

Resistance and revitalisation

Kaupapa Māori emerged from a proactive movement of resistance to the hegemony of a colonial system that assimilated Māori through education, and removed them from their own language and cultural heritage. In the 1970s as a nation we accepted the need to revitalise Māori language, culture and aspirations through Māori self-determination.

Therefore the essence of kaupapa Māori theories embrace a Māori worldview and uses Māori metaphor to illuminate a journey of revitalisation and transformation. At its heart, kaupapa Māori relates to 'being Maori' and is deeply connected to Māori principles and philosophy. Kaupapa Māori takes for granted the legitimacy and validity of the beliefs and practices of Māori, the Māori language and the cultural, intellectual, political and social legitimacy of being Māori.

Key principles

Distinguished Professor Graeme Smith identified the following key principles within kaupapa Māori for education:

1. tino rangatiratanga (the principle of self-determination)
2. taonga tuku iho (the principle of cultural aspiration)
3. ako Māori (the principle of culturally preferred pedagogy)
4. kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga (the principle of socio-economic mediation)
5. whānau (the principle of extended family structure)
6. kaupapa (the principle of collective philosophy)
7. Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the principle of the Treaty of Waitangi) and
8. āta (the principle of growing respectful relationships).

These principles were further added to by Professor Linda Smith when describing kaupapa Māori as it applied to research:

1. the principle of whakapapa, or the relationships between all things
2. the principle of te reo as a vehicle for articulating the Māori world view
3. the principle of tikanga Māori or how one behaves in a Māori world
4. the principle of rangatiratanga or autonomy and again,
5. the principle of whānau.

As well as reclaiming Māori knowledge, Kaupapa Māori challenges Western ideas of what constitutes valid knowledge. Rather than the ongoing abuse and belittlement of Māori ways of knowing, Māori communities are reclaiming ownership of their own knowledge in support of the revitalisation and protection of all things Māori. This enables Māori to take responsibility for transforming their own situation by taking a more proactive role in bringing about the changes that they identify as being important. Māori can therefore reposition away from deficit positions about their status through colonisation, to positions of reclamation and transformation through agency and decolonisation.

Kaupapa Māori: Underpinning Poutama Pounamu practice

In supporting educators to assist Māori learners to enjoy and achieve education success as Māori, the Poutama Pounamu whānau have always attempted to utilise Kaupapa Māori as one of the key underpinning theoretical frameworks. We centre the work within a Māori worldview, we draw from

Māori aspirations, preferences and practices and we build upon previous kaupapa Māori scholars and their research.

Shared responsibilities to Kaupapa Māori

On 1 August 2020, the latest Education and Training Act came into effect replacing Education Acts of 1964 and 1989.

The 2020 Act requires significant reform to the education and training work programmes across the system. Perhaps the most significant of these changes requires schools, through their boards to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by:

- working to ensure that its plans, policies, and local curriculum reflect local tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori, and te ao Māori
- taking all reasonable steps to make instruction available in te reo Māori and tikanga Māori; and
- achieving equitable outcomes for Māori students.

In 2018 the *Korero Mātauranga* process saw conversations about the future direction of education held throughout the country. A number of aligned documents emerged including *He taonga te tamaiti – Every child a taonga: Early learning action plan 2019-29*. This document makes explicit Early Childhood's responsibilities in this area:

The early learning curriculum, Te Whāriki, is an expression of biculturalism. It recognises Māori as tangata whenua, and assumes a shared obligation for protecting Māori language and culture, and for ensuring that Māori are able to enjoy educational success as Māori. All early learning services are expected to include te reo and tikanga Māori in the curriculum.

p.8 He Taonga Te Tamaiti Ministry of Education 2019

The ECE licensing provisions have required centres to align with Te Tiriti o Waitangi since 2008.

Together, these legal requirements across the learning pathway ensure Kaupapa Māori can be appreciated by wider groups of people in Aotearoa and that non Māori must take greater responsibility for the part they play in this work as well. Notwithstanding this, kaupapa Māori theory requires us to move beyond conversations and as Smith challenges;

“Show me the blisters on your hands - in other words how is your theorising work linked to tangible outcomes that are transformative”.

Chapt. 6 Critical Conversations in Kaupapa Maori



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