



**Title of Project:**

*Practice Research: Implications for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning*

**Research Team:**

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## 1. Acknowledgements

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Te Rū Rangahau, the Māori Research Laboratory located at the College of Education, provided a physical and spiritual home for the Internship.

The project was aided by two anchor publications: the Hikairo Schema for early childhood settings (Macfarlane, Macfarlane, Tierney, Kuntz, Rarere-Briggs, Currie, Gibson, & Macfarlane, 2019) and the Hikairo Schema for Primary (Ratima, Smith, Macfarlane, Macfarlane, 2020) published by NZCER Press.

## 2. Preamble

*Ko Maungapohatu te maunga*

*Ko Waikaremoana te moana*

*Ko Hinepūkohurangi te wahine rangatira*

*Ko au tētahi o ngā tamariki o te kohu*

*Ko Mataatua te waka*

*Ko Matahi te marae*

*Ko Tūhoe te iwi*

I am an undergraduate graduate student at a tertiary institution that is geographically placed in Te Waipounamu, the University of Canterbury - Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha. The University of Canterbury has a vision of attracting and supporting people who are passionate about making a positive difference: *tangata tū, tangata ora*. I share this vision to be part of an organisation that has a tradition of world class research, scholarship and teaching.

I enrolled at the University of Canterbury with a keen interest in Criminal Justice and Indigenous Studies. In the course of my studies at the University of Canterbury I was introduced to leading researchers in the College of Education, Health, and Human Development and the information systems from which much of their thinking and theorising emerges. My curiosity and keenness was kindled by these leading researchers' interests in transforming theory into practice, and their enthusiasm for creating 'concrete' resources for end-users.

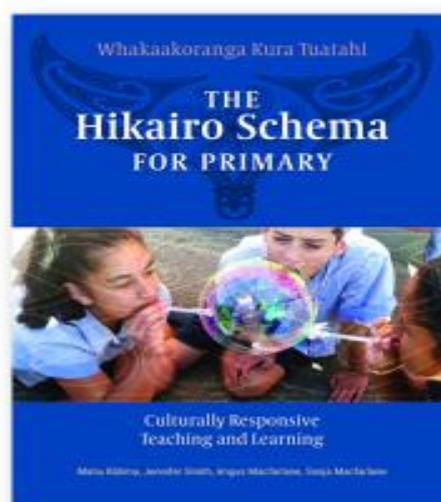
In life, I aspire to work in a field that interests me, supports my continued learning and provides positive outcomes for communities in Aotearoa.

*Maia Goldsmith*

### 3. Setting the Scene

This study, *Practice Research: Implications for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning*, aims to complement the research carried out by Macfarlane et al. (2019) and Ratima et al. (2020) which are classic examples of culture emerging from the past (has links to ancestral figures) and functioning in the present (is relevant to today's research contexts). Two recent publications (see pictures below of book cover pages) attest to this claim.

## A Shifting [Epistemological] Terrain



The research activities associated with the creation of these books, and other publications, focused on Māori perceptions of the extent to which teachers across the sector adopted, and advocated for some of the core values of Te Ao Māori (The Māori World) in their respective teaching and learning sites. Undertaking this Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga internship provided me with a first-time experience in working in a Māori research environment, Te Rū Rangahau<sup>1</sup>, on a topic that is relatively new to me. In a sense, this experience (as a summer intern) can be considered as not just crossing disciplines, but also crossing cultures. Crossing cultures is about making sense of hitherto blurred accounts of identities, languages, places and times. It

<sup>1</sup> Te Rū Rangahau: The Māori Research Laboratory at the University of Canterbury has incorporated into its title two key words. One of these, Rū (in this instance taken to mean vibrant) is a tribute to the mythical Rūaumoko (god of earthquakes and seasons) and the other, Rangahau (research), is a marker to remind us of an important dimension of our core work. This title was chosen as a way of recognising the resiliency and camaraderie that has been evident at the University of Canterbury. Te Rū Rangahau is a place of vibrant scholarship where postgraduates and staff can discuss plans, analyse activities, write proposals, report on and complete projects, and, importantly, express whanaungatanga.

has shaped my personal practical knowledge while simultaneously it has contributed to the discourse of educational research relating to culturally responsive pedagogies.

