

<http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz>

ResearchSpace@Auckland

Copyright Statement

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

This thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of this thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from their thesis.

To request permissions please use the Feedback form on our webpage.

<http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/feedback>

General copyright and disclaimer

In addition to the above conditions, authors give their consent for the digital copy of their work to be used subject to the conditions specified on the [Library Thesis Consent Form](#) and [Deposit Licence](#).

Wrestling with angels: A Pākehā researcher in Anahera School

Tim Andersen

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
of the degree of Doctor of Education

The University of Auckland

2015

Abstract

This thesis reports on research into the effects of child poverty and Māori ethnicity on educational success, and how teachers and education officials understand and internalise these effects in their work with schools in low socioeconomic communities. The thesis presents two stories: one about a school referred to as Anahera School—a low decile urban primary school with a 100% Māori roll. The second story tells how my research relationship with Anahera School forced me to look again at everything I thought I knew.

The thesis presents a rich, engaging account of everyday life in Anahera School. The pseudonym Anahera, which means Angel, is chosen to reflect the biblical story of Jacob's wrestle with an angel to gain a blessing. Low decile schools also wrestle with poverty and related challenges, in order to help children achieve. But an angel is impossible to wrestle, as are systemic social forces including economics and history, but seeking to prevail is the only option for schools which are expected to make a difference for students.

Māori educational achievement is not a recent problem and cannot be explained simply by poverty-related factors. Māori poverty and hence underachievement result from the processes of colonisation, which marginalise Māori people, language and culture, reflecting and perpetuating hierarchical discourses of European superiority and Māori inferiority. Schools play an important role in these processes through policies informed by dominant Pākehā assumptions, yet these effects are often misunderstood by education professionals, policy makers and government officials.

Neoliberal influences on education also constrain understandings of Māori identity and the need for culturally responsive and inclusive teaching and learning. This lack of understanding impedes the ability of education policy to achieve its expressed aims, and supports the continuation of the status quo in a self-perpetuating cycle.

This research project contributes to professional knowledge and understanding of Māori education, focusing on the influence of child poverty, and how this influence is understood by teachers, education professionals and government officials. New knowledge arises from the insights gained by combining empirical data collected in the research school with auto-

ethnographic accounts of learning cultural responsiveness, and critical analyses of relevant literature and theoretical concepts.

This research challenges the egalitarian myth that all New Zealanders are on a level playing field of opportunities for success in life. It also explains why policy has not transformed poor Māori achievement, given that education policies focus on schools in isolation, rather than as part of a holistic response.

Acknowledgements

Firstly I want to thank my wife Naomi for her unconditional support on this long journey. In times when giving up was a very real option you gave me encouragement to keep persevering, and understanding in order to dedicate time to it. Thank you to my children Neve, Matt and Sam who have been born and have grown up during this doctoral journey. You teach me new things every day and I am very proud of you all. To my parents – thank you for your support and funding my way. To Jo my mother-in-law – thank you for undertaking the tedious task of transcribing taped interviews. To my supervisors Dr Georgina Stewart and Dr Margaret McLean - I am very grateful for your critical support and encouragement. To the wonderfully dedicated people with whom I had the opportunity to work at Anahera School - I admire you greatly for the daily struggles that you engage in to support the students in your care.

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22-23.

Tim Andersen

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
Chapter One: Introduction	1
“Welcome to Anahera”	2
The research question and its significance.....	5
<i>Researcher positioning</i>	6
Towards culturally responsive practice	8
<i>A dialogue about the first draft thesis submission</i>	8
<i>Facing up to the feedback</i>	14
<i>Understanding and knowledge of Māori</i>	16
<i>The importance of the history of Māori education</i>	17
<i>‘Sledgehammer writing’ and standards of scholarship</i>	18
Thesis chapter overview	18
Chapter Two: Literature Review	20
The current situation for Māori in schools.....	21
<i>National Standards data</i>	22
<i>NCEA and UE data</i>	22
<i>PIRLS data</i>	22
<i>PISA data</i>	23
<i>The ‘long brown tail’ of Māori educational achievement</i>	23
The history of Māori in schools	24
<i>The earliest New Zealand schools</i>	24
<i>Before World War Two</i>	26
<i>After World War Two</i>	29
<i>Changes in the 1970s</i>	32
<i>The 1980 and 1990s</i>	34
<i>Māori education in the twenty-first century</i>	37
Concepts for investigating and describing Māori education.....	40
<i>Foucault’s notion of discourse</i>	40
<i>Education policy</i>	42
<i>Bourdieu’s concepts of capital and habitus</i>	43
<i>Factors that influence teacher expectations</i>	44
<i>Ethnicity and identity</i>	45
<i>Neoliberal education reforms</i>	50
Conclusion	51

Chapter Three: Methodology	53
<i>Theoretical Framework</i>	54
<i>What is research?</i>	54
<i>Research methods and methodology</i>	55
<i>Does qualitative education research provide new knowledge?</i>	58
Study design.....	59
<i>Finding a research school</i>	60
<i>Approaching the research school</i>	61
<i>Data collection</i>	61
<i>Ethnography data: participant observation</i>	61
<i>Interview data</i>	63
<i>Engaging with interview participants</i>	63
<i>Documents about the school</i>	64
<i>Research diary and field notes</i>	65
<i>Narrative data</i>	65
<i>Data analysis</i>	66
Ethical considerations	66
<i>Informed consent</i>	67
<i>Anonymity</i>	67
<i>Power relationships</i>	68
<i>Recognising Māori perspectives</i>	69
<i>Ownership of the research data</i>	70
Chapter Four: School voices	71
<i>Challenging behaviour</i>	73
<i>Who is involved in challenging behaviour?</i>	75
<i>When and where did challenging behaviour occur?</i>	78
<i>Understanding challenging behaviour?</i>	83
<i>Who viewed challenging behaviour as a problem?</i>	86
<i>Teacher perceptions of student behaviour</i>	86
<i>Was challenging behaviour viewed individually or collectively?</i>	90
<i>Providing structure during break times</i>	95
<i>Were school wide initiatives viewed collectively?</i>	99
<i>School wide implementation struggles</i>	99
<i>Māori culture in the curriculum</i>	102
Chapter Five: Engaging with the community	108
<i>Proud to be Māori</i>	111
<i>Māori gangs in the local community</i>	112
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>	114
<i>Absenteeism and transience</i>	116
<i>Parental engagement with the school</i>	117
Chapter Six: Anahera School.....	120
Part I: Introducing Anahera School	120

<i>Achievement levels at Anahera School</i>	121
Part II: A day in the life of Anahera School	124
<i>The school day starts before the school day starts</i>	124
<i>The bell rings</i>	125
<i>Puffers Club</i>	126
<i>Kapa haka practice</i>	129
<i>My body is at school, but my mind is at home</i>	130
<i>Staff meeting at 3.15pm</i>	132
Chapter Seven: Discussion	134
The ‘Long Brown Tail’ and students of Anahera School	134
Reducing the influence of poverty on children’s learning	136
Teacher expectations.....	138
<i>Discourses of deficit and teacher behaviour</i>	140
<i>The importance of understanding history</i>	142
Māori ethnicity and resistance to disadvantage	143
Current policy: tweaking or aiming for sustainable change?.....	144
Difficult learning for education professionals	145
School as a social service hub.....	147
Chapter Eight: Conclusion	149
Synopsis of the thesis.....	149
Synopsis of the findings.....	150
Implications for further research.....	152
Limitations of the research.....	153
Final thoughts.....	153
Glossary of Māori words	155
Appendices.....	157
<i>Appendix A: Interview Participant Information Sheet: BOT / Parent</i>	158
<i>Appendix B. Interview Participant Information Sheet: Teachers & support staff</i>	161
<i>Appendix C. Interview Consent Form</i>	164
<i>Appendix D. Student Participant Information Sheet and Assent Form</i>	165
<i>Appendix E. Semi-structured interview schedule</i>	166
References.....	168

Chapter One: Introduction

There are some common-sense understandings about education and egalitarianism that are characteristic of the national identity of New Zealand. Firstly, few would disagree that a good education is key for a successful life (Child Poverty Action Group, 2014). Relatedly, it is widely believed that education can overcome the disadvantage of growing up in an impoverished family (Boston & Chapple, 2014). New Zealanders also take pride in being an egalitarian nation, where everyone has equal rights and is given a fair chance in life. This includes the belief that school is a ‘level playing field’ where we all begin our educational pathways from the same point, which means that the ‘fittest’ and most hardworking deserve their success. But each of these ideas is open to challenge.

There is mounting concern today about child poverty in New Zealand, and its short and long-term implications, for evidence shows that approximately 285,000 people live in settings affected by poverty (Child Poverty Action Group, 2014). There is overwhelming evidence showing that family socioeconomic status has a significant influence on education outcomes (Carpenter & Osborne, 2014). Children from impoverished families often start school with lower literacy and numeracy skills than children from higher socioeconomic status families, and this gap tends to widen over time (Snook & O'Neill, 2014). This does not mean they won't achieve to the same levels as those children from higher communities, but it does mean that it is a greater challenge for them to do so.

There is a longstanding and intransigent ethnic education gap, whereby the outcomes of schooling for Māori are significantly worse than the national average (Hattie, 2013). This thesis reports on research into the effects of these complex and sometimes contradictory ideas about child poverty, Māori ethnicity and educational success, and the work of teachers and education officials in schools in low socioeconomic communities.

The original motivation for this project came in the form of a letter (below) from a local school principal to the regional office of the Ministry of Education where I worked, in which he sought assistance for a number of students at his school who were presenting with severe behaviour problems:

We have a large number of challenging pupils for whom in-school assistance is either not available, or is very limited. We are struggling to meet our 'general needs' so all external help the serious cases receive will free up our internal resources.

My motivation to want to help schools in the region arose from my familiarity with the area, having grown up there, and later working as a teacher, an experience that convinced me that Māori students could be better served by the education system. More recently, I worked as an advisor to schools, supporting students experiencing severe behaviour problems. In this role I realised that many schools were struggling with the demands of large numbers of children presenting with behaviour problems. I wanted to know more about how to support schools with large numbers of students displaying challenging behaviours, and teachers displaying practices which influenced this dynamic. My experience as a teacher told me that things could be done at a school level to ameliorate these concerns. For example, I had witnessed how teachers making themselves visible to students at the end of lunchtime prevented arguments and fighting among the children on their way back into class, and provided teachers with an opportunity to positively engage with students on the way back to class after a break.

This thesis presents the story of my work as a Pākehā researcher in one low-decile school with a 100% Māori roll, and what I found out about myself and my country in the process. In this thesis, the research school has been given a fictional identity 'Anahera School' as a way of maintaining anonymity and for the purposes of telling the story of schools like this, and the everyday lives of teachers and students there.

The next section tells the story of my first introduction to Anahera School as a whole, at a school assembly especially for me. This vignette illustrates my views and assumptions of this school and community that I held before I developed a long term relationship with them. These views and assumptions would be radically challenged and changed during the course of completing the thesis research, as clarified in the remaining sections of this chapter, below.

“Welcome to Anahera”

As my wife, my daughter and I drove through the suburb towards Anahera School, I was reminded by everything we could see that this was one of the poorest parts of the town where we live. We passed a parked police car with lights flashing - the police had stopped a car by

the side of the road close to the school. As we passed the police car I said to my wife, sarcastically, “Welcome to Anahera”. This suburb held a reputation as a poor, dysfunctional community with a heavy gang presence within the city that it was situated. Undoubtedly, the perception I held of the suburb influenced what I expected to find in Anahera School.

Approximately 50% of the houses are state houses in this suburb, which has experienced a general deterioration over time. Later, I would be shown historical pictures of the community showing the original condition of houses, fences, and streets, in stark contrast to the way they are now. In the year prior to my research in the school, a sum of several million dollars was spent upgrading state houses in the town, of which over \$100,000 was spent on state houses near Anahera School. The local community has also organised clean-up projects to try to restore some pride.

A large, arresting photograph of the Māori cultural group in full performance mode graces the entrance way into the school administration building. The faces of the students in the photo are utterly absorbed in the performance: nothing is held back emotionally. They look fierce but proud of themselves within the context of a Māori cultural event - an expression of who they are.

I was about to begin an intensive year-long research relationship with the school within the context of an ethnographic investigation. A pōwhiri - the customary process of greeting visitors to new places or contexts within Māori culture - was standard practice for any new visitor entering this environment. It gives both the hosts (tangata whenua) and the visitors (manuhiri) the opportunity to speak and share their values and ideas, paving the way for them to come together as one group. It also gives both the tangata whenua and the manuhiri the opportunity to witness the event, participate in the occasion, and mix together over food (kai) after the event. As a Pākehā researcher it was correct protocol for me to begin my time in the school in this way.

Around the time of my pōwhiri, a local newspaper article had reported that 10% of the crime committed in the town occurs in the suburb where Anahera School is located, which has only 3% of the town’s population. A community police station had recently been established near the school, with a team of six officers. The article reported that after a year, police were getting a friendlier reception than when they had first been relocated in the community. Two

days after this article appeared, an incident occurred where residents had reacted after police stopped a car near the school for driving at nearly twice the speed limit. Men wielded spades and wheel braces and threw objects at the patrol car, forcing police to abandon the pursuit until back up arrived.

My pōwhiri was to take place in the school hall. As I walked into the hall, I felt a sense of nervousness coupled with the anticipation of a new opportunity in my research journey. This was largely a step into the unknown. While the methodological approach that underpinned my research proposal provided solid guidance in regard to the research pathway that I was about to take, it gave no guarantee of a positive working relationship with the school community.

I was really nervous about the pōwhiri because I felt like all of the attention was going to be on me. I also wasn't sure how much the students had been told about my presence or intent within the school. The pōwhiri followed a process that I was familiar with as I had been part of a number of workplace pōwhiri before. I knew at some point toward the end of the process I would be offered the floor to speak. I had prepared for this and had a script at the ready. When it was my turn to speak, I thanked the school for their warm welcome and for the opportunity to work at Anahera School. I thanked my colleagues and family for their support, and told the school that they had provided me an opportunity that I valued greatly. At the end I said that my biggest hope was that our work and time together would be fun and that it will result in good things for this school. After I had spoken, my supporter group and I sang a waiata, which was followed by the hongi, after which the students and teachers returned to class, and my group were joined by Principal and several other members of the school community in the staffroom for refreshments.

After the pōwhiri, my wife and I talked about what the children might actually have thought of my presentation and me. My wife suggested that the children were probably thinking, "Who the hell are you?" Even though I had put a lot of time into preparing for the pōwhiri and pitching it to the children's level of understanding, I tended to agree with her. As a Pākehā researcher, I was asking to become part of the way they do things for a year. I did not expect all the staff and students to accept my motives or me. Further than this, I expected resistance.

Through my job I already knew some concrete things about the school. For example, I knew they regularly provided breakfast and lunch for a fair proportion of the children, and felt ambivalent about this. One recent morning my own son had forgotten his school bag – as we discovered when my wife and I dropped him off at his school on our way to work. As a result of leaving his bag at home, he faced the prospect of being issued with a marmite sandwich for lunch by the school, and his name entered into a book to record that this had occurred. My wife and I made an instant decision to drive a 30-minute round trip back to our house to get his school bag and lunch and drop it back to him to avoid being seen as parents who didn't provide. If the school continually intervenes to be a substitute for what is really a parent's responsibility to feed their kids, is this really solving the problem?

The next day after the pōwhiri was the weekday I had selected as my 'research day' at Anahera School. For the next four school terms, I would spend one day in the school every week. Again, nervousness and eager anticipation dominated my mood. The anxiety centred on whether or not I would be accepted in the school since, if I was not, the entire research project could be jeopardised.

To my delight, many of my initial anxieties were alleviated that first full day at Anahera School. What occurred surprised me! The resistance I expected from staff, students, and parents did not occur or if it was present, I did not sense it. The teaching and support staff were friendly and happy to have me in their classes to observe and meet the children. My first interactions with the children in the playground and classroom were positive and fun. To my surprise, the children called me 'Matua Tim'. "Matua? They barely know me" I thought. I felt humbled since my understanding was that, within Māori culture, the title Matua is used as a respectful form of address, and I wondered if I deserved this level of respect.

--ooOoo--

The research question and its significance

The research question addressed in this thesis is: **What is the relationship between child poverty, Māori ethnicity, and educational success, and how is this relationship understood by teachers and education officials working in low decile primary schools?**

This question is important because of commonly-held opinions that ‘blame the victims’ of poverty-related settings, such as the communities of low-decile primary schools. These attitudes and perceptions of deficit do little to assist communities who are already struggling anyway. Education policies and systems expect schools to ‘fix’ issues like transience, absenteeism and child hunger to achieve better achievement levels. For many low-decile primary schools, these issues are overwhelming in their severity. Such policy-related decision-making reflects limited understanding of the fundamental socio-cultural and historical reasons why Māori students from low socioeconomic communities are experiencing poorer achievement outcomes in national statistics.

The final research question shown above represents a significant shift compared with the original research question. This change, and the accompanying change in my positioning as the researcher, is described below.

