



Māori Research Perspectives

*Tangata Whenua Community and Voluntary
Sector Research Centre*

**Inaugural Annual General Meeting
& Launch of Clearing House**

Families Commission

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Dr Lynne Pere

Kāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungūnu, Kāti Māmoe, Rangitāne, Ngāti Porou

Ko wai au?

Our kids!



Hamuera, Mereana, William,
Maharata and Thomas



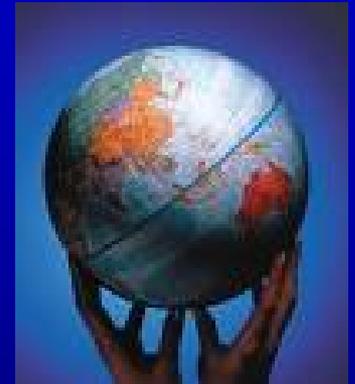
Outline of presentation

- ① Acknowledgement of whakapapa
- ② Expectation of excellence
- ③ Acceptance of time
- ④ Recognition of communal benefit
- ⑤ Understanding of cultural fit
- ⑥ Fostering of relationships



Whakapapa

- 🌀 All things and people have whakapapa
- 🌀 Connects past with present and future



Māori research history and development

Ⓢ Of little benefit

Ⓢ Negative



Research findings appear as yet another example of the overt and covert ways in which Māori people are reminded of their “shortcomings” and “weaknesses”.

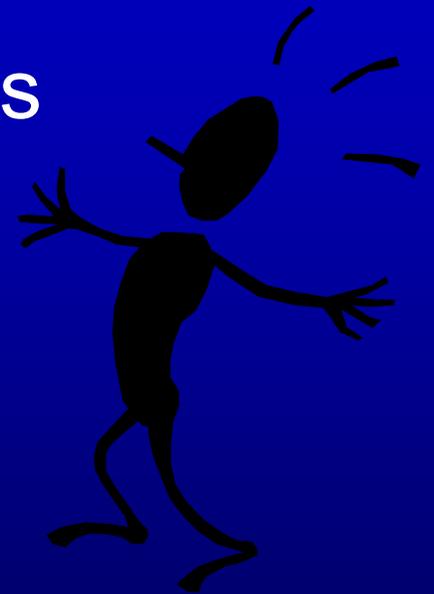
(Jackson, 1987:17)

We, as one ethnic minority, as a divergent entity, will be written about, scrutinised and ultimately objectified by others. For whose long-term gains?

(Te Awekotuku, 1984:247)

Māori as researchers

- ① Tāne searched for the baskets of knowledge
- ① Māui searched for his parents
- ① Rupe searched for his sister
- ① Arrival of Māori in Aotearoa
- ① Development of land and culture





Māori as the researched

- ① Newcomers became expert
- ① 'Findings' became entrenched
- ① Records of a 'dying race'

Every day, every year, some aspect of the Māori world is being researched.

(Te Awekotuku, 1991:13)



Translating whakapapa into research practice

No members of a culture can be understood in isolation from the cultural forces which shape them, and no culture can be understood unless account is taken of the attitudes, expectations, beliefs and values on which it is based.

(Jackson, 1987:25)

Excellence in research

- Ⓢ Expect excellence
- Ⓢ Excellence is an attainable outcome
- Ⓢ The Research Centre aims to demonstrate “the highest standards of research”



Research takes time

- ⌚ It doesn't happen over night...
- ⌚ Factor time into proposals
- ⌚ Take into account Maori processes – they take time





The importance of knowledge

Knowledge was to be kept from discovery or abuse by hostile people. Those who would learn that knowledge were required to observe the rule holding such knowledge as secret. Betrayal or breaking of this ethical commitment usually resulted in severe punishment.

(Milroy 1996:60)

In the Māori way, knowledge is a taonga. The person who has the knowledge is a storehouse for the people. To pass it out as they need it, to pass it on to future generations.

(Awatere, 1984:94)



...for the collective

For Māori there was none of the concept of “researcher” as an independent, neutral observer who was accountable to him/herself or the academic community rather than the community being researched. (Milroy, 1996:60)

There should be more specific aims and objectives in Māori research that are directed at helping people in their daily lives. (Stokes, 1985:3)

It is vital... that the knowledge gained from research benefits the community... the activity itself should have value and relevance to the people studied. (Te Awekotuku, 1991:14)



The importance of ethnicity

...researchers may be Māori or Pākehā. The racial or biological origin or skin colour is less important. What is important and essential is that the researcher can operate comfortably in both cultures, is bicultural and preferably bilingual. (Stokes, 1985:9)

But...

- Ⓢ Ethnicity is a critical element of cultural fit
- Ⓢ Ways of thinking and communicating are culturally determined

The difference with Māori...

① Access information differently



② Respond differently

③ Different expectations

④ Different assumptions



Foster relationships

- ② Embrace diversity
- ② Honour and protect relationships



Unleash Maori potential



*Unuhia i te rito o te harakeke
Kei whea te kōmako, e kō?
Whakatairangitia*

Rere ki uta, rere ki tai

Kī mai ki ahau

He aha te mea nui o te ao?

Māku e kī atu



© He tangata, he tangata, ā, he tangata!