Māori have a distinct cultural identity and their perspective, compared to the mainstream culture in Aotearoa New Zealand, is often different. As the traditional custodians of this land, Māori are bound by whakapapa and the responsibilities bestowed on them as descendants from ancestral lines, which also determines the responsibilities to, and for, future generations.

Curriculum and instruction are the heartbeat of education programs across the sector. The daily exchange of teaching and learning is what keeps programs alive as critical knowledge and skills are transferred from teacher to learner, and vice-versa. The preparation of teacher professionalism includes a plethora of knowledge construction and skill development across a broad scope of categories, including teaching skills, learner development, and management of the learning setting, subject-specific content, and assessment (Howard & del Rosario, 2000). Curriculum and instruction are conveyed within contexts as well as through field experiences and more recently, sophisticated technology. Unfortunately, education curriculum maintains hidden assumptions and practices that actually sustain inequality through the lack of culturally relevant curriculum and instruction (Clarke et al., 2017).

The overarching aim of this internship study was to examine meanings and perceptions of the espousal of practice research and to relate these meanings and perceptions to the creation of education resources, such as the Hikairo Schema. This was achieved through (1) carrying out a review of the literature, (2) drawing from statements based on practitioners' experiences in the two anchor publications and (3) drawing from statements acquired through conducting interviews with practitioners who had proximity to and familiarity with, the Schema.

The auxiliary aims of this project were to:

- follow a research agenda that could be seen to be compatible to the responsibilities of a Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga internship; and
- be part of a compact group of researchers located in a Māori, tertiary education context.

Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga (NPM) is a Centre of Research Excellence (CoRE) which undertakes and invests in research concerning the needs and opportunities arising in Māori communities. NPM is particularly interested in the creative potential of:

- resources, assets, organisations and institutions of Māori peoples
- mātauranga Māori
- Māori people.

The NPM research programme has specific themes and priorities, declaring that it is critically aware of the importance of sharing research outcomes with appropriate audiences, user groups and stakeholders – Māori communities especially – so that positive change can be achieved. NPM is keen to support emerging researchers in the field of Indigenous development and to build capacity and capability through national and tertiary-based research projects and programmes. Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga has three main research themes:

- Whai Rawa: Māori Economies
- Te Tai Ao: The Natural Environment
- Mauri Ora: Human Flourishing

This *Practice Research* project orients strongly towards the theme of Mauri Ora. The better teachers are at crafting their practice culturally responsively, the more likely the *tamaiti* (child) motivation for learning, will flourish.

## 4. Methodology

### Design of the project

This study presents a comparative literature review of the research studies related to the effects of practice research for culturally responsive teaching and learning in early childhood centres and schools. First, the study explains the place of a Māori worldview, Māori values, and the Treaty of Waitangi when setting out on a research project. According to the review of international and local research, appropriately selected literature provides meaningfulness to studies that focus on such imperatives in education's constructivist effects, cultural effects,

effects on the performance in the target cohort (in this case learners) and effects on the affective and cognitive states of the learners and teachers. Second, the study presents a modest mention of some similarities and differences between the kinship nature of practice research to practice-based research and evidence-based practice. Finally, some practical recommendations and suggestions are offered.

The project adopted a small-scale Case Study approach that incorporated observations of an existing culturally imbued resource (the Hikairo Schema) that is underscored by kaupapa Māori principles. These observations were tested by commentaries made by educators familiar with the context and content of the resource, and by interviewing teachers who had experience with the resource as a practice tool. This is often referred to as triangulation – aimed at achieving more reliable findings. A qualitative approach strives to understand the perspective of participants or a situation by looking at first-hand experience to provide meaningful data. Kaupapa Māori principles support the notion that a satisfactory explanation is what counts, not the power of the method for deriving it (Bowen, 1996). In addition, kaupapa Māori research determines that significance is derived culturally, as well as statistically (Smith, 2005).