Researcher positioning

I started this research with the intention of wanting to make a difference for the education community that I worked within, and for a Māori school situated within this community. I thought I had something to offer the school to help it become a better and safer place for students and staff. I knew they were struggling with student behaviour and high levels of violence. I wanted to help the school implement a school-wide behaviour management plan, and to capture a ‘before and after’ picture that I would use as the foundation of my doctoral thesis, because I was interested in community and school based factors that influenced school climate. I was interested in tracking student behavioural incidents across a whole school environment, understanding the individual and group function of the behaviour, and how an evidence-based, school-wide behavioural intervention could reduce the number and intensity of the behaviours. I was also interested in the school’s response to community factors that influence school climate like poverty and child hunger. I ultimately wanted to understand how to better support schools that were experiencing challenging behaviour amongst their students. These ideas and themes formed the basis of my original study design, before I entered Anahera School, and the research question in my first draft thesis submission:

(Research question from first submission) What concepts and processes of a school-wide behavioural approach are important in influencing a school community’s views and

interpretations of antisocial behaviour, in a primary school with a predominantly Māori student population?

At the beginning of my research I felt my intentions to help the school while completing a data gathering process were well-meaning. I recall feeling justified in what I was attempting to do because I planned to ‘give’ knowledge to the school through the implementation of a programme of support, while at the same time gathering data for my research purposes. But the ‘give and gather’ methodology I had originally envisaged did not go as planned after I entered Anahera School. While the school was very obliging in giving me access to their records, and members of the school community were willing to be interviewed, the development of a school wide behaviour management plan did not eventuate, and therefore I could not track its effectiveness. In retrospect, I was naive to expect that the school would engage in a full scale review and implementation of their behaviour management systems according to the timeframe of my doctoral research.

My first thesis submission was heavily criticised for: a mismatch between the literature review and the rest of the thesis; the methodology claims; and a deficit view of the Māori school community in the research, as is illustrated in the vignette above titled *Welcome to Anahera*. My first thesis submission resulted in a period of revision and resubmission, during which the direction and design of the research project changed considerably. This thesis is a thoroughly revised version of the first draft thesis submission. I count myself fortunate to have had the level of critique and input I have had since my first draft failed to progress to oral examination, although it took me considerable time and effort to acknowledge and profit from this critique. My research journey started with a specific focus on helping others who I thought would benefit from what I had to offer, and ended up leading to a thorough examination of my own prejudices and unchallenged views, both conscious and unconscious.

Within the context of the doctoral study, the revision process provided an opportunity for observing how my own learning proceeded, capturing my own learning process using narrative and auto-ethnographic approaches. Expanding the methodologies included in the research design allowed data collection to continue in the revision period, including the addition of significant new literature and theoretical concepts, all of which work together with the original data to contribute to the overall outcomes of the research reported in this

thesis. This new turn in the direction of the research was reflected in the expanded final form of the research question, shown above.

This research is aimed at education professionals and officials and seeks to provide greater understanding about the relationship between child poverty, Māori ethnicity, and educational success, in order that efforts through policy to support Māori students in low-decile schools may become better informed. This research builds on current thinking in Māori education policy documents such as *Ka Hikitia*, which is the primary statement of a national aspiration for culturally responsive practice within the education system. An important function of research is to provide a critical view of society, and to use utopian thinking responsibly to explore possibilities, since we cannot build towards the society we want unless we can first imagine it. The critiques of policy in this thesis are therefore meant to support the ongoing evolution of educational policy, which reflects changing norms of society, in the drive towards ameliorating social and educational inequality.

Towards culturally responsive practice

This section addresses the second part of the research question, which deals with the learning process required of the average Pākehā educator (a category within which I locate myself), if a step-change at a national level towards culturally responsive pedagogy is to occur (Ministry of Education, 2008b). In the dialogue below, one side is based on edited comments from the process of examination of my first submission¹. The dialogue is written up in the form of a conversation between myself and a fictional Māori expert ‘Matatiro’ who could be thought of an imaginary ‘critical friend’—someone who provides critical feedback on one’s work, in order to help and enable one to learn, grow and improve one’s performance.

A dialogue about the first draft thesis submission

Tim: This is my thesis title - ‘The potential of a Kaupapa Māori School climate to facilitate School-wide Positive Behaviour Support’.

Matatiro: *This research has not been completed in a Kaupapa Māori school so it is unclear why the thesis title refers to a ‘Kaupapa Māori school climate’.*

¹ Acknowledgements and thanks are due to the Examiners for all their feedback and in particular to Dr Mere Berryman of the University of Waikato, for comments drawn on in writing this dialogue.

Tim: The key research question that guided this study centred on identifying the important concepts and processes of a school-wide behavioural approach, particularly in regard to the construction of a school climate. History shows that the language, culture and identity of Māori have not benefited from the experience of colonization.

Matatiro: *The latter sentence is so understated it is unacceptably inaccurate.*

Tim: All the students and most of the staff at Anahera School are Māori. Five parents and community members, also mostly Māori, were on the Board of Trustees, which has responsibility for the governance of the school. Māori are the descendants of the early Polynesian settlers. During the eighteenth century, New Zealand was colonised by European settlers, and many Māori lost contact with their language and culture. Today, many Māori are regaining a mastery of what it is to be Māori through a revival of their language, custom, and creative arts.

Matatiro: *Don't know we ever lost what it is to be Māori, but it is true that te reo was taken.*

Tim: At the time of colonisation, Māori expected to be in a partnership, but British expectations were that they were now in charge. This resulted in the erosion, negation and discouragement of Māori knowledge, language, culture, and practices. Following colonisation, the social and educational experiences of Māori have been characterised by inequality and disadvantage.

Matatiro: *The assertion that colonisation is over is incorrect.*

Tim: Following World War Two, many Māori moved away from their traditional rural homes, in a massive migration to the cities, and Māori society began to change. This urbanisation of Māori was the start of a process that has resulted in poverty-stricken urban communities like this one.

Matatiro: *The movement of Māori to the cities began after the return of soldiers from World War Two. Non-Māori soldiers were gifted parcels of land and benefits, while Māori were not.*

Tim: I was informed enough to know that entering into this research project on my own, with my own understanding and knowledge as a Pākehā was culturally and ethically unsafe. To lessen the risk of unsafe practice, I engaged with critical friends who supported me as a Pākehā researcher before and upon entry into a research site steeped in the traditions of Māori Kaupapa. The concept of working with a critical friend or colleague as a way to support

practitioner research has been acknowledged in the literature for over 30 years. A critical friend is external to the context, someone who has a perspective that enables understanding. My critical friend was a work colleague who I consulted on issues relating to Kaupapa Māori philosophy. Also, one of my academic supervisors was Māori.

Matatiro: Two Māori people, one from the University and the other from the Ministry, legitimated your work in this school, which is inadequate without whanaungatanga.

Tim: I thought resistance to my research might arise from some Māori staff and community members who could make their own assumptions about the project. Resistance from Māori would likely be fuelled by historical reactions to the way Western researchers have treated Māori in the past. This apprehension occurred because I was aware that I was taking a path that, in the past, has often been ineffectively and disrespectfully used by Western researchers whose investigations have centered on Māori. These researchers vacated the fields of study with the data that they were seeking, but without the respect of the people at the centre of their interest because the research experience did not benefit Māori. This has left Māori with a historical perspective of Western research that is negative, to say the least.

Matatiro: Your apprehension overlooks Māori traditions of being respectful and inclusive towards manuhiri (guests). What did you do to avoid the past mistakes of Western researchers investigating in Māori schooling contexts?

Tim: Gaining a view into the lives of Māori through qualitative research comes with significant responsibility for a Pākehā researcher like me: Pākehā researchers have a history of not getting it right when it comes to time spent in a research context with Māori. Conscious of the tendency of research to reproduce inequities maintained by centuries of colonial oppression, I took steps to ensure that, as a Pākehā researcher, I did not abuse or take for granted the privilege of gaining an intimate look into the school lives of participants, and that I did not to make the same mistakes as some of my predecessors.

Matatiro: What did you do to avoid those mistakes? Explain how the steps you took were able to legitimate your research, and how your research was participatory. Your descriptions position you as working outside of a Kaupapa Māori stance, which makes your thesis title and key assumptions problematic, bringing your findings into question.

Tim: Prior to the start of the study, I planned to gather data using focus groups, which promote a comfortable atmosphere in which participants can share ideas, beliefs, and

experiences to produce extremely rich data and in-depth descriptions. I felt this was an important data-gathering tool in the Kaupapa Māori context, as it emphasised the sharing of knowledge in a social setting. By the time it came to considering how I could structure the groups, however, I had already asked a lot of the participants' time. The school is a busy, pressured environment and I did not feel that I could ask for any more time from these participants; thus, I made a decision not to pursue the opportunity.

***Matatiro:** Your research decisions denied the school community members the opportunity for whakawhitiwhiti kōrero. Your methods do not connect to Kaupapa Māori. They do not necessarily need to – but given the context where you were working with Māori, and asserting to be using Kaupapa Māori, they should in some way. You claim you engaged with Kaupapa Māori theory, and that relationships are important, but the selection processes and methods you used were hierarchical and Western - not what I would have expected. Nowhere in your description of your research is there any consideration of developing a relationship with this community. Why do you think this is? Yet the school held a pōwhiri for you to begin this exact process. It appears you ticked the 'relationship' box and carried on.*

Tim: This study has shown that schools like Anahera have the potential to serve as a nexus of in the revitalisation of Māori culture, and offer a real alternative to the of a Western based education system that has not benefited Māori children.

***Matatiro:** That statement is an unsubstantiated generalisation.*

Tim: Through the transformation of their educational environment, Māori children in urban schools were likely to receive more exposure to their culture and language at school than they would at home.

***Matatiro:** And that statement is another unsubstantiated generalisation.*

Tim: It could be argued that the staff of the school assumed a parental role in their relationship with the community, rightly or wrongly making an assessment and judgment that the students attending the school were not culturally, physically and emotionally prepared for learning. It could also be argued that staff encouraged the children to resist certain types of community forces in order to achieve a better life than the one their parents were experiencing.

***Matatiro:** According to your data it could also be argued the school staff took a paternalistic and dominant role in their relationship with the community.*

Tim: An important finding of this research is that exposing Māori students to learning in the Māori language and in a Māori context has strong potential to promote the construction of cultural identity and a positive sense of wellbeing. This study has also shown that Māori want more than just learning to be Māori in an educational setting; they want to be Māori. When given an opportunity to be Māori in the educational setting, these students reap benefits in terms of enjoying being at school, and longer engagement in education. New Zealand schools have a long history of adopting approaches developed for use in schools in other countries: this study hints at the benefits of doing things the Māori way, instead.

Matatiro: Māori whānau also want their tamariki to achieve academic success.

Tim: Most of the interviews I held with members of school staff included some discussion about the school-wide initiatives that had been tried during the past few years. Many participants spoke of lack of consistent support from all teachers and auxiliary staff, for maintaining change processes. This lack of consistency led to expressions of frustration by some teachers, who thought if a school-wide rule or expectation was created then it should be maintained by everyone. According to the participants, many teachers reacted from an individual perspective, rather than according to the agreed collective approach.

Matatiro: This description makes it sound like there was tension between staff wanting collective support to maintain initiatives consistently, yet not giving students support to apply the rules consistently.

Tim: As a result of the cultural shift in the suburb around the school, the children attending Anahera live life in a context which many New Zealanders of European descent are likely to have experienced only to a limited degree.

Matatiro: The term 'cultural shift' is unexplained and appears from context and in the light of other comments to be an academically unsound euphemism for deficit thinking.

Tim: Over the past two decades, the school has transformed itself both physically and philosophically, from an English-medium school to a Māori kura. Simultaneously, a transformation was occurring in the teaching methods and practices used in the school. In their struggle against the combined effects of poverty and Māori cultural erosion, Anahera School assumed the role of change agent, to address the needs of a community they saw as struggling.

Matatiro: According to your research, the school assumed power over the community. This inevitably involves being judgemental.

Tim: My research suggests that views on problem behaviour, and building a school-wide response amongst Māori, should be undertaken by Māori, for Māori, and delivered in the context of a Māori paradigm. From a Māori perspective there seems no better plan to facilitate this collective understanding and agreement than through the hui structure, along with Māori language and protocol, of which there is already a significant degree of collective understandings amongst Māori. From a Māori perspective, it is not surprising that the Māori staff wanted to move away from the state of tension they were experiencing as a result of problem behaviour. At the heart of the issue for Māori was that relationships were being compromised.

Matatiro: Are you qualified to write about a Māori perspective? It is not clear from your presentation of your research that you understand the gap between the 'Māori perspective' and YOUR perspective.

Tim: The findings from this study are limited by the nature of a study in one school and its surrounding community. While it is not possible to compare the findings of the proposed study with data from other schooling communities, these findings will still have implications for schooling communities and families from cultural contexts that differ in norms and philosophy from so-called Western cultural contexts.

Matatiro: On what basis do you make this assertion?

Tim: What this study lacks in generalisability of findings, it makes up for in depth and richness. This is the strength of a qualitative study: it bores into the inner depths of the lives of the people and explores the relationships that surround it. In a Māori community, where relationship is central, this is an appropriate approach as it seeks to maintain the integrity of all people concerned, and to tell the real story.

Matatiro: Although you listened to the school staff pointing out faults in its community, the community was not given a right of reply. Your findings were one-sided, not dialogical or relational.

Tim: Being Māori was a source of pride and unity for children and adults alike. From a socioeconomic perspective, the effects of social class differences were marked. In the

community around the school, culture brought people together, while attitudinal differences towards the value of education often pushed school and community apart. Kaupapa Māori was the common ground between the school and the community.

Matatiro: Kaupapa Māori is about critical awareness and political self-determination: the right of Māori to define who and what they are, and what they will do. The way you talk about Kaupapa Māori shows you have little understanding of what it actually means, nor of the differences between Kaupapa Māori theory, Kaupapa Māori education, and Kaupapa Māori research methodologies. There is much literature by respected Māori writers that you could have drawn on to increase and strengthen your understanding.

Tim: A dominant thread that developed in this study related to the way the Immersion Unit operated, and the unexpected realisation that exposing Māori students to learning in the Māori language in a Māori cultural context has significant potential for promoting the construction of cultural identity and a positive sense of wellbeing.

Matatiro: That may be new knowledge to you, Tim, but not to the many who proudly identify as 'Māori'. This disjunction or gap points to limitations in your researcher stance and understanding.

Tim: With full exposure to language and protocol, it could also be argued that students in a full immersion setting at Anahera School were gaining the ability to walk comfortably not only in the world of their colonisation partner, but also in their own world as Māori.

Matatiro: This statement betrays your belief that, by default, the point of school is to produce people with a non-Māori identity.

Tim: If Māori students were given the opportunity to engage in a learning context that is respectful and inclusive of activities and protocol underpinned by Kaupapa Māori culture, they were likely to engage in education for longer, and with more purpose and enjoyment.

Matatiro: Again, no one would ever argue with this statement; it underpins the existence of Kura Kaupapa Māori and Ka Hikitia.

Facing up to the feedback

When I first approached Anahera School with the intention to 'give' skills and knowledge, and 'gather' data, I had no real sense of what I could be portraying to the school and the

community in terms of the power and privilege I held as a white middle-class male, with a well-paid job and an academic agenda. People like this can be described as ‘white saviours’- people who hold the “idea that it is the role of the white outsiders to lift the poor and oppressed” (Straubhaar, 2014, p. 384).

I was not aware of my own sense of privilege and power and my accompanying biases on my entry to Anahera School. In a similar reflection on his growth as a Pākehā academic supervising Māori students, Clive Pope (2008) said “there are many tensions I must address and overcome. And perhaps the most difficult concerns the biases I have established while growing up and living in a colonial world” (p. 68).

Recognition of these biases is important because one’s judgements informed by power and privilege will be conveyed through one’s words and actions. Paulo Freire (1970) notes that “the oppressors do not perceive their monopoly on having more as a privilege which dehumanizes others and themselves (p. 59). My level of critical consciousness has grown in the intervening time since I worked in the school, but I do find myself wondering how much the school and I actually understood of each other’s intentions.

Dwelling on past experiences can be a valuable exercise of reflection and learning, helping to make the unconscious conscious. My journey towards critical consciousness is not finished, and it never will be. As a Pākehā I will continue to work with schools with high proportions of Māori students and teachers. Through reading and reflection I have slowly come to understand the need for a different mind-set and approach to dealing with Māori, one that works better than the ‘white saviour’ mentality. Julio Cammarota (2011) describes an alternative position that is termed a ‘white ally’. White allies realise “they have privileges and work to undermine the very power that provides them with superiority” (p. 253-254). Understanding the knowledge required to be a white ally is critically important for Pākehā to become more conscious of perceptions of deficit and potential prejudices, in order to work with Māori school communities in a responsive, sensitive and informed way.

