doesn't work? Why?

2. What are the greatest influences on Māori students' education? How do these influences impact on the experiences of Māori students in education?

Social/cultural

Teachers

Parents/friends

Other

3. Do you think Māori students' experiences of education have changed?

Explain

How do you know this?

What evidence tells you this?

4. What advice would you give to others for improving the educational experiences of Māori students?

What Māori experiences are students at this school offered?

How do you organise curriculum in your class- ability levels, and catering to different needs and wants?

How would you describe the achievement of your Māori students?

D. Interview schedule for the Principal

From your own experience/perspective:

1. What are the experiences of Māori students in this school?

What are the areas where Māori students experience the most success in this school? Why do you think this is so?

What are the areas of challenge for Māori students? Why do you think this is so?

What do you do to improve the experiences of Māori students? What works best? What doesn't work? Why?

2. What are the greatest influences on Māori students' education? How do these influences impact on the experiences of Māori students in education?

Social/cultural

Teachers

Parents/friends

Other

3. Do you think Māori students' experiences of education have changed?

Explain

How do you know this?

What evidence tells you this?

4. What advice would you give to others for improving the educational experiences of Māori students?

E. Interview schedule for Iwi representatives

From your own experience/perspective:

1. How would you describe your experiences of education?

What were your experiences of school?

What positive experiences do you recall?

What negative experiences do you recall?

2. What influences had the greatest impact on your education?

Social/cultural

Teachers

Parents/friends

3. In your experience, how did being Māori affect your education? Does this still hold true today? Explain

Positive/negative

4. How do you think the educational experiences of the children in your iwi are different to and are the same as yours? Why is this so?

What are the iwi aspirations for their children?

In what way do these aspirations influence whānau and children?

In what way do these aspirations influence schools?

What expectations do you have for your children?

What expectations do you have of their teachers/school?

5. Who would you target and what advice would you give to others for improving the educational experiences of Māori students?

ⁱThis approach differs somewhat from that used in the first phase of Te Kotahitanga which in the first instance developed a series of narratives of experience using a Collaborative Storying approach, (Bishop, 1996) in order to address Māori people's concerns about researcher imposition by focusing on the collaborative co-construction of the meaning that the participants ascribe to their reported experiences.

The narratives were then used in the project in three main ways. Firstly they were used to identify a variety of discursive positions pertaining to Māori student achievement and the potential impact of these positions on Māori student learning. The analysis of these narratives showed that while the most common discursive positions taken by Māori students, their families and their school principals was that which placed classroom caring and learning relationships at the centre of educational achievement, among teachers, the most pervasive explanation for the underachievement of Māori students was that they are the victims of pathological lifestyles that hinder their chances of benefiting from schooling.ⁱ Our subsequent analysis of detailed classroom observations over three time periods (Bishop et al 2003; Bishop et al 2007a, 2007b) demonstrated that the dominance of this deficit theorizing by teachers

was matched by the predominance of pathologising classroom practices such as transmission teaching, remedial programmes, behaviour modification programmes and suchlike. Such programmes perpetuate teachers' already low expectations of Māori students' ability, and continue their blaming of someone or something else outside of their area of influence. As a result they feel that they have very little responsibility for student's educational outcomes or agency. The main consequence of such deficit theorising for the quality of teachers' relationships with Māori students and for classroom interactions is that teachers tend to fatalistic attitudes in the face of relational and systemic imponderables. This in turn creates a downward spiralling self-fulfilling prophecy of Māori student achievement and failure. It is this use of the narratives of experience that has similarities with the approach used in this current approach.

Secondly, the narratives were then used in the professional development part of the Te Kotahitanga project to provide teachers with a vicarious means of understanding how students experienced schooling in ways that they might not otherwise have access to.ⁱ This experience provided teachers with a means of critically reflecting upon their own discursive positioning and the impact this might have upon their own students' learning.

Thirdly, the narratives provided a practical representation of what a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations might look like in practice. This we termed the Effective Teaching Profile (ETP) (see Bishop et al, 2003: Bishop et al, 2007). Fundamental to the ETP is teachers' understanding the need to explicitly reject deficit theorising as a means of explaining Māori students' educational achievement levels, and their taking an agentic position in their theorising about their practice. That is, practitioners expressing their professional commitment and responsibility to bringing about change in Māori students' educational achievement by accepting professional responsibility for the learning of their students.

These two central understandings are then manifested in these teachers' classrooms where the teachers demonstrate on a daily basis: that they care for the students as culturally located individuals; they have high expectations of the learning for students; they are able to manage their classrooms so as to promote learning; they are able to engage in a range of discursive learning interactions with students or facilitate students to engage with others in these ways; they know a range of strategies that can facilitate learning interactions; they promote, monitor and reflect upon learning outcomes that in turn lead to improvements in Māori student achievement and they share this knowledge with the students.

ⁱⁱ Overall results could vary by up to 2% from the individual data due to rounding.