### Case Study Research

Case studies strive to portray ‘what it is like’ in a particular situation, to catch the close-up reality of participants’ lived experiences of, thoughts about and feelings for, a situation (Cohen et al., 2000) The Case Study approach has been especially used in social science, psychology, anthropology and ecology to accomplish an in depth study of a particular situation, rather than a sweeping statistical survey. It is a method used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. Whilst it may not answer a question completely, it will give some indications and allow further elaboration and thought provocation on a subject. Social scientists have regarded the case study as a useful research method for many years, to understand at an in-depth level the contextualised meanings within specific cases, and ensure a more holistic approach to research (Cohen et al., 2000).

### Kaupapa Māori research principles

Kaupapa Māori research principles stem from a growing consensus that research involving Māori needs to be conducted in culturally appropriate and responsive ways; that are in

tandem with kaupapa Māori theory as well as Māori cultural practices, preferences and aspirations (Irwin, 1994). Kaupapa Māori research is therefore the enactment of kaupapa Māori theory within a research context, and is driven by a social history and worldview that is distinctly Māori (Williams, 2010).

#### Collaboration with the research community

In keeping with the collaborative spirit of kaupapa Māori research, an existing relationship with a research community established the context for this research. In discussions with the Te Rū Rangahau University of Canterbury Māori research community, expressions were raised regarding the desire to have more understanding about the bicultural practices in the educational workplace and their need to be more inclusive of Te Ao Māori. In response, it was agreed that this project be tied to a related Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga Platform project (for research ethics purposes) and that senior Māori expertise was to be included at the centre of decision-making. Three principles informed these aims:

- to maintain and strengthen Māori cultural traditions;
- to foster connections between a tertiary institution (UC) and an educational site;
- to maintain an existing partnership.

Two senior staff of a local school were involved in the data stories section of the study.

## 5. Literature Review

### Te Ao Māori

Through time and whakapapa, Māori have gained and grown knowledge, known as Mātauranga Māori. This knowledge has been created and passed down through the generations for hundreds of years; a reality that continues. It is from this knowledge that Māori values – tikanga come to light. Based on tradition and beliefs, they provide an explanation for and guidance around the correct ways to perform activities and enable Māori to act in a manner that is socially acceptable within their community. Māori values are central to the guiding principles of Te Ao Māori – the world of Māori (Harmsworth, 2005a, 2005b)

### Māori Values

Kuntz et al. (2014) established five core Te Ao Māori values that were supported by senior Māori academics' recommendations. They defined these values and outlined how they are

relevant to workplace behaviours and attitudes. This study draws from four of those values and adopts the view that they maintain relevance in terms of educational practice. The values are as follows:

*Manaakitanga* involves reciprocity of kindness, respect, humility, hospitality – being a responsible host, caring for others, making people feel at home, treating others with respect, and caring for the environment. Overall it refers to the relationship between host and visitor, the teacher and the learner – and vice-versa. *Whakawhanaungatanga* is the notion that embraces whakapapa as a connective device that links individuals through generations. It has a strong focus on relationships. Māori, as tangata whenua, expect the support of their relatives no matter how geographically distant they are. This value also reaches beyond whakapapa relationships and includes non-related people who have developed relationships like kin. It involves taking responsibility for one another and including others in overall kaupapa (situation). In the whānau (family) context, those who encourage involvement in decision-making report strengthened collective action and positive outcomes when whakawhanaungatanga is enacted. The early childhood centre or school is different in setting, but similar in principle. *Wairuatanga* encompasses the spiritual and physical dimensions of thinking, being and doing, and, influences the behaviour of individuals in different spheres of life. It is believed and valued that there is a spiritual and physical being held together by a mauri – a unique life force or life energy that everyone and everything has. *Kaitiakitanga* involves preserving, protecting and sheltering – relating to environmental issues and the guardianship / preservation of traditional knowledge for the benefit of future generations. Consequences are severe when the responsibility of kaitiakitanga is not taken seriously, resulting in the loss of mana and taonga (treasures), or damaged and depleted resources. In practical realities of centres and classrooms, usually the teacher is charged with the kaitiakitanga role. Practice Research principles would strongly suggest that they adhere to this principle with accuracy and integrity.