Jen Tatebe’s (2014) research on pre-service teachers also deals with the need for teachers to develop these understandings. Her work identified the strength and depth of some of the teachers’ negative views and deficit thinking about low decile schools. It can be surprising to learn that deficit attitudes towards Māori are prevalent today in New Zealand. This work

contributes to the current research into teacher expectations and their important influence on student achievement (Rubie-Davies, 2008a). Together, these strands of current educational research underline the fact that the criticisms made in the examination of my original draft thesis submission point to a widespread problem of Pākehā ignorance that underpins education in New Zealand. Alison Jones (1999) notes that “even good intentions by the dominant group are not always sufficient to enable their ears to ‘hear’, and therefore for the ‘other’ to speak” (p. 308). Angus Macfarlane and colleagues (2007) suggest that “educators who are members of the dominant and more powerful culture may hold impositional attitudes towards students who belong to non-dominant less powerful cultures, and towards their ethnic and cultural communities” (p. 66). My former lack of awareness was clearly not an isolated or personal failing. The following sections describe three inter-related aspects of the way my unconscious assumptions weakened the scholarly quality of my initial draft thesis submission.

Understanding and knowledge of Māori

Prior to receiving the examination feedback on my first draft thesis submission, I would never have thought I was so far off the mark in some of my understandings of Māori language, concepts and meanings. Perhaps if my research had been completed 30 or so years earlier, my work would not have been criticised so strongly. But more critical understandings of cultural processes are available in the contemporary academy, developing in response to critiques of embedded Eurocentrism, led by indigenous scholars such as Graham and Linda Smith (G Smith, 2003; L. Smith, 2005, 2012). In retrospect, I made the claim of ‘knowing what I was talking about’ on the basis that I was familiar with some of the routines and practices associated with Māori protocol and language. For example, I knew the basic routines associated with a pōwhiri as it is carried out in the area I lived in, as narrated in the section in Chapter One titled *Welcome to Anahera* (p. 2). I knew some waiata, I knew some words of te reo Māori, I knew and worked closely with many Māori people. Yet my understandings were superficial and did not go nearly far enough towards understanding Māori education. This created an impression of me as an uninformed, naïve Pākehā, who was researching Māori, rather than researching with Māori. I could and should have made efforts to address this lack of knowledge by reading more deeply around the topic. I could and should have actively sought another Māori supervisor after my first Māori supervisor left the university and moved away. As a doctoral candidate it was my responsibility to initiate this

process. I believe Pākehā working in education would benefit from close ongoing supervision from Māori colleagues. This type of partnership is certainly not new within professional organisations in New Zealand. But how many Pākehā truly have their minds open to learning about Māori, in order to explore beliefs and thoughts that are accumulated over their lives in the privileged and powerful position they have held? One key aspect of learning for Pākehā concerns the history of Māori education.

The importance of the history of Māori education

People like me often have access to training on the Treaty of Waitangi, with the expectation of ‘partnering’ with Māori in educational matters. People like me contribute to forming and implementing educational policy in low-decile schools across New Zealand. But how many people like me have the time to go into those schools for extended periods so as to really understand them? Do we take the time to learn in detail about the history of Māori education? Do we understand the influence of history of Māori education on current discourses of Māori achievement, teacher behaviour and teacher expectations? As a New Zealander and a New Zealand government employee, I would have said, prior to receiving the feedback on my first thesis, that I knew enough about the history of New Zealand, the process of colonisation, the Treaty of Waitangi and the history of Māori education to be well-informed on the subject.

An in-depth understanding of the history of Māori education has become absolutely essential in helping to understand the educational scenario I observed at Anahera School. Learning about Foucault’s notion of discourse, its connection to history, and its influence on the present, have been revelatory. I now see such situations through different, more critical lenses.

I believe there are important learnings for people like me in government jobs, who make decisions that affect those who are poor and under-privileged. We need to see, and to be able to see, both sides of the story in a deep and meaningful way, before we act. In order to do this, we need the space, time and willigness to reset our thinking: to learn enough about what equity, equality and collective ownership actually mean, before strategies that are deemed to be ‘helpful’ are put in place. Decisions made by the privileged for the poor are still happening, without detailed consultation with those who are the intended beneficiaries. In

such a situation, deficit discourses may simply be repeated and reinforced, albeit unintentionally.

‘Sledgehammer writing’ and standards of scholarship

Based on inadequate knowledge and understanding of the effects of discourse and the ongoing influence of history, in my first draft thesis submission I tended to use a ‘sledgehammer’ approach characterised by sweeping generalisations and hard-hitting statements, which were not necessarily well-supported by literature or evidence from relevant fields. As one’s knowledge and understanding grows about the complexity of educational situations, one becomes more conscious about the adequacy of one’s points and assertions. As noted in Chapter Three below (p. 58), in this study I was privileged to gain an in-depth view of the daily lives of members of the school community of Anahera School. Learning more about cultural responsiveness during the revision process has enabled a fairer and more adequate representation of the original qualitative data collected in the school.

The process of revision has given me the opportunity to learn and grow and become more conscious of discourses of deficit, privilege, power and ethnicity, in order to present an academic critique, with more potential for reaching helpful conclusions. This research project aims to contribute to understandings and professional knowledge relating to Māori educational success in low-decile schools, focusing on the influence of child poverty, and how this influence is understood by teachers and education officials. New knowledge arises from the insights gained by synthesizing the original empirical data, feedback throughout the examination process, personal narratives and fictional ethnography, combined with critical readings of relevant literature on the history of Māori education.

Thesis chapter overview

This thesis includes a portrayal of two stories. The first story is about a school called Anahera School. The other story is about how my research relationship with Anahera School forced me to look again at everything I thought I knew. The research draws on data from the literature, personal reflections and empirical data collected in Anahera School, which represents many schools around the country struggling to raise levels of achievement of Māori children.

Chapter Two reviews literature on aspects of the social, cultural and educational history of New Zealand, and relevant theoretical concepts that help to understand the disadvantage experienced by Māori students within education today. The first section describes the current situation of Māori within the New Zealand education system, based on data from national statistics and international studies. The second section gives an account of the history of Māori education and the origins of current levels of Māori achievement. The third section introduces key concepts useful for understanding complex educational scenarios. These include Foucault's notion of discourse, cultural literate capital, symbolic violence, ethnicity and identity, neoliberalism, and education policy.

Chapter Three describes the methodology of the research project, including the study design, data collection and analysis methods. Narrative research was used in writing fictionalised vignettes from the empirical data collected in the research school to synthesise diverse data in readable engaging forms, conveying a better sense of the 'lived experience' and subjectivities of the school community members, in comparison with the usual 'facts' and infographics. Autoethnography turns the data collection onto my own experiences, including my learnings from the process of revising the thesis.

Chapters Four and Five present the empirical data collected in the research school. Chapter Four looks specifically at the school effects on learning, and describes some of the social and behavioural problems the school was experiencing. Chapter Five looks at the community effects on learning and student behaviour, as described by school personnel and some community members of the Board of Trustees. Chapter Six gives a detailed description of the research school in two ways. The first section is a synopsis of historical and demographic details about the school and community. The second section presents a series of fictionalised vignettes that capture a day in the life at Anahera School, based on the experience of working in the research school.

Chapter Seven presents a discussion of all the data presented in previous chapters, in relation to key concepts in the literature. Chapter Eight includes a synopsis of the thesis, key findings, and further possible research to address the aim of raising Māori achievement.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The first European explorer to reach the shores of the land he named New Zealand was Dutchman Abel Tasman in 1642. Captain James Cook, who arrived from England in October 1769 on the first of three voyages of discovery on behalf of the British Crown, was the first European to circumnavigate and map New Zealand. From that point onwards, New Zealand was regularly visited by explorers, adventurers and sailors, and starting in about 1814 was increasingly settled by missionaries, traders and other colonisers.

[New Zealand's] spaciousness and the opportunity it afforded for solitude – that was noticed by so many settlers, and that made the country appealing to them in the nineteenth century. But instead of the solitude being a permanent blessing of the new lands, those same colonists saw only opportunity to replicate the very form they had escaped from in the first place (Moon, 2013a, p. 53).

In 1840 the Treaty of Waitangi was signed between representatives of the British Crown and various Māori chiefs. This historic event brought New Zealand, including Māori, into the British Empire, and was followed by extensive British settlement throughout the rest of the 19th century (King, 2003).

With British colonisation, not only new people came to New Zealand but also their diseases, foods, plants and animals, technologies, and their ideas, religion and philosophy. The British immigrants came with a civilising agenda by which they sought to assimilate Māori to European ways, encouraging them to abandon their traditional cultural values, customs and language (Belich, 1996). This process of colonisation was facilitated by converting Māori to Christianity, and engaging them in the process of schooling following British models.

This chapter provides an introduction to aspects of the complex social, cultural and educational history of New Zealand, the current situation, and relevant theoretical concepts that help to provide an understanding of the disadvantage experienced by Māori students within education today. The first section below gives a snapshot of the current situation of Māori achievement within the New Zealand education system, based on data from national statistics and international studies. The second section presents an account of the history of Māori children in schools, within the wider social changes that engulfed the Māori population, which seeks to shed light on the origins of current levels of Māori educational achievement, focusing on key phases of time, as follows: the initial period of missionary and

state schooling in the late 1800s; pre- and post-World War II; the 1970s; the 1980s and 1990s; and developments in the new millennium.

The third section below introduces key concepts useful for understanding Māori education and complex education scenarios in general. Michel Foucault's key notion of discourse is discussed, as well as other theoretical concepts and key educational ideas, including cultural capital, symbolic violence, ethnicity and identity, neoliberalism, education policy, and the notion of education for social justice.

The current situation for Māori in schools

Since schooling began in New Zealand, education outcomes for Māori have been significantly different from those of non-Māori (Penetito, 2010). As noted in Chapter One above, there is a longstanding, intransigent statistical gap in educational achievement for Māori, strongly associated with the negative social indices that characterise the Māori population in such areas as employment, income, housing, health, welfare, addictions, crime, incarceration and morbidity (Mulholland, 2006).

Whilst Māori underachievement has long been recognised as a problem within the New Zealand education sector (Ewing & Shallcrass, 1970), the development in recent decades of large-scale international comparative studies of reading literacy in particular (also of numeracy, science literacy and other educational measures) has made the issue of unequal outcomes of schooling for Māori and Pasifika students increasingly visible at a national level. Concerns raised by these results for the government and citizens of New Zealand include that they: give rise to unfavourable comparisons with other countries participating in the studies; indicate the failure of our education system to perform effectively according to national social and economic policy objectives; and provide evidence of social injustice, contradicting claims that everyone in New Zealand is provided with fair and equal opportunities to succeed in life (Milne, 2009).

This section presents selected results from two national sources of data (National Standards, NCEA) and two international sources (PIRLS, PISA) to highlight these educational inequalities.

National Standards data

The Ministry of Education started to track student achievement in English-medium schools using National Standards in 2010 (Megan Chamberlain, 2014). National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics provide benchmarks that are intended to give teachers, children, parents and families a clear idea of how much students have learned, and what they have to do next. Schools are required to monitor and report annually, by gender and by ethnicity, on the number of children achieving ‘above’, ‘at’, ‘below’, and ‘well below’ the standard for their year level. As a representative example, the results in 2013 showed that 68.7 percent of Māori students in Years 1-8 achieved at or above the standard in Reading, compared with 84.1 percent of Pākehā/European students (Megan Chamberlain, 2014). Under the heading ‘Equity – is it good enough?’ the Ministry’s National Standards Results 2013 summary sheet notes:

Overall, this data shows that there are pressing issues of inequality. Whilst there are particular challenges and successes for each group, overall, achievement for Māori and Pasifika across the standards is much lower than for Asian and Pākehā/European – roughly 10% - 20% points worse. (Megan Chamberlain, 2014)

NCEA and UE data

NCEA (National Certificates of Educational Achievement) are New Zealand’s national secondary school qualifications, introduced in 2002 (NZQA, 2014). In 2009, the New Zealand Herald reported on the ‘gulf in achievement between ethnicities’ exposed by NCEA results, with 52.8% of participating Māori students achieving NCEA Level 1, compared with 79.2% of Pākehā/European (J. Smith, 2009). But much larger disparities in final secondary school outcomes are evident in the results for the University Entrance qualification, which has stricter academic requirements than NCEA Level 3. For example, in 2007, the proportion of participating students who gained University Entrance was 66% for Asian, 44% for Pākehā/European, 20% for Pasifika, and 18% for Māori (Starpath Project - University of Auckland, 2009).

PIRLS data

PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) studies are conducted by IEA (the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement), which is an international, independent research cooperative that originated in 1958 under the auspices of the UNESCO Institute for Education. New Zealand has been included in IEA studies of

reading comprehension since 1970 (www.iea.nl/six_subject_reading.html), and was one of 48 education systems to participate in PIRLS 2011. The mean reading score for New Zealand Year 5 students was 531, significantly higher than the PIRLS centrepiece score of 500, and 23rd out of 45 countries (Megan Chamberlain, 2014, p. 24). By ethnicity, 'Pākehā/European (558) and Asian (542) students scored, on average, at a significantly higher level than Māori (488) and Pasifika (473) students' (p. 10). There was a relatively large group of Year 5 students who achieved highly, but also a relatively large group of lower-achieving students, and Pasifika and Māori students, especially Māori boys, were over-represented in the lower-achieving group.

PISA data

PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) is a study conducted every three years under the auspices of the OECD, which aims to evaluate and compare the education systems of participating countries by testing 15-year-old students in reading, mathematics and science (www.oecd.org/pisa). The most recent completed PISA study was in 2012, for which the Ministry of Education published a New Zealand summary report, noting that the average reading score for New Zealand (512 points) had declined slightly since the first PISA study in 2000, but still remained above the OECD average of 496 points (Steve May, Cowles, & Lamy, 2013, p. 16). This report also noted that about 16 percent of New Zealand students are poor readers, whose reading levels are likely to impede their learning, while about 14 percent are advanced readers (p.18). The average score for Māori students was below the average score for both New Zealand and the OECD, and 27 percent of Māori students were poor readers, meaning that their level of reading was unlikely to support their learning (p. 30).

The 'long brown tail' of Māori educational achievement

The above examples are representative of data that build up an overall picture of the unequal outcomes of the New Zealand school system. While the top New Zealand students perform at the very highest levels, and the national average compares favourably with other countries, New Zealand is 'one of the few Western countries in which the bottom twenty percent of students are systematically falling behind' (Airini, McNaughton, Langley, & Sauni, 2007, p. 32). The wide spread of reading achievement between the top (95th percentile) and the bottom (5th percentile) students in New Zealand was larger than for all but nine other countries, out of the 45 countries that participated in PIRLS 2001 (Tunmer & Prochnow,

2009, p. 156). For this reason, the New Zealand education system is characterised as ‘high quality, low equity’ – along with those of Australia, the UK and the US (Airini et al., 2007, p. 33).

The clumping of a disproportionately large number of students in the New Zealand context at the low end of achievement (regardless of which specific data set is used) has the effect of causing the standard distribution or bell curve graph of such data to be lopsided: below the mean at the top of the bell shape, the curve slopes downwards more gently than expected, remaining above zero much longer. This asymmetry of the graph is called a ‘long tail’ (Millward, 2008). Most of the students represented by this long tail are Māori and Pasifika, so the term ‘long brown tail’ has come to signify this inequity of educational outcomes (Elizabeth McKinley quoted in J. Smith, 2009).

So what gives rise to today’s ‘long brown tail’ of Māori education? The next section turns to the past to examine historical influences on the contemporary situation.

The history of Māori in schools

New Zealand is only one of many lands colonised by Britain and other European powers in the period of European global expansion, beginning in 1492 with Christopher Columbus, and peaking in the 19th century at the height of the Victorian era (L. Smith, 2012). Today, the four ‘settler nations’ of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, collectively termed CANZUS, share many characteristics in common, including a history of colonisation by Britain (Bell, 2014, p. 12). In each of these countries, the British colonisers set out to assimilate or ‘civilise’ the indigenous populations, using overt methods in which schools played a key part (Simon & Smith, 2001).

The earliest New Zealand schools

The first schools in New Zealand were established in Northland, beginning in 1816, by British missionaries for the purpose of teaching Māori to read and write (Consedine, 2012). At first, missionaries taught Māori about the Bible and European life, through the medium of the Māori language. ‘Following the Land Wars of the 1860s, the Minister of Native Affairs, James Richmond proposed that the government itself should now provide schools for Māori’(Barrington, 2008, p.19). The resulting 1867 Native Schools Act enabled primary

schools to be established at the request of Māori communities under the supervision of the Native Department, and by 1879 there were 57 Native primary schools throughout New Zealand. At the request of Māori parents, the medium of instruction in these schools was English (King, 2003). The Native School system taught manual skills and a watered-down curriculum, with the aim of producing a docile working class (Simon & Smith, 2001).

Māori language, culture and identity struggled to survive under the experience of colonisation. While Māori 'expected to form a partnership in the life of the new colony, British expectations were that they were now in charge and would operate the colony to benefit their people while at the same time paternalistically bringing "civilisation" to Māori' (S. Walker, Eketone, & Gibbs, 2006, p. 331-2). In 1888, the inspector of Native Schools, James Pope, argued that:

The work of teaching the Māoris to speak, write and understand English is in importance second only to that of making them acquainted with European customs and ways of thinking, and so fitting them for becoming orderly and law-abiding citizens. Indeed, it might be maintained that the first-named of these operations is the more important seeing that the knowledge of English ways can hardly be obtained by Natives unacquainted with the language. To teach the Natives English is therefore the *raison d'être* of Native schools. If they do this work well their existence is justified; if not, there can be little advantage in maintaining a separate order of schools for this purpose. *AJHR* (1888), E-2, p. 9

During this period of New Zealand's history, Māori knowledge and protocol was subjugated and suppressed in favour of European knowledge through a watered-down education system that differed from that to which Pākehā had access. Essentially two different schooling systems were developed in New Zealand – a rural, manual curriculum for Māori that operated in Native Schools, and an academic schooling system for Pākehā, based on a British public school model. It was essentially a dual education system (Stephenson, 2006).

It is important to consider the thinking that underpinned this decision-making, and the common sense understandings that were promoted as a result. Māori were seen by the decision-makers of the time as inherently less capable of learning an academic curriculum; better suited to rural, practical learning and manual employment. These ideas are captured in the phrase 'good with their hands' which has been, and arguably still is, a dominant and stereotypical view of Māori, held by Pākehā (Bishop & Berryman, 2006).

Schooling resulted in the discouragement, erosion and negation of Māori knowledge, language, culture, and practices. Under colonisation, ‘the educational and wider social experiences of the indigenous Māori in New Zealand have been characterised by consistent inequality and disadvantage’ (Bishop, 2003, p. 221). As a result of the colonisation process by which New Zealand was established as a modern Western nation-state, Māori became embedded in political economies constituted from structurally dissimilar groupings that result in an unequal distribution of material, social, and political power (L. Smith, 2005).

Before World War Two

The period after the initial colonisation of New Zealand and prior to the Second World War was a time when Māori were still living rurally and were strongly connected to their tribal land and local Marae, and were still practicing local traditions. Between the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 and 1881, the number of Europeans settled in New Zealand increased from approximately 2000 to 500,000. From this point on, Māori were well and truly outnumbered by European settlers, mainly from Britain, the United States, France and Australia (King, 2003).

The 1877 Education Act provided for free secular education throughout New Zealand. While education was made compulsory for Pākehā children from 1877, it was not made compulsory for Māori children until 1894 (Selby, 1999). It was during this time that secondary schools for boys emerged. Initially church-run boarding schools were opened such as St Stephens in 1844 and Te Aute in 1854. These were followed by ‘public’ secondary schools such as Christ College in Christchurch, founded in 1855, Wanganui Collegiate in 1865, and Otago Boys High School in 1863. These schools charged heavy fees for day and boarding students. Despite some free places, these schools were generally restricted to children of the wealthy who were seen to have aspirations. This form of schooling helped to maintain the gentry classes and also to keep out everyone else (McIntosh, 1988). Māori children could, if their parents so wished, attend local board schools, but most chose to attend Native Schools. In any case, very few Māori families would have been able to afford the fees for secondary schools like those mentioned above.

The Native Schools were mainly staffed by Pākehā teachers, although in later years Māori were appointed to teaching positions. Notwithstanding a genuine motive to make a

difference for their students and their communities, the teachers' involvement and practice in Māori communities served to domesticate or colonise Māori children from an early age (Rubie-Davies, Flint, & McDonald, 2012). As Stephenson (2006) comments, "Europeanization of Māori was the ultimate goal of the Native Schools, to be measured in the first instance by proficiency in the English language" (p. 307). Apparently many teachers strove to broaden the students' world views by taking them on trips to the city, and extend them educationally by coaching them for scholarships that would offer them access to secondary schooling. There are many examples of Māori students leaving their rural communities to enrol in church-run secondary schools in urban settings. 'Such appropriation and reshaping of Māori traditions has ignored that Māori are a complex, tribal people, with widely differing stories, histories, genealogies and traditions' (Good, 2008, p. 18).

Regardless of motives, Native Schools were influential in changing the cultural identity of Māori up until World War Two (Good, 2008). By the 1930s the Pākehā way of life had become dominant and many Māori parents saw a knowledge of English and the Pākehā way of life as a 'meal ticket to the future for their children' (Selby, 1999, p. 16). The collective drive to educate Māori in European customs through the language medium of English was having a detrimental impact on Māori language and culture. It was doubly difficult for Māori because English was the only language used within the Native Schools, but Māori was spoken at all times outside of school (Consedine, 2012). Even though there was the potential to develop a healthy bilingual / bicultural approach within education for Māori, but instead Māori children were physically punished for speaking their own language at school (Stewart, 2014). This practice continued into the 1950s and 1960s (Selby, 1999).

During the 1930s and 1940s Māori were beginning to be trained as teachers and admitted to Teachers' Training Colleges. Pākehā Head Teachers trained junior assistants in the skills of teaching. The junior assistant position was a stepping stone for many Māori to enter teachers college (Rubie-Davies et al., 2012). It was also during the 1930s that a review of policy occurred that resulted in some aspects of Māori being included in the school curriculum. These included arts and crafts but not Te Reo Māori. These changes did not involve Māori people in decisions about what aspects of Māori culture were to be included in the curriculum (Selby, 1999).

The Native School system served two major purposes for the colonial society that had been established by the British settlers. Firstly, the Native Schools were instrumental in disrupting inter-generational transmission of traditional language and knowledge among Māori, which accelerated the disintegration of Māori social organisation and economic bases. Secondly, Native Schools served as gatekeepers that limited opportunities for Māori people to participate in the Pākehā social, political and economic systems. Māori were considered suitable only for manual work, and the Native Schools reinforced this destiny by means of a limited curriculum, the suppression of the Māori language and culture, and by restricting avenues for higher education and employment for Māori children.

A few Māori were highly successful within the context of the Pākehā education system. According to Selby (1999):

There is much evidence that the native schools played an important and significant role in the education of Māori for a hundred years. For some they offered the opportunity to enter the world of Pākehā and a chance to access government scholarships which were the ticket to a secondary boarding school, while for others they were places of misery and pain (p. 19).

Most Māori students stayed within and graduated from the native school system and on this basis were marginalised from educational opportunities to which Pākehā had access, reinforcing the message to Māori that they were not good enough for the Pākehā system.

Colonisation and policies of assimilation effectively marginalised the mainly rural Māori population, and positioned Māori as the lower class or blue collar workers in the emerging modern economy (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). On the other side of the ledger, Pākehā families prospered in the colonial milieu. Although few European settlers arrived with vast fortunes, they were able to expand their economic bases and accumulate capital using entrepreneurial methods and the abundant natural resources of the land, which had been appropriated from the original iwi inhabitants. The Pākehā gentry of New Zealand networked themselves into tight regional elites, united on fundamental principles such as maintaining their rule, dominating Māori and pushing progressive colonisation (Belich, 1996).

Thus, by the early 1900s, New Zealand society was dominated by a ruling elite class, which was growing richer and politically stronger, while the Māori population remained rurally-based, involved mainly in subsistence agricultural lifestyles, and with their children receiving

a lesser form of education through the medium of English. The Pākehā system was completely stacked against Māori, with laws that supported the continuation of Māori land alienation, outlawed Māori political movements, and suppressed Māori traditional knowledge. At the same time, Māori were effectively prevented from participating in the emerging modern economy, since multiple land ownership made it impossible for them to access loans or to vote in local body elections, notwithstanding the dead weight of paternalism and institutional inequalities at every level (Pearson, 1990).

A famous statement from 1939 is attributed to educationalist Clarence Beeby and then Prime Minister, Peter Fraser, illustrating a desire for educational policy to work in the interests of social justice. This statement articulates and represents a strong tradition in New Zealand of educational equity in the form of meritocracy:

Every person whatever his [sic] level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has a right as a citizen, to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers (cited in Mutch, 2012, p. 377).

While this statement espouses an ideal that has continued to motivate generations of educators and education officials, the vision never came close to being realised.

After World War Two

The war years of 1939-1945 affected Māori people profoundly, as well as the population of New Zealand as a whole, and some powerful national trends occurred in the aftermath of World War Two.

In the 1950s, New Zealand had full employment, a very high standard of living in world terms, and an international image of peaceful relations between culturally diverse peoples. The complacency and optimism fuelled by these conditions was dented in the late 1960s as New Zealanders experienced the first signs of economic downturn and associated social and political upheaval (Spoonley, Pearson, & Macpherson, 1991, p. 7)

Rapid growth and development of New Zealand cities and suburban culture occurred during this time as well as massive migration of Māori from rural to urban living (King, 2003). During the post World War Two period, education and in particular science and mathematics also came to be seen as a means to an end for people wanting to make good in their lives, or in the lives of others.

Urban drift

At the start of World War Two, 80 percent of the Māori population was rural, but during the war, young Māori were recruited into industry to support the war effort (Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 2015). In the 1960s, the relocation of Māori families to the cities became official policy, and by 1986, 80 percent of the Māori population was urban (Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 2009). This demographic shift for Māori from a rural to an urban population was one of the most rapid urbanisations undergone by any people in the world (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). The population of Māori, and of New Zealand as a whole, underwent a rapid increase with the ‘baby boom’ that began immediately following the end of World War Two, and continued through into the 1970s. This rapid rise in the number of children necessitated an extended period of significant expansion of the number of schools and teachers.

Through the process of urban migration, Māori left their traditional tribal home areas for the towns and cities. The major reasons motivating Māori to move to urban areas were associated with work, money and pleasure – a feeling that the old ways were too slow and restrictive, and the desire to explore new opportunities, fun and adventure. In the early stages of the Māori urban migration, inner city locations were preferred as they were close to work on wharves and in factories and the transport industry. The governments of the 1940s and 1950s dealt with the almost unstoppable influx of Māori to cities, in particular Auckland, by converting military hostels left over from the war into accommodation, and providing limited assistance for boarding and renting (Moon, 2013b).

Urbanisation posed challenges for Māori that they had not necessarily encountered before, related to the economic demands of urban living like paying rent and living in a cash economy (R. Walker, 1990). Prejudices toward Māori moving to urban settings were also apparent. Landlords preferred to rent accommodation to Pākehā because they felt that they were more capable of looking after their property than Māori (Moon, 2013b). This evidence of ‘petty racism’ (Harris, 2004, p. 17) was usually experienced by Māori in the margins, and ‘rarely explicitly exposed in public’ (Harris, 2004, p. 19). Māori urban migration also accelerated the breakdown of tribal and extended family units, since it was mostly younger people who were moving away, leaving behind the older generations (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). The emergence of Māori gangs occurred during the early 1960s such as Black Power and Mongrel Mob. These gangs were significantly influenced by the American gang and

civil rights developments of the time (Taonui & Newbold, 2011). While the gang movement is typically viewed from a negative perspective within mainstream New Zealand society because of their connections to criminal behaviour (Marks, 2011), there is also evidence that gangs want to make a positive difference in their community through feeding children in schools (Cronin, 2015) and teaching children how to swim (Dominion Post, 2015).

It was in this phase of history that the Māori language declined, from being widely spoken by Māori, to being nearly extinct by the early 1970s, mainly still being spoken only by older Māori people, and becoming restricted largely to the marae (Benton, 1978). It was also as a result of mass Māori urbanisation that the Māori and Pākehā populations came into increased daily contact with each other on a large scale, and inter-marriage increased (King, 2003).

Responses to urbanisation

The post-World War Two period saw the emergence of new Māori cultural and political organisations directed at supporting Māori in their new urban settings. This struggle was taken up initially by Māori women who in 1951 set up the Māori Women's Welfare League (www.mwwl.org.nz), to help raise Māori standards of living by supporting Māori women and children, and articulating Māori women's needs in housing, health, education and welfare (Brookes, 2000). The League was also a major lobby group for representations to government on Māori issues (King, 2003).

As a result of Māori urbanisation following World War Two, Māori children entered mainstream schools in great numbers, leaving the population in the Native Schools depleted (Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 2015). The mainstream education system focused on and promoted self-development and individual betterment through the mastery of abstract concepts that were largely unfamiliar to the New Zealand context. These values, constructs and experiences recorded in text were unfamiliar to Māori, who had been socialised into family, community and peer groups where competition and collaboration were both valued. The clash of Māori and Pākehā value systems created cultural and psychological tensions for Māori children. Māori students often found that their cultural knowledge was belittled or disregarded, their intentions misinterpreted, and their language and names mispronounced (Bishop & Glynn, 2003).

The Hunn report

In 1960, Prime Minister Walter Nash commissioned Jack Hunn to report on the Department of Māori Affairs, resulting in the historically-significant document, the Hunn Report (Hunn, 1961). Hunn's report was a wide-ranging review of Māori education, as well as inter-marriage, crime rates, multiple land ownership, and many other aspects of Māori health and social development, giving rise to unprecedented levels of interest and discussion (Hunn, 1961). The report showed for the first time the extent of the disadvantage suffered by Māori in education; for example, that only 0.5 percent of Māori students completed their final year of secondary school, compared with 4 percent of Pākehā. Discourse about Māori underachievement emerged from research on Māori education undertaken in the 1930s - 1960s, overwhelmingly focused on deficit explanations that included social, cultural and language factors (McKinley & Hoskins, 2011).

In his report, Hunn wrote that compared with living a 'backward life in primitive conditions', Māori people would be better off conforming to the Pākehā way of life. No reference was made to the cause of Māori impoverishment other than indications that it was the result of rural or 'desultory' living (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). The report recommended that Māori needed to blend more thoroughly into Pākehā society, and this became the basis of Māori policy through the 1960s. The effect of the Hunn Report was to strengthen efforts to urbanise Māori and integrate them into Pākehā ways of life, through policies such as 'pepper potting' whereby Māori families were scattered amongst Pākehā neighbours (Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 2009).

The disbanding in 1970 of the Native Schools, or Māori Schools as they were known by then created a unified schooling system, which in principle was intended to provide equal learning opportunities for all students, whether Māori or Pākehā, rural or urban.

Changes in the 1970s

By the 1970s, economic recession was a reality, and deepening divisions between rich and poor were revealed. Such divisions were overlaid by distinctions based on physical appearance and ethnicity (Spoonley et al., 1991, p. 7).

As a consequence of the migration of many Māori to the cities changes were occurring in Māori society. Among wider social and economic changes, Māori political activism was becoming more visible at a national level. The rise of Māori activist groups, increased Māori

politicization to secure control over resources allocated for Māori, and the emergence of a small but politically astute urban Māori intelligentsia, culminated in the Treaty of Waitangi Tribunal being set up in 1975 to process Māori grievances.

Like indigenous Australians and native Canadians, Māori pursue a politics of indigeneity which means that they seek recognition of collective rights in the nation state not on the basis of need or disadvantage, nor even on the grounds of compassion but on the basis of ancestral occupation (O'Sullivan, 2007, p. 103).

One of the consequences of Māori urbanisation was increased knowledge of the alienating culture of Pākehā dominance and Māori subjection. The 1970s era saw tensions grow between Māori and Pākehā, as Māori became more aware of their rights to run their own affairs and move from under the influence of Pākehā dominated governments (R. Walker, 1990).

We have, as a people never felt more let down, more insecure, and more economically and socially deprived than we are today (Matiu Rata, cited in R. Walker, 1990, pp. 227-228).

The modern era of Māori protest 'experienced its heyday in the 1970s and 1980s' (Harris, 2004, p. 13). The combined efforts of individuals and groups was to focus media attention on Māori issues in a way that had not previously occurred, seeking to bring about change in the operations of government departments including education, social welfare, justice and Māori affairs (King, 2003). Initially the 'radicals' modelled themselves on the Black Power leaders of the United States.

The Māori land rights movement showed Māori determination to reclaim land that had been wrongfully taken from them through the process of colonisation. The driving force of the movement was raising resentment over the alienation and control of the remaining Māori land by Pākehā law that saw the land taxed but remain largely unoccupied. Action by Māori cumulated in a national march from across the country, which on the 13th of October 1975, arrived in Wellington and culminated in a large hui on Parliament grounds. The Land March became a media spectacle which gave Pākehā a close perspective of the unfolding struggle (R. Walker, 1990).

Responses of the education system to Māori political protest

In 1973 Māori academic Ranginui Walker identified key points concerning the

underachievement of Māori in the education system. Walker argued that as teachers were predominantly Pākehā and monocultural, education was theorised and delivered from within a single cultural frame of reference. As a result, he argued, Māori children saw little relevance in the education system, and Māori people had developed an ambivalent attitude towards education in general (R. Walker, 1990, p. 112)

One example of a Māori driven strategy that was designed to right the imbalance of colonial power and English language dominance within the education system was the development of structured programmes to save the Māori language from extinction. Te Kohanga Reo, or Māori medium early childhood education has its roots in the struggles of the late 1970s eventually led to the development of Kura Kaupapa Māori primary and secondary schools. These initiatives were set up because Māori people wanted an education that maintained their own lifestyles, language and culture and their success has been significant (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). Teacher training courses were also set up for fluent Māori speakers during this time, and public funds were distributed for the renovation of local marae (King, 2003).

These Māori efforts have had to struggle against inherent non-Māori perceptions and expectations. A watered-down notion of bi-culturalism was embraced by governments during this time ‘for its potential to mediate between assimilation and self-determination, which had been the main competing paradigms in Māori/state relations since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi’ (O'Regan, 2006).