Using an exploratory factor analysis (Gorsuch, 1988) of these Māori values Kuntz et al. (2014) were able to understand their meanings more fully. *Wairuatanga* was found to be a value that could stand independently, represented by a distinct dimension, but the other values were collectively underpinned by a common distinct factor; *whakamana tangata* – the notion of placing people first. Whakamana translates as ‘to enhance and give power and authority

to someone or something', and tangata translates as 'people'. The term whakamana tangata is displayed in the whakataukī (proverb) '*He aha te mea nui o Te Ao? He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!*' (What is the most important thing in the world? It is people! It is people! It is people!).

### Practice Research Values

Bent Flyvberg (2001) and others contend that phronetic social science theories such as Practice Research may actually act as a way of restoring the validity of research in the social or 'soft' sciences and help to reconnect the flow between research and practice. The word 'phronetic' – is a Greek word that refers to a sort of common sense or practical wisdom and speaks to the practical aspect of judgement intended in this new form of qualitative research analysis. This is because Practice Research's key intention is to be able to measure and observe practical events and subjects in a way that can be translated into scientific research and theory and also, to communicate scientific findings in ways relevant to practice (Flyvberg, 2001; Julkunen & Uggerhoj, 2016). There are two main elements to how Practice Research perspectives intend to do this. First, by creating research methods that are capable of analysing, measuring and testing qualitative data in a scientifically valid way and, second, by creating ways of communicating theoretical and scientifically valid research so that it is relevant and useful to the practical aspects it intends to impact.

The issue of creating useful, practical and accessible programs that can be successfully introduced to improve the quality of education and support responsive and dynamic teaching approaches is a challenge that is recognised by many in the education sector. Putting theoretical claims into practice has always been a difficult task for academics and professionals and, historically, it has created a divide between those who operate in the domains of theory and those who act in the practical realities of educational contexts (D'Cruz & Jones, 2014). In fields such as maths or science, objective scientific observation and analysis of subjects within a controlled test environment is seen as the most reliable and respected way to make claims about research (Parsonson, 2012; Roberts & Yeager, 2004). The positivist view of empirical research standards is well entrenched in some research domains. Recently, however, the question surrounding the relevance of conducting scientific and objective tests, when it comes to making claims about the more variable and fluid elements of human existence, has become an increasingly contentious issue across many disciplinary fields. For

example, elements such as human emotion, human behaviour, intuition or personal growth, which are the foci in fields such as education and social work are difficult concepts to contain, observe and repeat successfully (Higgs, 2010; Roberts & Yeager, 2004). Because of this reality, there is a strong claim that scientific research methodologies are somewhat limited in their ability to respond to the unpredictable and uncontrollable elements that are so present in the realities of human existence.

Few dispute the principle that practice should be based on the best available evidence, or that the basic tenets of evidence-based practice are potentially beneficial to practice for learners' outcomes. However, Dopson and Fitzgerald, as cited in (Gabbay & Le May, 2011), contend that there have been many barriers to overcome, not least the defiance of some professionals who argue that the evidence is often impracticable, irrelevant, or absent, and takes time to obtain. Gabbay and Le May (2011) add that, even with a willingness to adopt evidence to change practice, organisational barriers—such as inadequate resources or inappropriate systems—have provided further obstacles. Additional concerns have included the noticeable gaps between research and practice, particularly scant regard for evidence from the reality of what occurs within the hurly-burly of classrooms and centres, and models of good practice derived from culturally responsive pedagogies. With this concern in mind, the need to consider culturally based evidence to inform practice is paramount. The second major concern regarding Practice Research methods is the ability for its outcomes to be applied broadly to large populations and have a wide ranging and effective impact on issues within a practice (Roberts & Yeager, 2004). This is because, as has been determined, Practice Research at its core is about creating close, responsive relationships that are very involved with the particular subjects and issues they are analysing and this makes it difficult for the research itself to be broadly applied. The particular and focused aspects of Practice Research act as both its greatest strength and its biggest weakness. A strength because it allows this type of research to be in-touch and as close to the issue as possible but a weakness because there are major concerns as that the outcomes of this research may only be applicable to those particular subjects and issues it was responding to within that particular research. This is an extreme concern in fields like Health and Medicine where a mistake in best practice may result in a person's ultimate demise. In fields such as education or social work, while not as consequential, still have serious ramifications, potentially. The implementation of programs

and frameworks that are not adequately suited to those on whom they intend to impact can render a major waste of time and resources and can even be damaging to the progress intended. The need for discernment is very real.