The late 1970s saw Māori politics become even more mainstream. For example, Professor Hirini Mead advocated for a Māori Parliament to be established to fight for political freedom. From first colonisation, much had changed technologically and economically in New Zealand and the wider world. Attitudes to race and culture, however, and responses to social inequity and injustice, have failed to keep pace with technological developments.

The 1980 and 1990s

The 1980s saw the introduction of wide-ranging neoliberal reforms of many aspects of New Zealand society, including education. From the 1980s onwards:

[New Zealand] felt the full effects of government policies, whose underlying principles were those of corporate managerialism, increased centralism, and instrumentalism and technicist approaches focused on efficiency and

effectiveness. The effects of those principles played out in practices of deregulation, performance contracts, ‘user pays’ which increasingly permeated everyday experiences (Walshaw, 2007, p. 46-47).

Like other public sector reforms, education policy reforms of the 1980s were aligned with market ideology to provide greater autonomy at the school level. The result of a review at the time showed that people within the system felt powerless to make decisions to benefit children (Mutch, 2012). In 1989, under the banner of education reforms known as *Tomorrow's Schools*, the Department of Education was disestablished and replaced by a centralised Ministry of Education. More apparent decision-making power was devolved to individual school boards to make contextually-based plans to raise student achievement because there was seen to be too much power and complexity tied up in central government. The country’s first national curriculum policy was developed.

Developments within education in New Zealand in the late 1980s are an example of how policy works to organise society, and also how schools can use policy and their power of influence to impose meaning at a specific levels within their community. Through a process of disestablishment and devolution, the New Zealand public were suddenly cast into the role of being able to govern their local schools. Prior to this, education professionals had this role through local education boards. Through sweeping policy changes, schools were apparently placed into the hands of their communities with power to determine their strategic direction and learning culture.

The 1980s was a period in which New Zealand society examined deeply-held political differences, turning away from some traditional alliances with other countries. The widespread opposition to the 1981 Springbok rugby tour meant that New Zealand rugby teams would never tour South Africa again during the apartheid era (King, 2003). This event also brought Māori issues to national consciousness. The focus of Māori activism moved to the formation of the Waitangi Action committee, which targeted Waitangi celebrations in opposition to Pākehā involvement and in support of social transformation. The protests during the Waitangi celebrations sometimes turned violent which escalated Police presence at these events (R. Walker, 1990).

Within the Māori cultural community the 1980s was a phase in history where new directions signalled in the 1970s were consolidated.

The ‘real’ revolution of the 1980s was a shift in the mind-set of large numbers of Māori people – a shift away from waiting for things to be done to them, to doing things for themselves; a shift away from an emphasis on reactive politics to an emphasis on being more proactive; a shift from negative motivation to positive motivation. Graham Smith (2003, p. 1)

Māori-medium education grew out of a realisation that regular schools functioned to reproduce Pākehā culture at the expense of Māori culture, and to address the threat of Māori language death (R. Walker, 1990). The state eventually took over the funding of these schools, although initially parents and communities had to cover all of the expenses themselves. The number of Kura Kaupapa Māori rose to 59 by the end of the twentieth century. Despite these achievements in the education sector there still existed a high level of intolerance and fear towards Māori language initiatives in the wider community (O'Regan, 2006).

A comprehensive study of the Kohanga movement in the late 1980s reported that young children leave Kohanga Reo speaking Māori and feeling positive about their language and culture (Bishop and Glynn, 1999). According to Reyes and Vallone (2007) ‘When issues of language and culture intersect, a solid foundation in both minority and majority languages may positively affect self-identity’. May, Hill and Tiakiwai (2004, p. 25) note that research has consistently highlighted the cognitive advantages of bilingual education. Less well-researched are its effects on the construction of identity, cultural identity in particular. Nancy Hornberger says of multilingual education, ‘[it] opens spaces for revitalizing the indigenous’ (2009, p. 13).

The decile system of classifying schools

For the purposes of equity, since 1990 funding for every state school in New Zealand has been based on a rating determined by socioeconomic census data reflecting household incomes, employment, housing, qualifications, and income support levels of families in the community in which the school is located. These ratings are fitted into ten bands called deciles. Low-decile schools receive more funding per pupil than high decile schools (Ministry of Education, 2008a). Decile 1 schools constitute the 10% of schools with the highest proportion of students from the communities in the lowest socioeconomic band. Decile 10 schools are the 10% of schools with students from communities with the highest socioeconomic levels.

Māori education in the twenty-first century

New Zealand's population has changed significantly in size and ethnic composition since it was first colonised in the early to mid-1800s, and even since the late 1900s where New Zealand was largely bi-cultural – Māori and European. As a result of successive waves of migration from Europe, Asia and the Pasifika over the last 50 years New Zealand is now an ethnically diverse country (Ongley, 1996). Citizens of New Zealand now live in a social and environmental context that is becoming increasingly more complex.

However, each period in history can be defined a relatively few broad characteristics. In recent years, and driven partly by increasingly diverse immigration sources and the centrality of the Treaty issues, one of the key characteristics, along with age and sex, used to distinguish functional groups within a population is ethnicity (Didham & Bedford, 2004, p. 8).

Ethnicity is generally self-defined by people and how people perceive themselves also changes over time (Didham & Bedford, 2004). New Zealand is now a multi-ethnic country requiring policies and institutions that encompass much greater diversity (Spoonley, Macpherson, & Pearson, 1996). 'The migratory process...has fundamentally altered the nature of ethnic relations in New Zealand by introducing non-indigenous ethnic minorities and locating them disproportionately in certain sectors of the economy' (Ongley, 1996, p. 32). There is a significant educational divide between those who succeed and those who are struggling. Recent changes have been implemented to address this and other economic and political priorities within the New Zealand education system.

The current situation in New Zealand education is heavily influenced by the neoliberal programme of structural adjustment of the economy and major reforms of education, health and the welfare system that began in the late 1980s.

The neoliberal agenda and the continuous process of reform has had a profound effect on New Zealand society and after two decades has now produced a generation of young people whose lives have been framed by neoliberal vision. In education neoliberalism is marked by a discourse of education as a market place with parents and students as consumers and clients, teachers and schools as self-managing providers of services, and curriculum knowledge as a commodity that can be traded up for social goodies such as well-being and social status (L. Smith, 2006, p. 248).

The current policy situation is also influenced by a need for the education system to do better for Māori achievement.

Recent government responses to the needs of Māori in education

According to the Ministry of Education the education system needs to work better for Māori and Pasifika students. ‘The deficit focus on Māori culture and homes has been replaced by more positive discourses about Māori cultural capital and the role of whanau and iwi in education outcomes’ (McKinley & Hoskins, 2011, p. 50). The Ministry of Education has set in place various initiatives and strategies to raise achievement for Māori and Pasifika students.

There has never been a time when so much interest has been shown and so many resources directed toward the fulfilment of Māori aspirations in Māori education. A review of Ministry of Education Annual Reports on Māori Education from 1992-2000 reveals a most impressive range of policies, initiatives and resources devoted to improving the education of Māori students from early childhood to tertiary. (Penetito, 2010, p. 45)

These government strategies and initiatives are based on the New Zealand government’s ‘Better Public Service Goals’ for education. Through a range of community based and systemic interventions it is planned that 98% of children starting school will have participated in quality early childhood education, to increase the proportion of learners achieving expected literacy and numeracy standards, to ensure that 80% of schools will be demonstrating highly inclusive practice for learners with special education needs with 20% demonstrating good practice, to ensure that 85% of 18 year olds will have achieved NCEA Level 2 or equivalent qualification, and 55% of 25–34 year olds will have a qualification at Level 4 or above (Ministry of Education, 2015).

On its website, the Ministry of Education claims to be implementing the following extensive range of strategies to raise national student achievement:

- The implementation of 1500 family education plans to help parents support their children;
- Release Public Achievement Information to local communities to help raise achievement;
- Fund the cost of early learning for 3 to 5 year olds for up to 6 hours per day and up to 20 hours per week;
- Increase the range of ECE options for parents, including marae, churches, sports clubs and places where people naturally come together;
- Invest in new leadership roles in schools;
- Support communities of schools collaborating around an achievement;

- Provide specialist advisors to schools on how to use assessment to target resources to students needing a helping hand;
- Provide more specialist support to a greater number of schools to raise student achievement;
- Raise the status of the teaching profession;
- Deal with disruptive behaviour;
- Support parents and schools with advice on preventing school bullying;
- Access to safe, reliable and fast digital technologies;
- Give school buildings need a refresh;
- Provide further funding to support School boards;
- Get more children to stay in school longer and achieving more;
- Get more students into further education or training pathways;
- Target 260 secondary schools to identify young people at risk of not achieving NCEA Level 2;
- Provide Youth Guarantee and Trades Academies to ensure more young people get the qualification they need;
- Provide \$10.5 million to accelerate mathematics and science teaching and learning;
- Help 250 Communities of Schools set achievement targets (Ministry of Education, 2013a).

While many of the above strategies are still to be fully implemented, data collected in relation to the National Standards and other signposts within the New Zealand education system show some small gains. Participation levels in early childhood education (ECE) grew to 95.9% in March 2014, with participation rates amongst Māori up 2.9% or 1,637 children since 2011. In 2013, 78.6% (63,301) of 18 year olds obtained an NCEA Level 2 or equivalent qualification, a 4.3% rise since 2011, and Māori and Pasifika achievement rates have risen at a higher rate than the national average. Māori achievement rates rose by 6.2% or an additional 714 students, between 2011 and 2013 (Education Counts, 2014).

Ka Hikitia – Raising Māori achievement

Specific policy development for Māori education is presented in *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success 2013–2017*, which is the Ministry of Education’s policy strategy to rapidly change how the education system performs, to allow Māori students to gain the skills, qualifications and knowledge they need for education success (Ministry of Education, 2013b). *Ka Hikitia* identifies two key factors for raising Māori achievement: quality provision and leadership, teaching and learning supported by effective governance; and strong engagement and

contribution from parents and families, Māori organisations, and businesses. The policy has five focus areas:

1. Students have access to high quality Māori language in education;
2. All Māori students participate in high quality early learning;
3. All Māori students have strong literacy, numeracy and language skills;
4. Māori succeed at higher levels of tertiary education; and
5. The Ministry of Education, ERO and other education sector agencies creates conditions for Māori students to enjoy and achieve educational success as Māori (Ministry of Education, 2014).

Concepts for investigating and describing Māori education

This section introduces key concepts that are useful for understanding Māori education and complex education scenarios.

Foucault's notion of discourse

Philosopher Michel Foucault has provided a rich post-structural perspective on the fundamental assumptions of language, meaning and subjectivity that exist within cultures and community groups. Foucault was interested in how power and knowledge are entwined and embedded within the use of language, a process he called 'discourse', and the associated rules that enabled certain understandings to be entertained in one social context and constrained in another (Walshaw, 2007).

We must make allowance for the complex and unstable powers whereby discourses can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy (p 43).

This concept of 'discourse' helps explain the understandings and ideas we have about others, and that we construct of ourselves, to tell us what it means to be for example: a parent, a teacher, a researcher, academically challenged or gifted. The notion of discourse is also used to understand the relationship between knowledge, power and truth and the inseparable connection between these concepts. Discourses create knowledge, influence thinking and behaviour, and have the potential to create truth for people groups. 'The bad news is that discourses have the *effect* of producing truth...the good news is that because discourses are historically specific, we can't think of them as lasting. Neither can we think of them as absolutely true or absolutely false' (Walshaw, 2007, p. 42, emphasis in original). This shows

that discourses have the potential to create both possibilities and challenges for those concerned.

Applying Foucault's concept of discourse to education reveals possibilities and challenges for educators and students. The concept of discourse can be applied to the formation of teacher expectations, and how teachers form beliefs about students and student groups. All teachers have expectations for students. Teacher expectations are the notions a teacher holds of student performance in the long and short term (Rubie-Davies, 2008b). These expectations influence teacher's behaviours toward students. According to Rubie-Davies et al. (2012) teacher beliefs appear to influence teacher practice, and teacher beliefs are influenced by school context and the institutional sites of which they are a part. According to Walshaw (2007):

If learners are understood as capable or struggling, it is simply because a set of critical links has been forged between a number of elements to make that understanding possible. One of those elements might concern the status of education, another might be the status of learning, and another might involve the institutional sites from which these elements originate (p 41).

Timperley and Robinson (2001) found that prevailing assumptions about the causes of low student achievement in low decile schools were counter-productive to the aim of improving the quality of instruction. Teacher beliefs about the causes of low achievement were externalised, focusing on student and family deprivation, and on the deficits of the children and parents, and paying little attention to school-based factors. But teachers' assumptions were challenged by discrepant data on children's school entry literacy and numeracy skills, which were much higher than the teachers believed. The research showed that teachers made assumptions about parents' lack of involvement in their children's learning, and forecast a lack of care for reading books sent home. These fears were disproved by the data, which revealed a very low loss rate of 4.5% as opposed to the predicted 40%.

The history of Māori education in New Zealand, coupled with current achievement levels of Māori students suggests that negative discourse has influence on teacher expectations, teacher practices, and therefore student achievement, particularly in low-decile schooling contexts. This situation started to become recognised in New Zealand in the 1970s and 1980s as greater attention was paid to ethnic gaps in achievement levels, in particular for Māori (Mutch, 2012). As these gaps came to be understood as evidence of fundamental flaws in the New Zealand education system, policy was seen as a means to address poor Māori achievement.

Education policy

Education policy is framed by the principles, laws and rules that govern the operation of education systems. The development of educational policy is an important lens for examining and investigating Māori education. Government policy is developed in the context of the political climate of the day, and the stance of the government in power at the time. How appropriate policy is for each specific schooling community is open to interpretation, depending on how well associated funding and support meets the needs in the community.

In this sense the content and potential influence of government policy is ultimately in the hands of those with influence to develop and implement it. ‘Decision making, such as this, by policy makers, alerts us to the fact that subjectivities are strategically fashioned through relations of domination and power’ Walshaw (2007, p. 46). Whether policy makers appreciate the needs of those living in low socioeconomic schooling communities is open to question. In general, policy makers do not originate from low socioeconomic communities. Knowing this, ‘it becomes important to look at those who represent reason and those who do not’ (Walshaw, 2007, p. 50).

The New Zealand government’s recent education policy directions aim to raise achievement for the ‘one in five students’ who are seen to be failing within the New Zealand education system, including a disproportionate number of Māori children. (M Chamberlain, 2010). The national standards are a benchmark of each student’s level of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, which is reported to them and their parents each year. Openshaw (2009) argues it has become politically attractive to view the school and the teacher as a panacea for complex social problems, but that this is an oversimplification of the solution.

In recent years there have been calls for teachers to have high expectations for all students, in the hope that these will translate into improved academic progress, even though this effect has not been thoroughly researched (Rubie-Davies, 2008a). It seems reasonable to suggest that if education policy is not accompanied by appropriate social policy to reduce the gap in living standards between wealthy and impoverished, such education policies will be

ineffective, and actually conceal the full causes of patterns of underachievement, hence continuing to reinforce the status quo.

Charles Payne describes the effects on teachers in low-socioeconomic schools of continual development and evolution of education policy:

Policy is ephemeral, changing with every shift in the superintendancy. While they are in office, superintendents tend to spit out reforms at a staggering rate, as if, knowing they are not long for this world, they decide to try everything while they have a shot at it (Payne, 2010, p. 129).

Regardless of why or how often education policy changes, it has the power to shape the education system and influence the practice of educators – to the advantage or disadvantage of students' learning opportunities.

Bourdieu's concepts of capital and habitus

Pierre Bourdieu investigated the power of schools within the larger processes of social and cultural reproduction through his concepts of *symbolic violence* and *cultural capital*. Bourdieu describes symbolic violence as 'power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force' (Sadovnik, 2007, p. 11). Bourdieu argues that schools have the power and influence to advantage upper and middle classes through symbolic representations of cultural domination, such as language, ideas, and knowledge of music, art and literature in the school curriculum, which forms cultural capital. Cultural capital has important exchange value in the educational and social marketplace. Bourdieu argued that cultural capital reproduces social classes and that schooling reproduces cultural capital unevenly among social classes because schools respond to the dominant interests of society at the time (Sadovnik, 2007).

Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and the reproduction of dominant interests in society finds application within the field of teacher behaviour and teacher expectations. Hattie (2007) found that teacher–student relationships and teacher feedback influence student achievement in classroom settings. Researchers agree that teacher expectations affect student achievement, but disagree about the size and significance of these effects (Rubie-Davies, 2008b). Brophy (1983) identified 17 teacher behaviours that varied depending on whether teachers were interacting with high or low expectation students. The review showed that

teachers demanded less of low expectation students. Rubie-Davies (2008b) confirms this in stating:

Where expectations are inaccurate, especially where they are well below student potential, there can be profound effects on student achievement, particularly when compounding factors are considered (p 255).

Factors that influence teacher expectations

Ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status are student characteristics that influence teacher behaviour through the expectations that teachers form of children. Research in the New Zealand context by Turner (2013) revealed that teacher expectations differed depending on the ethnicity of the student, and that expectations were highest for Asian students, followed by Pākehā and then Pasifika students. Teacher expectations were lowest for Māori students even though their achievement was equivalent to Pasifika students. Teacher expectations can also translate into differing instructional environments by their effect on teacher behaviour (Rubie-Davies, 2008b). Teachers working in low socioeconomic schools had lower expectations for their students than teachers working in middle-class schools (Solomon, Battistich, & Hom, 1996). Rubie-Davies (2008b) describes the concept of the ‘unintended curriculum’ as an insight into the origin of these potentially damaging expectations:

Students [are] aware of teachers’ differential interactions and consequently infer whether their teacher considers them smart or not. From these interactions students may learn lessons that were not intended. Students gain the impression some are considered better than others. Such messages are conveyed not only through direct verbal teacher-student interactions but also nonverbally through smiling, nodding, leaning toward or away from students, sighing, or rolling eyes (p. 256).

Jennifer Tatebe (2014) researched how pre-service secondary teachers perceived and engaged with disadvantaged students and schools. The findings showed that the majority of pre-service teachers demonstrated minimal engagement with issues of disadvantage that impact on students. The research also showed that pre-service teacher engagement with disadvantage was influenced by a complex set of political, economic and social structures, contexts, policies and practices. These findings suggest that newly-qualified teachers in New Zealand may be entering the teaching profession with little knowledge of the notions of disadvantage and inequality experienced by many students in New Zealand, including the reasons for disadvantage, the impact on learning, and how teacher expectations and behaviour impact on student achievement.

In summary, Rubie-Davies (2014) states:

The major point is that we should not make assumptions about where high and low expectation teachers are located. Part of the movement towards becoming a high expectation teacher involves moving past the stereotypes related to ethnicity, culture, language and gender and breaking down the barriers to learning, so that all students can make substantial progress (p. 229).

White privilege

The concepts of cultural capital and power also help to explain how education assists in the influence and maintenance of dominant cultures and classes within society. Peggy McIntosh (1988) used the term ‘white privilege’ to describe conscious or unconscious benefits for ‘white’ people of these attitudes or behaviours. One example might be the ability for a white person to rent a house from a landlord more easily than a dark-skinned person, on the basis that the landlord assumes that the white person will look after the house better. McIntosh states:

I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was “meant” to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks (p.1).

The discussion of white privilege is relevant in understanding the alienating effect on Māori of dominant cultural assumptions embedded within schools and the education system. The next section examines the concepts of ethnicity and identity as they apply to Māori education.

Ethnicity and identity

Ethnic diversity in New Zealand schools has grown markedly in recent decades, especially in relation to the Māori and Pasifika student population. Where the New Zealand schooling population was once largely bi-ethnic, many ethnicities from all over the world are now represented. On one hand, ethnic diversity provides a rich tapestry of cultures and protocols to draw on and learn from. On the other hand, diversity challenges teachers to provide a culturally responsive and inclusive learning programme for their students (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013). The efforts that teachers make to acknowledge ethnic diversity in their classrooms is important, if not essential. Research shows that a student’s sense of ethnic identity is an important factor in promoting a strong sense of wellbeing at school (Reyes & Vallone, 2007). A strong sense of ethnic identity is related to fewer behaviour problems and

greater academic achievement (Mutch, 2012). Yet definitions and understanding of ethnicity in education are often unclear.

Two main ways in which ethnicity can be understood are known as *primordial* and *situational* views (Stephen May, 2012). Primordialism views ethnicity as inherited, based on biological kin groups and evolutionary processes. But the primordial view is criticised as deterministic and leading to stereotypes, since it holds that ethnicity determines group and individual behaviours. ‘Primordialism is not wrong, as far as it does, but on its own it is inadequate as a concept of ethnicity’ Stewart 2010 (Stewart, 2010, p. 11). In contrast, a situational understanding of ethnicity views the ethnic group as defined by the choices and behaviours of the individual members, and the socio-historical relationship to other ethnic groups (Stewart, 2010). The weakness of the situational account of ethnicity is that it understates the constraints on an individual’s ethnic choices.

Bourdieu’s notion of habitus can be applied to ethnicity to overcome this apparent dichotomy between primordial and situational positions:

Habitus is a set of dispositions that are commonly held by members of a social group and these subjectively created attitudes, beliefs and practices bind the members together so that they can identify and communicate with each other. It also allows them to recognise, and be recognised by, outsiders (Educational policy in New Zealand: Who pays the piper? A paper presented by Carol Mutch at Mutch, 2004).

This definition of ethnicity, as balanced between sets of influences from both primordial and situational accounts, provides a more complex and flexible explanation of a person’s behaviour. A person’s ethnicity is one important aspect of their identity. According to Cerulo (1997), the study of identity is a vast and complex account moving from an explanation of the construction of the individual ‘me’ in the 1970s to the construction of the collective ‘we’ in more recent years. Personal identity ‘refers to feelings about self’ (Reyes & Vallone, 2007, p. 3) and the ‘stable inner sense of who a person is’ (Diller & Moule, 2005, p. 120). These authors suggest that ethnic identity pertains ‘to that part of a personal identity that contributes to the person’s self-image as an ethnic-group member’ (p. 120).

Ethnic identity has been described as a product of personal choice, something that individuals actively adopt or stress, while commitment to an ethnic identity usually stems from a

culturally-based need for community (Waters, 1990). Block (2007) indicated that identity was not something which stayed fixed for life. Cerulo (1997) describes collective identity as a concept grounded in classic sociological constructs that describes the ‘we-ness of a group, stressing the similarities or shared attributes around which group members coalesce’ (p. 386).

In a review of literature on the relationship between language and ethnicity, Cavallaro (2005) noted that language is central to the maintenance of ethnic and cultural identity at both individual and group levels, as ‘language is a strong carrier of a group’s cultural heritage’ (p.568). According to Reyes and Vallone (2007), ‘When issues of language and culture intersect, a solid foundation in both minority and majority languages may positively affect self-identity’ (p. 6). The authors examined identity construction in childhood and adolescence. In particular, they looked through the lens of bilingual immersion programmes at what it means to children to become bilingual, bi-cultural, and bi-literate. The authors observed that ‘while cross-cultural attitudes may have more relevance to majority students, identity construction maybe more relevant to minority students’ (p. 5), and that the ability to develop and maintain relationships in both cultures may be the key to psychological wellbeing.

According to Marie, Fergusson and Bode (2008) there are statistically significant associations between cultural identity and educational outcomes in New Zealand. Māori identity is defined primarily through genealogy as well as key historical and geographical markers within the tribe’s territory. Māori identity is encapsulated in pepeha (tribal sayings or proverbs) specific to hapū and iwi (Mutu, 2005). Through an individual’s pepeha, personal identity in Māori contexts answers the question of “Nō hea koe?” (Where do you belong?) rather than individual identity. That is why pepeha usually include landmarks of tribal territory such as maunga, waka, tūpuna, whenua, hapū, and iwi.

For Māori struggling to shake off the oppressive mantle of colonisation, state dependency and state-imposed regimes, information about who each community is, where they come from, and their history, traditions, and underlying value systems are fundamental to their survival as Māori. (Mutu, 2005, p. 117)

Due to the historical processes of alienation reviewed above, today not every Māori person has a firm understanding of his or her identity and culture, such traditional marae practices and protocols. Many young Māori people have only limited knowledge of Māori traditions; do not speak Māori, and are only vaguely aware of Māori customs. Mutu (2005) stated that

the ‘revitalization of Māori [language] is proving difficult when this generation of second-language speakers cannot fully communicate with its native speakers’ (p. 129). According to research in 1998, only one-third of the Māori population had regular exposure to a marae - a location where Māori culture is practiced and performed (Te Hoe Nuku Roa, 1998). As a result, many Māori young people, particularly in urban areas, have been left alienated from traditional culture. Young males are also over-represented within Māori suicide rates, which are higher than any other cultural group in New Zealand (Snook & O’Neill, 2014). About young Māori, Van Meijl comments:

Their self is often constituted in and through different models of cultural identity, as a result of which they may be left with a feeling of not being a real Māori yet also lacking in any other positive form of cultural identity (2006, p. 919).

In contrast, Wally Penetito points to the strength and resistance of Māori identity:

What keeps the Māori agenda alive is its profound belief in its capacity to contribute to inclusive communities, to share a collective power in the pursuit of common values, and to transform a society without turning it inside out as in the new world order of market individualism. Māori like to do things together; to acclaim their Māoriness to one another; to meet and strengthen their social bonds with each other (Penetito, 2010, p. 45)

The role of schools in identity construction

According to Reyes and Vallone (2007), the school is well placed to play an important role in identity construction. The authors claim that schools are socialising agents and as such, “have the opportunity to profoundly influence identity construction through their pedagogical and curricular stance and their ability to provide services and to forge alliances with parents and families and communities’ (p. 10).

Schools have been identified as a place to reach children and families, particularly in poor communities, a setting with inherent capacity to support children’s mental health and development, and a nexus between home and neighbourhood with potential to bridge these ecologies. (Cappella, Frazier, Atkins, Schoenwald, & Glisson, 2008, p. 395)

But how does this role in identity construction relate to best practice for classroom teachers, and how does it relate to engaging Māori students in learning?

Mason Durie discussed the issue of engaging Māori at school at the National Hui Taumata Mātuaauranga IV: Māori Education Summit, held at Massey University in 2004. Durie’s

keynote address, entitled *Māori Achievement: Anticipating the Learning Environment* shared the perceptions held by young adult and senior Māori of their experiences in education.

Some panel members regretted not having had the opportunity to engage in Māori endeavours while at school. But for those who did, there was no question that time spent on te reo Māori, whakairo, waiata, kapa haka and tikanga was as important as other parts of the curriculum. And, contrary to views that are still prevalent in New Zealand, being Māori is not incompatible with aspirations for high levels of achievement in science, economics, marine biology, art or history. Many learners maintain that competence in one area has implications for other areas; cultural confidence goes hand in hand with accomplishments in sport, study, and personal development. (Durie, 2004, p. 7)

Durie highlighted the importance of a culturally responsive or culturally inclusive learning environment. Culturally responsive learning climates are ‘an important aspect of a socially just education and well recognised as such within equity and schooling policy’ (Keddie, 2012, p. 269). These findings support the assertion that ‘being Māori’ in an education setting in the New Zealand context can have positive educational, behavioural and academic benefits for Māori (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2009; Durie, 2004; Whitinui, 2008).

When students experience both social and academic success within a bilingual/bicultural environment, positive attitudes towards bilingual/biculturalism have a firm foundation in which to grow. We further suggest that such a foundation may provide the basis for healthy identity construction in children and youth from linguistic and cultural backgrounds. (Reyes & Vallone, 2007, p. 7).

According to Macfarlane, Glynn, Cavanagh, and Bateman (2007), while all students benefit from being in a culturally inclusive classroom, ‘many students from non-dominant cultures are not free to be who they are when they go to school’ (p. 65). Creating a culturally safe school for Māori has the potential to create a culturally safe environment for other minority cultures as well.

An ethnological investigation by Cavanagh (2005) at a rural area school (5–18 year-old students) in New Zealand provided insight into the characteristics of a culturally safe school, finding the relationships between students, parents, families, teachers, administrators, and community members to be the core element. According to Cavanagh, the central factor that held a culturally safe environment together was care, which combined rituals and relationships. Māori students needed to feel respected and proud of who and what they were as Māori, and teachers needed to respect the Māori-preferred ways of learning, which

included whānau wisdom, karakia, acknowledgement, celebration, mentoring, and honouring an individual's Māori identity, culture, practices and beliefs.

The importance of building safe and caring schools was also explored by Whitinui (2008), who claimed that building caring and culturally safe schools should not be about students merely having to cope. In response to the identification of Māori children as an underachieving cultural group, Whitinui states, 'Māori students need to feel genuinely happier about attending school and that they can achieve success and peace equally with other students' (2008, p. 3). Whitinui's study also showed that Māori students who participated in kapa haka across four mainstream secondary schools felt happier about attending school and wanting to learn.

The opportunity and ability for teachers to develop and implement culturally responsive and inclusive learning environments is constrained, however, within the current neoliberal political environment, which places higher priority on measuring standards and test results, and puts pressure on teachers to ensure these demands are met. The influence of neoliberalism on education and culturally responsive learning environments for minority learners will be discussed in the next section.

Neoliberal education reforms

Neoliberalism is an economic philosophy which holds that human well-being can best flourish within a framework of individualism, free market, free trade and competition. Under neoliberal frameworks, governments promote capitalism and follow business management models. Education systems are reformed to set high standards, to which curriculum is aligned, the work of teachers is directed, and against which the achievement of students is tested (Sleeter, 2012).

The 1987 government election was a turning point in the history of education policy in New Zealand, when neoliberal influences started to be felt (Grace, 1991). In the late 1980s and 1990s, New Zealand experienced an extremely rapid and wide-reaching conversion to neoliberal doctrine, resulting in deregulation, devolution, corporatisation and privatisation of public institutions such as education, which had previously been the domain of the state (Ritchie, Skerrett, & Rau, 2014).

After many years of priding itself on being a ‘welfare state’ which cared for all its citizens, New Zealand moved almost overnight to a user pays market driven economic system where welfare systems were pruned and national assets privatised. (Carpenter, 2009, p. 3)

In education policy, neoliberal reforms would ‘de-legitimize the existing education settlement in New Zealand’ (Grace, 1991, p. 32) based on meritocracy, discussed above on page 29. In this way the vision for education to work in the interests of social justice became even more difficult to realise. ‘Neoliberal thinking understands everyone as essentially the same: it cannot account for culture or indigeneity (Stewart, 2014, p. 12). In this sense, neoliberal thinking contradicts philosophies of culturally responsive and inclusive teaching and learning, since it cannot account for differences or special educational needs.

Neoliberal reforms, by negating the central importance of teacher professional learning, as well as context, culture and racism, reverse the empowered learning that culturally responsive pedagogy has the potential to support. (Sleeter, 2012, p. 563)

Conclusion

The literature reviewed in this chapter has provided grounds on which to question and challenge a cluster of commonly-held ideas in New Zealand, including the egalitarian understanding that all New Zealanders operate on a level playing field in the education system, employment opportunities and living circumstances. Poverty is a key underlying reason why inequitable outcomes are apparent in education statistics, and why Māori are disadvantaged within the education system.

Māori educational achievement is not a recent problem and cannot be explained simply by poverty-related factors. Māori poverty and underachievement results from the history of this country, and is an outcome of aims enacted through the process of colonisation, whereby European systems quickly marginalised Māori, their language, social forms and culture. This situation reflected and perpetuated hierarchical Eurocentric discourses related to the supposed superiority of European, and inferiority of Māori, people and cultures. Although implicit rather than publicly acknowledged, the influence of these discourses still plays out in teacher expectations of Māori students, which impact on teaching, learning and achievement.

Schools have played an important role in reproducing the aims and effects of colonisation through policies which have been informed by dominant assumptions of Pākehā, yet these

effects remain largely misunderstood by education professionals, policy makers and government officials. Neoliberal influences in education also constrain understanding of Māori identity and the need for culturally responsive and inclusive teaching and learning. This lack of understanding impedes the ability of education policy to achieve its expressed aims, and supports the continuation of the status quo in a self-perpetuating cycle.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Chapter Three describes the methodology of the research project, including the study design, data collection and analysis methods. The research design facilitated an investigation which produced a rich descriptive account of the unique lived experiences of the participants, and produced findings which have strong potential to enhance Pākehā understanding of Māori education.

Literary devices such as narrative and metaphor are useful in qualitative educational research for their ability to help scholars paint rich word images, and make nuanced comparisons within complex scenarios. The thesis title includes the biblical metaphor of ‘wrestling with the angel’ (Genesis 32: 22-32) to describe the struggle of children at Anahera School to learn and behave in ways expected of them at school; indeed, sometimes simply to make it from one day to the next. An angel is impossible to wrestle, and so are the systemic social features of child poverty, macro-economic change, and the historical trajectories into which children are born.

The impossibility of wrestling with an angel is also a fitting metaphor for the most testing parts of my doctoral journey, in my intense and prolonged struggle to adequately research this topic, and to write this thesis: difficulties that have seen me at the point of giving up more than once. While the task of completing my thesis has been a struggle, this doctoral journey has also forced me to consider some deep-seated attitudes and thoughts that have consciously or unconsciously been part of my mind-set as a white, middle-class male for many years. My experience as a researcher is captured in this statement by Lorraine Code, writing about researching from positions of privilege and dominance:

It is about linking lines of inquiry, weaving them into established forms of empirical evidence, for their capacity to unsettle patterns of ignorance and incredulity that, ironically have structured western epistemology and everyday knowing for too long (Code, 2011, p. 220-221).

As a consequence, and at the very least, I will look at and participate in the world differently as a result of this doctoral journey.

The study design outlined below incorporates the data collection and analysis methods from the first thesis, with the addition of elements from two recent methodological traditions, namely narrative research and auto-ethnography. Metaphors and other narrative devices are

also used, including the metaphor of a ‘journey’ – via a long winding path – of my completion of the requirements of the doctoral programme.