### Practice Research Perspectives

Practice Research is a relatively new research perspective that has identified a disconnect between scientific inquiry and practice on the ground. It attempts to position itself as a way to bridge the long criticised gap between theoretical observation methodologies and the dynamic and unpredictable realities of practice in the real world. Gaining an increasing presence in fields such as Health, Medicine, Social Work, Arts and Education since the 1990s, Practice Research and its advocates have accurately claimed that historical methods of objective scientific observation and analysis often create limited outputs that do not effectively relate to the reality of the situation they are intending to inform (Parsonson, 2012). This is because most research is conducted from a separated and objective standpoint that responds to data collected and observed usually after the fact (Roberts & Yeager, 2004). Therefore, theoretical research outputs sometimes fail to respond practically and relevantly to the dynamic and changeable realities of the human world, which cannot be controlled, measured or predicted in the same way as natural sciences such as mathematics or biology. Indigenous researchers (Clarke et al., 2018; Ratima et al., 2020) while not disputing this approach, would encourage a more culturally measured approach, one not bereft of subjectivity.

## 6. Data Stories

### The education resource

Fundamentally, the Hikairo Schema is a resource that has been developed to support teachers' practice in early childhood centres and schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. It assists teachers in reflecting on the ways in which they engage with tamariki in the curriculum and in the learning environments, and encourages teachers' increased adeptness toward connectedness to learners and their whānau. The Hikairo Schema for early childhood (Macfarlane et al., 2019) acknowledges the official place and contribution of the national Māori Strategy *Ka Hikitia (Ministry of Education, 2013)*,

and the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017) as providing the ‘what’ in terms of the sectors’ responsibilities. It is proposed that the Hikairo Schema provides the ‘how’, and with that comes a contention that it is part of the puzzle relating to ‘the science of the concrete’. In essence, this resource has a practice research ‘fit’.

The Schema comprises seven dimensions, and each is represented by one of the seven letters in the name 'HIKAIRO'. Figure 1.0 below is a visual representation of what these seven dimensions encapsulate<sup>2</sup>.

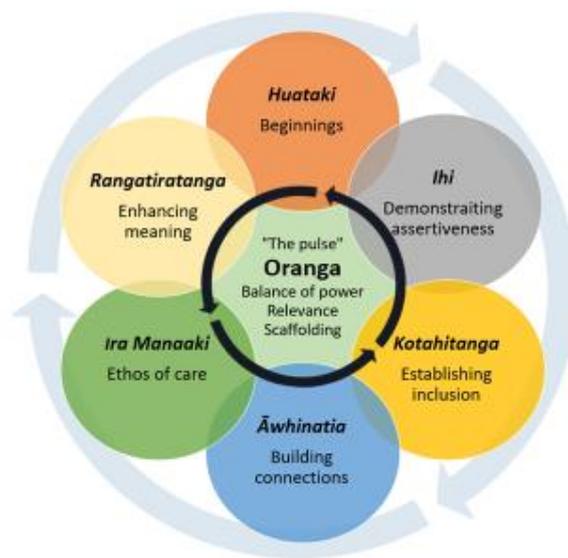


Figure 1: The dimensions of the Hikairo Schema

Macfarlane, et al. (2019) *The Hikairo Schema: Culturally responsive teaching and learning in early childhood education settings*, p.12.

This Data Stories section will aim to unpack the concept of Practice Research by discussing the main challenges it faces in gaining acceptance and acknowledgement against more preferred and verified research methods. Examples of Practice Research will be considered in order to evaluate its validity as an approach and as a useful and logical direction for disciplinary fields to follow. It will discuss perspectives that support the implementation of Practice Research programs (such as the Hikairo Schema) in centres and classrooms and how that may look in the regular protocols between teacher and learner. By doing this, it is hoped

<sup>2</sup> Further and fuller descriptions can be found in the 2019 and 2020 publications by NZCER Press, respectively authored by Macfarlane et al. and Ratima, Smith, Macfarlane, & Macfarlane.

that users of the resource will decipher, albeit subconsciously, what the core aspects of Practice Research are and also discuss some of the challenges and promises of Practice Research methodologies that may create opportunities for how it may be used.