Theoretical Framework

This thesis research project incorporates the processes used for data collection and analysis in the first thesis, with the addition of two recent methodological traditions employed during the revision period, namely narrative research and auto-ethnography. Narrative research is used in writing fictionalised vignettes from the empirical data collected in the research school (page 124 below) and in the fictionalised dialogue presented in Chapter Six below (page 120). Other narrative devices used include the two major metaphors of ‘journey’ and ‘struggle’ as outlined in the previous paragraphs.

This thesis also contains an auto-ethnographic element, catalysed in part by the outcome of the examination of the first thesis (Chang, 2008). My first thesis was criticised as containing evidence of ‘deficit discourse’ in regard to the research school and its community. These critiques related to my understandings of Māori history, culture and people, including friends, colleagues and clients. These critiques were very difficult not to take personally, and a very humbling experience. By way of response, when I started on the revise-and-resubmit work with my brand-new supervisor, I wrote reflection notes about what had happened, and my understandings of what I needed to do to address the feedback. These reflections form the basis of the last section of Chapter One (see p. 8), and surface again in Chapter Seven. The extensive use throughout the thesis of the first-person voice is another link to the ‘auto’ turn in research methodology (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Auto-ethnography has been identified as a useful tool for white teachers to deeply examine the influence of their own uncontested assumptions in their work with students of other ethnicities (Pennington & Brock, 2012).

What is research?

Research is a formal way to seek insight and explanations of complex situations, in order to help make sense of the world in which we live and work. Answers to ‘what, where, why and how’ questions are important to help people gain an understanding of their field of interest. In relation to field of education, research is usually focused on the ‘improvement of teaching and learning systems and practices for the betterment of all concerned and society at large’ (Mutch, 2005, p. 18). In regard to this project, a research plan was implemented using

relevant research methodology and methods to explore the relationship between child poverty, Māori ethnicity, and educational success, and to seek an understanding of how this relationship is understood by teachers and education officials working in low-decile schools.

The process of conducting research is important as it influences the reliability of the facts that are claimed to arise from it, and determines how well they can be trusted as truth. Therefore research needs to be ‘an organised, systemic and logical process of inquiry, using empirical information to answer questions’ (Punch, 2009, p. 10). Research answers or findings have the potential to inform future decisions and ways of operating. In this sense the answers derived from research need to be understood within the context in which they were established and the strengths and limitations of the process used to establish them. Conducting research thus ‘requires a set of skills and an understanding of the process, including its strengths and limitations’ (Mutch, 2005, p. 14).

The approaches and processes that are used to conduct research are informed by the *methodology* that the researcher selects, and the related *methods* that they choose to gather and make sense of research information. Methodologies and methods are underpinned by *theories* that are used to explain the social and scientific world that the research is conducted within. Research theory, methodology and methods are discussed below.

Research methods and methodology

Research methods are used to collect and analyse information or data. They are a ‘coherent set of strategies or a particular process’ (Mutch, 2005, p. 108). An example of a research method is questionnaire research, in which a questionnaire is given to each research participant to fill out. The questionnaire is the research tool or instrument that captures responses from participants. Another example of a research method is ethnography, which uses researcher observations to capture the lived reality of a group of people in a particular setting.

Ethnographic and auto-ethnographic research methods were used in this research project to provide a range of tools used to gather data. These data included semi-structured interviews, documentation and participant observations. A combination of approaches provided an opportunity to capture a deep, rich perspective of the social dynamics, educational systems

and the relationship between these that were evident at Anahera School at the time. Researching amongst people and their social contexts, such as schools, takes a far more complex object of study than those of basic science, where many elements of the natural world are stable, regular and universal. For example, the descriptions from science of well-known substances, such as table salt, are universally accepted as ‘truth’. We can have confidence that whether salt is analysed in New Zealand or Russia, its chemical composition is sodium chloride (NaCl).

The study of topics such as education that involve examining human behaviour and relationships is almost the polar opposite – people are unpredictable, unreliable and influenced by many different factors. Their reactions and responses depend on the conditions in which they operate and survive. Using a variety of tools enabled me to record the subtleties of the interactions and responses of everyday life that I observed each time I visited Anahera School. My data collection captured the shadings of emotional tone that made up the subjectivities of the individuals at the centre of the research context, which I have preserved in the form of the narratives in Chapter 1 (page 2) and Chapter 6 (page 124). The narrative form enables a more vivid, lifelike representation of the complex social scenario under investigation, so serves in this sense as a form of data analysis (see page 65 below).

Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to express their responses to pre-determined discussion starters that were linked to my theme of interest. I chose this tool because I anticipated that some of the participants would feel a sense of anxiety in speaking to me initially so I wanted to create a relaxed environment in the interview setting that almost feel like a discussion that they would be part of in the staff room with their colleagues. I chose a semi-structured interview because it provided some structure to shape a discussion – but not too much that it restricted the participant’s responses to a particular vein of thought.

Observation as a tool allowed me to be a presence in the school to capture the multitude of ‘moments in time’ that a researcher becomes part of in an ethnographic experience. While I did not necessarily capture the experiences right there and there, I would later retreat to a quiet room and record the event in a research diary, including my reflections. An observational presence also allowed me to follow up on themes that developed from semi-structured interviews, to clarify points of interest, or address an unanswered question. Being an observer allowed me to ‘fit in’ with everyday life at Anahera School which was my intent

– to ‘live life’ at school with the research participants. This experience provided ‘natural data’ to help me address my research question in a genuine way.

The data collected through the above methods was supplemented by looking at materials and records in written or photographic form that were held at the school, or that contained information about the school. These documents included assessment data, school photographs, and historical records of key events. One example of this form of data was a collection of old school photographs taken since the school first opened in the late 1950s. Comparing the ethnic composition from the 1950s to the early 2000s showed a significant shift from Pākehā to Māori. Data from interviews, observation and narrative inquiry was used in combination to shed light on and connect themes that became apparent. The range of data collected built up a rich picture of the social and educational issues faced by teachers and students at Anahera School.

While research methodology is about the methods used to collect data (as discussed above), it is also about the theory underpinning the research project. Research methodology is also about the ‘theory about the method’ – it is about ‘what lies behind the approaches and methods of inquiry that might be used in a piece of research’ (Punch, 2009, p. 15). The theory that the research methods rest on provides the purpose, application and interpretation of the research project. In this project the theory is comprised of a number of theories, rather than a single explanation or interpretation of how people learn, and relate in an educational setting because, as it mentioned above, human behaviour is complex and unpredictable. It is not possible to interpret the dynamics of everyday life with anyone formula or template.

Theories are explanations – ‘they can range from someone’s hunch about something to a well-tested, well respected explanation of the social or scientific work’ (Mutch 2005, p 56). Social and educational theories about learning, knowledge, language, history, identity, culture, ethical treatment of others, resilience, coping, and many more are relevant to this project. Recognised and named social and learning theories such as behaviourism, constructivism, social learning theory and socio-constructivism are also relevant. Michel Foucault’s theory of discourse and Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of social and cultural reproduction provide important theoretical concepts with which to understand the complex issues under investigation.

Does qualitative education research provide new knowledge?

Educational research is often categorised as either quantitative or qualitative, depending on the types of methods used to gather and analyse the data. Quantitative research uses statistical methods to collect numerical data about a representative sample, which can be generalised in its application to a wider population. Qualitative research uses methods that gather descriptive accounts of the unique lived experiences of the participants, in order to enhance understanding of particular phenomena. As with research in general, quantitative research has its roots in the natural sciences and claims to be more valid and reliable (Mutch, 2005). While there has been significant debate in the past between supporters of each discipline about the validity of each approach, in broad terms qualitative research claims to be able gather a richer description of events and circumstances in the field. Quantitative research is of necessity large scale, while qualitative research is often small in scale, and therefore not generalizable. Qualitative research underpins this research project.

Qualitative research accepts that people know themselves best, and can best describe, interpret, and talk about their own environment and lives. Qualitative research is concerned with understanding the research context and its political, social, psychological, economic, and cultural dynamics—all of which are vital to producing rich, useful, and valid findings (Anderson, 1998). Qualitative research plays a crucial role in developing a more accurate, and therefore more respectful, perspective of social contexts such as education, in which participants might otherwise be a silent and poorly represented minority (L. Smith, 2005).

A great deal of educational research is qualitative, including the research conducted for this thesis project. The study design for this research project uses a range of qualitative research methods for collecting and analysing data, in order to build up a detailed and engaging picture of the conditions of life and work for the staff of one school, the children they teach, and their whānau and community. One of the key reasons for choosing a qualitative research design over quantitative design is related to the nature of the research problem. Qualitative methods are useful in ‘research that attempts to understand the meaning or nature of experiences of persons’ and ‘lends itself to getting out into the field and finding out what people are doing and thinking’ (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 11). To investigate the research question I chose to spend time in the school lives of the people concerned, with the opportunity to capture data on interlocking systems and relationships from a range of

different angles. This enabled me to ‘tell the whole story’ in addressing my research question, in a more reliable and respectful way than a single visit and collection of records would have allowed.

In contrast, this research project provided an opportunity for a ‘person like me’ to gain a very detailed perspective on life for Māori students and teachers in a school where educational achievement is negatively influenced by child poverty, a particular social history, a system of educational and ethnic discourse, and certain patterns of teacher behaviour. The term a ‘person like me’ is used here to represent the majority of people who work within the education system in New Zealand: typically male, middle-class, Pākehā government officials, with influence to make changes, but lacking in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by Māori students in low-decile schools, and the factors that contribute to their situation. Generations of ‘people like me’ have forged careers in systems and structures that develop and implement educational policy in the school sector. While these are often well-meaning people who want to help and make a difference, few have the opportunity to spend anywhere near enough time to understand the dynamics of low-decile schools, and the daily lives of teachers and children in those schools.

The value of this research project was that a ‘person like me’ gained access to this environment for an extended period of time, and was in a privileged position to closely observe the detailed dynamics of learning and behaviour. It is unfortunately the case that ‘people like me’ very rarely get an opportunity like this, to reflect in an informed way on the insider experience of such a context, and to be able to relate this experience to relevant literature, in order to draw sound research conclusions.

Study design

At the start of this thesis research, formal ethics approval was obtained based on the following four research questions:

- Are there any cultural and contextual factors that are important in implementing a school-wide behavioural management system in a schooling community with a predominantly Māori student population?
- What are the factors that influence teachers’ views, interpretations, and responses to antisocial behaviour?

- What organizational and individual changes might be effective in changing teachers' understandings and students' responses? Is it necessary to change factors in the school climate and teacher practice to promote quality student–teacher interactions?
- Is it necessary to change factors in the school climate and teacher practice to promote quality student-teacher interactions?

As has already been made clear in the preceding chapters, the focus of the research shifted over time, and these research questions became outdated. The original empirical data was re-analysed to address the new research focus, but did not exceed the parameters of the original ethics approval.

Finding a research school

Prior to approaching potential research schools, I sought guidance on how to proceed from my doctoral supervisors as well as service managers at work, cultural advisors (Kaumātua), and critical friends. Based on the advice I received, my plan was firstly to request an informal meeting with the principals at identified schools, one school at a time. If there was interest in the project, I planned to maintain discussions with that school until such time as the research project was formally confirmed, or the school indicated that it did not wish to be involved in the project. I was not going to engage in discussions with more than one school at a time, as I did not want to put myself into a situation where I had to choose between one school and another.

I also planned to provide a Participant Information Sheet to the principal to use as a guide for discussion in the first meeting. During the first contact meeting with the school I planned to make it clear that even though the chosen methodology allowed for a collaborative approach to the research project, the key focal points of my research question and research areas were all aspects of the study to which I needed to stay closely connected. If the school or I could not see a clear way forward to enable an investigation of these areas, or a need to investigate them through a school-wide behaviour approach, then either party would need to conclude the discussions. Assuming ongoing interest from a school principal after this point, more formalised discussions with school Board of Trustees were likely to follow. However, this was to be dependent on how the school principal wished to proceed after the first meeting.

Approaching the research school

This plan described above was essentially how I proceeded. The Principal of the first school I approached showed immediate interest in the proposal and because of this, I did not approach another school. The process was formalised early in Term 1 of 2009, and a start date was negotiated for the beginning of Term 2 in 2009.

The research school was selected on the basis of the criteria described above. It was the first school that I approached because it met all of the criteria and was also geographically close to my work place. From a practical point of view, this was important. I also had some pre-existing professional relationships with staff at the school, which meant, from a relationship point of view, I was not starting from the absolute beginning. My critical friends also had professional relationships in the school so they were able to give me initial advice as to whether this was an appropriate environment.

Data collection

In this research, rich empirical ethnographic data was collected within one school through naturalistic observations and interactions with students and staff in the course of the typical school day, based on spending one day per week at the school for 40 weeks in total. In addition, semi-structured interviews with a range of members of the school community were conducted during the period of time spent in the school. Also, documentation on the history, policies and practices, and behavioural and achievement data of the school was collected. While undertaking these empirical data collection activities, two particular foci were used to guide investigation:

- Past events and changes, especially in the previous three years, which influenced the school climate in terms of frequency and severity of negative student behaviour; and
- Existing universal school-wide practices and approaches building on the links between behaviour and achievement.

Ethnography data: participant observation

Participant observation has three advantages over other methods of data collection it allows access to backstage culture; it allows rich descriptions of a society or group; and it provides opportunities and a means to report on unscheduled behaviours and events (Munck & Sobo, 1998). I sought to develop an active role in the school community by spending time in the

research school, building relationships and credibility (Edmonson (2000)). Creating the time to build and maintain relationships in the research school was an essential part of this work.

Participant observation was selected because as a researcher in this setting, I needed to be an active member of the schooling community. Munck and Sobo (1998) describe participant observation as ‘hanging out’ in the life of a society or group. Hanging out offered me the possibility of gaining entry into the backstage life of the school and the opportunity to build up friendly relationships outside of the professional role I had held as a Ministry of Education employee. According to Flick (2006):

Participant observation should be understood as a process in two respects; first the researcher should increasingly become a participant and gain access to the field and to the persons. Secondly, the observation should also move through a process of becoming increasingly concrete and concentrated on the aspects that are essential to the research questions. (p. 220)

As described above, I was present in the school for one day a week over a 40-week period. I tried to live the life of the school in a natural way. I entered the school in the morning and greeted administration staff and anyone else I saw. I had morning tea and lunch with staff. I attended staff meetings at times. I walked around the playground at lunch and break time, played the occasional game with children, and basically tried to fit in with the way things ran in the school. During these times I observed things, ended up in informal conversations, and asked informal or unstructured questions that were often prompted by the moment. I also felt comfortable to organise an appointment with a particular person if I wanted to clarify an observation or seek permission to access a document or record. I had a good relationship with the administration staff who allowed me to photocopy documents, or seek information, since, as is the case in most schools, the administration team was a hub of knowledge.

The observations that I made during this time in informal, semi-formal, or formal settings were recorded in my Research Diary. I would tend to make a mental note of information that was relevant to the theme that was of interest to me while in the conversation or when I observed something, then go back to my workspace and write a reflection in my Research Diary. In addition to participant observation, data were also collected from semi-structured interviews, documents about the school and a research diary.

Interview data

Individual participants were approached after I had started spending time carrying out observations in the school. Participants were sought from a range of representative groups within the school community: staff, students, parents and caregivers. Individual interviews of 30-60 minutes were held with 21 participants, each from one of the groups listed below. Additionally, a small group interview of one hour in length was held with the five Board of Trustees parent representatives.

In order to indicate their role in and therefore perspective on the school community, while simultaneously protecting the privacy of the school and individuals concerned, the identity of each interviewee has been replaced by assigning them to one of each of the following list of interview participant groups. Two groups clearly contain only one person (Principal, Caretaker) but the number of interviewees in all other groups is concealed. There were no research participants who were members of more than one of these groups. All interview quotes are attributed by indicating the group to which the quoted participant belonged, using these labels (see Chapters Four and Five below).

Interview participant groups:

Administration staff member
Board of Trustees member/Grandmother
Board of Trustees member/Mother
Parent
Caretaker
Junior classroom teacher
Junior immersion unit teacher
Middle classroom teacher
Principal
Senior classroom teacher
Senior immersion unit teacher
Senior student
Senior student in immersion unit

Engaging with interview participants

The school principal was my initial contact. The Principal gave his final approval for my involvement in the school after discussing the finer details of my proposal. This included exploring the ethical implications of the work and identifying how I was to manage ethical risk factors to maintain confidentiality and reduce the risk of harm to participants.

Board of Trustees members also represented the parent/caregiver group. This group was pre-selected by the Principal to increase the probability of their participation in the interview. The Principal had an initial conversation with this group prior to my contacting them, and all the individuals approached agreed to be interviewed. The first time we met, I gave them a verbal summary of my intent and how the interview would run. I then provided them with a Consent Form and a Participant Information Sheet specific to this group (see Appendix E) that included a written summary of the project and my ethical obligations to them.