#### Statements drawn from the resource

The Early Childhood Hikairo Schema (Macfarlane et al., 2019) was affirmed by the staff of a centre located within the Tai Tokerau (Northland) district.

*Our teaching team worked through the Hikairo Schema, reflecting on, and evaluating, our learning and progress at every stage, spending as much time as necessary on each component to ensure consistency and authenticity.*

One of the distinctive features of practice research is that teachers have time individually or as a team to reflect and evaluate as they progress. It supersedes the notion of having to be at a particular juncture by a certain time. What matters more is 'getting it right' and this corresponds to the Māori principle of tikanga.

*Our team's journey around the Hikairo Schema involved a lot of unpacking and understanding how the concepts will work in our learning and teaching context, how they look in practice for us. The Hikairo Schema provided a successful framework for developing stronger connections with our tamariki, whānau, and our community.*

Practice research is a wider phenomenon than the educational site – it expands to whānau and community. It encourages casting the net wider as well as deeper.

*After 18 months of [working] with the Schema, we now walk with purpose and understanding. We are able to measure and acknowledge our own mahi as teachers through an authentic te ao Māori lens.*

This statement reiterates that Practice Research values those who provide purposeful learning and has respect for Indigenous ways of knowing. Measuring of these Indigenous considerations, like practice, must be authentic.

The Hikairo Schema for primary schools (Ratima et al., 2020) was affirmed by the staff of a school located within the Te Tau Ihu (top of the south island) district.

*Collaboratively, we workshopped the Schema, unpacking components and viewing how it provided a Māori lens to assist reflection on our personal pedagogy. Booklets were created. Teachers chose the component they wanted to be observed on by a peer.*

This statement shows that Practice Research involves practice and research coming together, on the job. Not unlike their early childhood teacher counterparts, these teachers of older learners were adamant about getting it right for Māori.

*Ākonga were encouraged to contribute to how they viewed the learning environment in each component. This provided “student voice” and feedback to teachers and, along with teacher self-reflection and peer observation, rich data were gathered for kaiako learning conversations. New learning, undoing of learning, and teacher next steps ensued. Teachers self-reflect on their practice and how effective their relationships with ākonga are in developing the learning dispositions of all students.*

The Hikairo Schema principles of ‘balance of power’ (student voice) and scaffolding are highlighted in this statement.

#### Statements drawn from the interviews

The participants were experienced teachers in a large Christchurch secondary school. One is a teacher of French who had a passion for supporting Māori students and was keen to provide this support through culturally responsive practice. The other has competence in Māori language and customs and had been teaching at the school for 17 years.

*Why do I feel so strongly about Māori world and supporting it here, it really is cause there’s nothing I can do about (elsewhere), but here (in Aotearoa), there is so much to do... we can really make a difference.*

Although this teacher has grown up in another part of the world, she sees that with the right tools she can make a difference (culturally) for her learners. This points to the universality of Practice Research and to the potential that teachers have to make an impact in New Zealand schools. There may be more of an opportunity for biculturalism and multiculturalism than other countries.

*[I] Opened Hikairo resource and thought “this is it”..... Hikairo had the practical aspects. Away from diagrams and pretty pictures towards more interactive and self-reflective. [We were] able to measure and self-monitor progress.*

As a model, this teacher sees beyond the aesthetic qualities of the Hikairo resource. She sees practice in the form of interactive teaching and learning, self-reflection, and monitoring.

*Fortunately he [one of the university staff] gave access to the Schema and was allowed to share with a few select people. No copies [the staff member] now runs an enquiry group with two other teachers.*

Demand for these resources currently outstrips supply. This suggests that these teachers see the resource as useful and applicable to their work.

*One teacher (Social Studies) saw noticeable improvement with a “difficult” class within one month of using the Hikairo Schema. Even though we’re only beginning, we’re really keen to deepen understanding of Te Ao Māori. Just takes time.*

This is encouraging evidence, albeit anecdotal, of the resource having the desired impact on practice within the profession. Practice Research tools such as the Hikairo models are being across the curriculum areas. Māori students see the relevance to their world and non-Māori teachers see the relevance of deepening their understanding of the Māori world.

*Okay so “what does whanaungatanga mean, what does it look like?” starting from the start. Needing to get to know one another.*

At this juncture the teacher is realising the practices that connect people have deep-rooted pedagogical advantages.

*...but we need to have focus on the how and the “why”. This is where resistance is found. Many teachers struggle on the why this is important. This appeals to people who already want to and already are on board. Those who don’t, need to understand why it is important.*

This statement reiterates that while Practice Research has an emphasis on the ‘how’, it is important that teachers realise ‘why’ there is a need to go toward a cultural avenue to become a more accepted professional in the eyes of Māori students.

*This is our job [teachers], we swear to uphold Te Tiriti, and it’s our job. So we need to remind people of that.*

These teachers were aware and accepted their obligations. This awareness underpins the essence of the Hikairo Schema.

*[There is a] need to convince people of the positive outcome of this. Why do they need to spend more time on this? Russel Bishop wrote – what works for Māori works for everyone. Need to convince everyone of that.*

The participants saw the benefits of exploring cultural competencies further. They also warned of the need to encourage others to see these benefits, otherwise success could prove to be elusive.

*People get really afraid of getting it wrong or causing offence. Need people to be aware that it's okay to get it wrong when you're learning. Humility.*

The participant identifies a potential barrier to the uptake of the cultural responsibility agenda – the fear for the teacher of revealing their own limitations. The participant was also clear about what was needed in order to overcome this obstacle.

*Levelling with students, admitting that you don't know something is okay. Learning together. Everyone has to start somewhere. Communication is important!*

This statement resonates with the Huataki element of the Hikairo Schema – the decision 'to begin' is the start of a pathway toward a cultural destination. Thereafter culturally responsive communication will require an ongoing commitment to professional development.

*I've seen a major change in student attitude toward tīkanga Māori even in just the past few years, reflective of social change towards Māori in this country. Students in French classes a few years ago would say 'I'm here to learn French, not Māori'. This is changing, now [the attitude is] more inclusive.*

This statement reiterates the incremental nature of Practice Research and that a change in student attitude may relate to changes within the profession. Similarly, changes within the profession may impact on student attitudes.

To conclude this section, the data stories show, on the one hand, that evidence from the resources mostly concur with the interviewee's statements. In particular, the resources are seen as timely, pragmatic, and usable. They address the need for a simple guide to beginning the process of development towards culturally responsive teaching. The resources confirm and support the teacher's aspirations to make a meaningful contribution to enhancing the mana of the learners and to honour the principles of the Treaty. On the other hand, the interviewee data stories highlight areas within the resources that do not address some of the barriers to uptake within the profession of teaching. Of importance is the lack of a common understanding within the profession as to why culturally responsive teaching should be a

priority. It has been suggested by the interviewees that the resources don't address this issue and that some teachers do not appreciate that what is good for Māori is also good for all students. In other words, inclusiveness, respect for culture, and integration of Māori knowledge and pedagogy will benefit all learners, not just Māori.

## 7. Discussion

There are many in the world of research that hold the strong contention that it is the repeatable and predictable elements of the most popular research practices that makes research claims robust and verifiable. They add that this the most prominent feature that is lacking in research involving fluid concepts and qualitative knowledge. There is no doubt that socially orientated research has found great difficulty when it comes to measuring results and predicting outcomes in human behaviour and existence. Because of this, professionals in fields such as education and social work have often struggled with policy and procedure in the form of numerically loaded academic jargon that is scientifically valid but practically disconnected (Parsonson, 2012). This project has illustrated that the resource and people involved in the Practice Research spaces have, in fact, connected authentically with the theoretical drivers, eliminated scientific jargon, and preserved a kind of practice that makes instruction more meaningful for teachers and learners.

The data stories are in accord with Bent Flyvberg (2001) and others' contentions that phronetic social science theories such as Practice Research may actually act as a way of restoring the validity of research in the social or 'soft' sciences and help to reconnect the flow between research and practice. The Hikairo Schema resources, coupled with the validating comments from experienced professionals, highlight the reality that efforts are able to be measured and observed in terms of practical events and subjects. The scientific research and theory required to prepare the resources were translated into relevant practice (Flyvberg, 2001; Julkunen & Uggerhoj, 2016). There was evidence of creating ways of communicating valid research (from tribal ancestors through to contemporary academics and teachers) so that it is relevant and useful to the practical aspects it intended to impact (learners).

Being deemed a realistic or "concrete" science, Practice Research aims to position itself within the practical elements of the research and create an active interaction with those it is analysing rather than remaining as an objective and distanced observer (Bager-Charleson,

2014). This was a feature of this project. In tandem with the literature, the project showed Practice Research requires the formation of a relationship with the subjects and elements it is observing that is aware, responsive and remains close throughout the entire process of data collection, analysis and outcome. Therefore, at the very centre of it, Practice Research is about forming relationships and facilitating successful collaboration between those conducting the research, those implementing it and those impacted by it. This aspect is considered one of the strengths of Practice Research that sets it aside from previous (associated) research methodologies. Both on its own and as a complement to more positivistic research, the collaboration with research participants (including practitioners) helps to produce practical data and experience often lacking in quantitative research projects

Without a doubt, research methods such as Randomised Control or Double-Blind studies have served as reliable means of evaluating data in many fields for many years. The introduction of Practice Research in fields that require analysis of more humanistic concepts does not eradicate the necessity of conducting robust and verifiable research, nor does it disregard the need for such scientific methods to continue in operation where necessary (Macfarlane et al., 2015). It is important to be clear that the introduction of Practice Research is not an *either/or* choice between a Practice Research approach and a Positivist approach (as an example). Where hesitation is present, Practice Research can simply be used as a way to complement objective scientific research practices and may act as a guideline for informing policy and practice guidelines already in place by other research, rather than a method that is definitive in itself (Macfarlane, 2012).

The second major concern regarding Practice Research methods is the ability for its outcomes to be applied broadly to large populations and have a wide ranging and effective impact on issues within a practice (Roberts & Yeager, 2004). This is because, as has been determined, Practice Research at its core is about creating close, responsive relationships that are very involved with the particular subjects and issues they are analysing and this makes it difficult for the research itself to be broadly applied. The particular and focused aspects of Practice Research act as both its greatest strength and its biggest weakness. A strength because it allows this type of research to be in-touch and as close to the issue as possible but a weakness because there are major concerns as that the outcomes of this research may only be applicable to those particular subjects and issues it was responding to within that particular

research. This is an extreme concern in fields like Health and Medicine where a mistake in best practice may result in a person's ultimate demise. In fields such as education or social work, the implementation of programs and frameworks that are not adequately suited to those they intend to impact can render a major waste of time and resources and can even be damaging to the progress intended. These myths were dispelled. The implementation of programs and frameworks proved to be ideally suited to those whom they were intended to impact and were not a waste of time and resources. Neither was it damaging to the progress intended. It is argued that the converse is true, as supported by the following professional using the Hikairo Schema.

*If kaiako can see a working example within the kura and hear from kaiako and ākongā they know that it does work, they might be keen to jump on board the waka.*

*To make a framework attractive to kaiako I think you need to very directly connect it to the Standards for the Teaching Profession, so it is very clear to kaiako how this will help them achieve those standards which they are already working towards rather than being an additional piece of work.*

Practice Research has to be pragmatic, sensible, and variable. Being keen to 'jump on board the waka' is a good thing. The better thing is that 'they know that it does work'. Its likelihood of working successfully is often contingent on other variables and in the statement above there is reference to 'connecting to the Standards for the Teaching Profession'. That Practice Research is variable is evidenced by an ability and a willingness to change.

## 8. Recommendations

A selection of the recommendations is listed here:

- Hold fast to deeply held teaching values and moral standards.
- Complement these values and standards with Practice Research contentions.
- Value researchers and friends within the context of the centre, school or professional community because they are valuable sources of knowledge and support.
- Practice Research extends beyond the formal educational environment. Help to ensure that home environments are positive, safe, caring and nurturing. Individuals who are products of such environments are more content, emotionally secure and resilient.
- Ensure educational programmes have meaningful links to the local people, their history and their language. These links are prime Practice Research sites.

- Encourage the use of Practice Research resources that espouse a clearly marked path to success for Māori.

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