I approached teachers and support staff on an individual basis after I had started my time at Anahera School. I requested a short meeting with participants to seek their involvement in an interview. At this time I also provided a verbal summary of my intent and how the interview would run. I then provided each person with a Consent form (see Appendix G) and a Participant Information Sheet specific to this group (see Appendix F) that included a written summary of the project and my ethical obligations to them. None of this group declined involvement in the interview.

A group of six students were pre-selected by the Principal for involvement in the research project. The Principal wanted to ensure that the student group to whom I had access were capable of engaging positively in the interview, and I met with this group with the Principal present. I summarised the research project for them and described how the interview would run. At this stage, I gave the group the option of not being involved and one student chose to leave. Of the five students remaining, I provided each a Participant Information Sheet and an Assent Form (see Appendix H) that required the signature of a parent or caregiver as the students were under 16 years of age.

Documents about the school

I reviewed historical documents such as the school's administrative handbooks, recent Education Review Office reports, student behaviour records, and school and community photographs, to add further depth to the inquiry. I also obtained and incorporated details from the following documents:

- School charter, school administration handbook, Board of Trustees planning document— 'The [name of suburb] child', class lists, school map, data from the Student Management

System software programme, academic assessment data, copies of the school newsletter, copies of the local community newsletter.

- Education Review Office reports.
- Newspaper articles about the research school and its community.

Research diary and field notes

I used a research diary to record my personal thoughts and experiences in the form of memos to myself, as I navigated through the data gathering process. The research diary became a very important tool that helped me to keep track of the observations I made. I used the research diary to help with being a reflexive researcher, examining my theoretical stance and its impact on my practice, as well as promoting critical reflection on personal decisions and actions in relation to the processes I employed in the study (Mutch, 2005). I also made working diagrams, wall posters and timelines to help me make sense of the information I was collecting. The timeline was useful for capturing the detailed history of the school in the three years prior to the start of my research in the school, and highlighting important events.

Narrative data

Writing vignettes

I have re-processed some of the qualitative data gathered in this research project into vignettes that capture in narrative form some of the major themes that became apparent from the semi-structured interviews and observations. An example of this is found in the section 'A day in the life of Anahera School' in Chapter Six (p.124). Most of the data that I collected when I was present in Anahera School was provided in the form of a story to me, so it seems appropriate to translate it back in story form, removing any identifying features of the research school and participants in order to protect their privacy. Constructing vignettes from the data in this way gives life to the story of the school, adding immediacy and power to the themes explored in this thesis.

Personal reflections

I have also written up my experiences as a doctoral student in the form of personal reflections (especially in Chapter One) to help explain my own learning, which have been equally as important to the findings as the gathering of empirical data at Anahera School. My time at Anahera School provided me with information, but my continued doctoral journey after this time had completed, including the rejection of my first thesis, and the revision process leading to the final submitted version, provided me with challenging learning experiences.

This experience forced me into a process of deep reflection about the content of the data I had gathered, relevant literature, and where I was philosophically positioned as a Pākehā researcher and government employee, when considering issues relating to Māori education. The reflections are honest and hard won and are relevant to the outcome of the thesis, and as information for other Pākehā researchers and government officials like me.

Data analysis

Participant observations were recorded in a research diary to supplement interview findings. These were the basis for writing detailed narrative vignettes about life in the research context. Writing the vignettes was a way of further processing or analysing the data collected in the school. The interview data was transcribed and analysed using the NVIVO qualitative analysis tool. Relevant documentary data was also analysed for key messages and how they were presented. The range of primary data collected from these sources built up a rich and detailed picture of life within the school, which is synthesised with the literature review and discussed with reference to key theoretical concepts and debates in Chapter Eight.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are aspects of how a research project is carried out that ensure the rights and interests of participants are upheld and maintained throughout. ‘If you treat participants with consideration, fairness and respect, you’ll end up acting ethically’ (Mutch, 2005, p. 78). Ethical considerations apply to all stages of a research project, from the motivation for the investigation, through planning, data collection and analysis, and dissemination of the results. A researcher is obliged to consider issues of power and authority in their approach to the field and in their thinking and writing about the topic. These issues have the potential to impact on one’s access to research participants, and the willingness of participants to provide information. Even more importantly, ethical considerations relating to issues of power and authority can also impact on the value of the results drawn from analysis of the data. Ethical considerations are therefore crucial in determining the academic worth and reliability of the overall results of research. Five main ethical aspects relating to this research project are considered below.

Informed consent

The process of informed consent is vitally important is making sure that research participants are ‘fully informed about the purpose, conduct, and possible dissemination of your research’ (Mutch, 2005, p. 78). Initiating an informed consent process provides an opportunity to put the researcher and research participants ‘on the same page’ around the purpose and intent of the research, and who is involved. Appendix F provides an example of the informed consent form that was used in this research project. As seen on the form, the concern around my dual role as both researcher and government employee of the Ministry of Education is addressed early on in the text through a transparent statement.

The process of informed consent also helps to address or at least initiate other concepts related to the process to carrying out ethically sound and robust research projects. Notions of ‘voluntary participation, the ‘right to withdraw’, ‘permission’, ‘confidentiality’ and ‘anonymity’ should be at addressed with research participants, and were addressed with the research participants of this project.

Anonymity

A second standard ethical consideration in a typical educational research project carried out in a school or other institutional setting is that of protecting the privacy through techniques to preserve the anonymity of the school and individuals who may be observed and interviewed during the collection of empirical data. The participants in the research school placed their trust in me not to reveal their identity. Given the strong opinions expressed by some members of the school community about others in the same community, it was particularly important to protect the privacy of participants from those who knew where the research was being carried out. A number techniques were used to protect the anonymity of the school, community and research participants including the use of pseudonyms, removal of identifying details (from the documents in the Appendices, quotations and descriptions of the school and the community where it is located) and changing or concealing some details (e.g. changing gender of some participants, grouping interview participants under headings) that do not affect the relevance of the data being reported.

Power relationships

An important ethical consideration for this research project related to me as a researcher representing more than one role while I was present in the school during the data gathering phase. As well as a researcher, I was also familiar to the school as a Ministry of Education employee, and had operated in the school under this ‘banner’ before. Other researchers have voiced ethical concerns when placing themselves and their research in familiar contexts. Ladson-Billings (1995) shared thoughts about locating herself in a research context that was culturally and professionally familiar: ‘I too share a concern for situating myself as a researcher – who I am, what I believe, what experiences I have had all impact what, how, and why I research’ (p. 470). Ladson-Billings declared there were positive and negative implications of such a situation.

Under this dual role situation there was potential for confusion both from my perspective, and for the research participants, over which role I was fulfilling at any one time while present in the school. As a result, there was also potential confusion over what level of authority I was using to seek information – that of a researcher, a government official, or both? Researchers with additional positions of authority or influence like mine need to consider the power they hold within the relationships they develop while in the field.

According to Mutch (2005), researchers are in a position of power because they enter the lives of others and gather personal information. It could be argued that I had more actual or perceived power in my roles in Anahera School because I was operating under two titles – researcher and Ministry of Education employee. A potential consequence that could have developed from working within a Ministry of Education ‘work related’ environment related to the perceived power I held as a public servant of the Ministry of Education, while operating as an academic researcher. Public servants are expected to uphold governmental policies and manage the funding that is at times associated with them. There was a risk that in the course of data collection I may have observed situations that could have influenced my work related decision making about that school. There was also the risk that research participants may have been less honest with me, or even exaggerated points of discussion to influence my thinking and decision making related to my ‘work’ role connected back to the school. While I can never be absolutely sure, I never got a sense that this was the case however.

While there were negative aspects or risks with me holding dual roles in the school, there were also positive aspects of my familiarity with Anahera School. The essential relationships that needed to be in place for working in a predominantly qualitative research paradigm were assisted by the fact that the school and I were familiar to each other. These relationships facilitated a positive working relationship. Regardless of the positions I held or the perceptions of power that these had the potential to create, I managed my research relationship with the Anahera School predominantly through the informed consent process where I clearly acknowledged the roles I had as both researcher and Ministry of Education employee.

Recognising Māori perspectives

Researchers working within communities have a responsibility to work responsibly with research participants (Code, 2011). Pākehā researchers working in New Zealand contexts have an added responsibility in this regard.

Researchers in Aotearoa/New Zealand have developed a tradition of research that has perpetuated colonial values, thereby under-valuing and belittling Māori knowledge and learning practices and processes in order to enhance those of the colonizers and adherents of neo-colonial paradigms (Bishop, 1989, p. 200).

This study is an investigation by a Pākehā researcher in an almost entirely Māori school and community. Such a research project has the potential to fall into well-worn patterns created by Pākehā attitudes towards Māori participants, which have created tensions and given rise to justifiable caution on the part of Māori to engage with research.

Many Māori see research as a means of the development of western knowledge and theories, which have dehumanized Māori while continuing to privilege western ways of knowing, while denying the validity for Māori of Māori knowledge, language and culture (L. Smith, 2012, p. 183).

While pursuing the goals of this research, I remain conscious of the role of research in reproducing social and political inequities, established by centuries of colonial oppression. The methods used and the personal support I was given were intended to ensure that the research project treated people with respect. ‘Research methodology must not only meet professional standards, it must also honour the research subject appropriately, especially if he or she is from a culture that differs from the researcher’ (Wong, 2006, p. 46). In hindsight

these measures never guaranteed that I would not make mistakes or uninformed conclusions in my first thesis.

In acknowledging the history of Pākehā research on Māori, Smith (2005) also points out that qualitative research plays a crucial role in developing an accurate representation of indigenous social contexts. To acknowledge Māori perspectives is to recognise that Māori lives are directed by Māori concerns, philosophies, histories and beliefs, which do not necessarily have anything in common with Pākehā concerns. As a non-Māori, my task is limited to exploring the relationship between child poverty, Māori ethnicity, and educational success, and how this relationship is understood by teachers and education officials working in low-decile schools. This research project does not seek or claim to ‘explain’ Māori perspectives, nor to ‘fix’ Māori under-achievement.

Ownership of the research data

This thesis presents an honest and close-up account of life in a school community struggling with poverty and its effects on many aspects of their lives. Interview research data collected in the school is presented in Chapters Four and Five, where efforts have been made to preserve the voices (reo) of the research participants by including lengthy quotations in their own words, and allowing these quotations to largely carry the chapters. Clearly, at one level the thesis and its contents ‘belong’ to me, as the researcher whose name appears on the thesis cover as author, and on whom the academic credentials for completing this work will be conferred. But it is important to remember that the research data ultimately belongs to the research participants, the people who shared the details of their lives with me during this research project. Returning to the school community to share the results of this study, once it is completed, will honour the trust they placed in me, and the honest, inclusive approach they shared with me, so that the relationship I formed with the school can be ongoing and mutually respectful.

Chapter Four: School voices

For several years prior to my research, the staff at Anahera School had recognised the need to address the school's achievement levels by better school wide consistency in dealing with barriers to student learning, including an emphasis on student behaviour. Their efforts to implement systematic change, combined with the effects of other planned and non-planned events, had made a positive impact on the school climate, decreasing instances of problem behaviour, and creating a safer, less stressful environment for both children and teachers. Their efforts encountered internal and external barriers, however, which impeded the effectiveness of the change process to provide a consistent approach across all staff and areas of the school.

Shortly prior to my work at Anahera School, an ERO visit and its recommendations concerning learning and achievement prompted the school to increase their expectations of teachers in regard to planning, assessment, and record keeping. Previously, teachers had gathered data on learning in different ways using individual methods, with no systematic method for collecting this data across the whole school. Some participants commented on the increased accountability in terms of what was expected of teachers in this area:

I'm learning that I can do all this testing, but I've got to use it if you know what I mean and then if I don't use it, then why am I doing the test? Especially when it's pointing out areas needed to [be] looked at. That's my evidence and of course we're being made more accountable. We're having to make sure that our planning is completed within a particular time (*Junior classroom teacher*).

During the period I was collecting data in the school, a strategy to improve teacher accountability for learning was implemented. An ex-teacher who had worked locally as an advisor was employed to work one-to-one with each classroom teacher, in a coaching-type role to support of teaching practice and pedagogy. As a result of these changes and strategies, the school's focus on learning became more evident. One senior manager identified the increased emphasis on learning as the reason for overall change in the school climate, overturning the school's previous reputation for having a violent character.

Switched the kids on to learning—yes, good teachers and switch them on to learning. Turn their heads. I mean, it was so that they were actually enjoying

success in the classroom, just keeping at it. ‘No, you’re here to learn the language’ over the last couple of years is, ‘we’re here to learn, we’re here to learn’, so as soon as you step over there, you’re learning. Different space, creating a different space and switch on to learning (*Junior classroom teacher*).

The ERO report and the strategies the school adopted in response stimulated higher expectations for student learning to be held by both teachers and parents of children at Anahera School. Teachers and parents interviewed for this study were clear that they recognised potential in the children of Anahera School, that they wanted the best for them, and that they saw it as their role to raise the children’s expectations of themselves. One teacher said, ‘I say it to them, I basically remind them over and over again what they are capable of doing’. Another spoke of a strategic decision the teachers had made to raise their own expectations of the children, and to involve the children in this process:

We just raised our expectations, shared what we wanted with them, what we expected of them, allowed them in the decision-making, the choices of rules, why we should have them, gave them a voice I suppose, and shared the reasons why it made us happy or why we felt good. Right down to dressing, health, brushing our teeth, cleaning our fingernails. Went through the whole kaupapa of looking after ourselves and being the best that we can be (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Parent and teacher participants felt it was important to have high expectations of students, which had not always been the case at Anahera School.

In the past there were teachers that had very good [reputations], kids liked them, but they didn’t have a high expectation of learning and that’s one of the key things. If you ask me what a good teacher was, that’s what it was because there were teachers last year who didn’t have a high expectation they didn’t do that, and it’s taken a long time to go into this term and turn that around (*Junior classroom teacher*).

The following sections delve more deeply into the issues related to student behaviour at Anahera School, which was a major focus within the school at the time.

Challenging behaviour

Problem behaviour was commonly referred to by staff and students as bullying. Involving anything from verbal abuse to physical violence, bullying was used as an umbrella term for hurtful actions directed from one individual or group towards another individual or group. ‘That anti, the negative, the bullying...macho, staunch, can’t cry, can’t say nice things to one another’ (*Senior classroom teacher*). ‘Picked on’ (*Senior student in immersion unit*) was another term used for bullying.

Bullying was used to explain why some children left the school to attend another (i.e., they had been bullied), and also to describe children who had left the school, but had been seen as bullies at the school. The comment below highlights the interchangeable terms used in combination with bullying:

I think that was why initially I put my hand up and said I want to do it, because there was a lot of bullying, not really bullying but fights going on, just little niggles and then they’d start attacking each other, so the idea was to work with the bigger kids, give them something to do (*Administration staff member*).

The words ‘aggressive’ (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*), ‘violence’ (*Senior student*), ‘fighting’ (*Board of Trustees member/Grandmother*) and ‘stand over’ (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*) were also used to describe instances of antisocial behaviour in the school and community. The term ‘violence’ was used both to describe what children were doing to others, and something to which children were exposed (*Senior classroom teacher, Caretaker*).

Other generic terms like ‘good’ and ‘bad’ were also used to describe antisocial behaviour, in particular by children. Once again these terms referred to a range of problem behaviours from minor to severe. ‘Oh it’s like, the kid’s behaviour and stuff and like one minute they’ll be good and next minute they’ll be bad and stuff’ (*Senior student*).

More specific words including ‘kick’, ‘punch’, ‘hitting’ and ‘swearing’ were used by various research participants to describe antisocial behaviour. In response to an interview question about whether she had seen fighting in the school, one parent responded:

I have, lunch time is the main time. Oh there's teachers around you know, there's always teachers walking around and that, but if they're left out on the field for five minutes, there's a big circle and they're just having big punch ups.

The term 'kick' was used both in the context of a perpetrator: 'I'm going to kick your head in'; or for a caregiver administering discipline: 'He needs a good kick'. This was a parent and Board of Trustees member, referring to examples of phrases she had heard in the community.

Teachers believed that instances of antisocial behaviour, in particular physical violence, had decreased during the previous three years. The following is a typical comment about the improved climate of the school:

I wouldn't say it was a violent school, but there were individuals that were controlling the behaviour in the school and there was violence towards teachers. The violence I'm talking about is oral violence, not physical violence. I've had a couple of physical incidents myself but the violence I talk about is the abuse that teachers receive from ex-students and parents. Physical violence I think is a lot to do with the students, but there was a lot of physical violence back then. Now we'll have the odd one you know a one-on-one draw, but you can say it's ceased. There's still verbal abuse and we are still trying to combat that, but the working conditions in the school are a lot safer and so that's how I look at it (*Senior immersion unit teacher*).

A senior student offered another comment on the history of antisocial behaviour: 'That was what was happening, last two years, they would fight back. Little kids fight for the big ones: "Good girl, go punch him"'.

While the physical assaults had apparently decreased, the teacher comment above shows instances of antisocial behaviour were still present in the school. This evidence is supported by other interview comments:

They don't swear nearly as much as they used to, they don't hit each other nearly as much as they did. They all go into class, they basically stay in the class and just a few every now and again and there's no stand over; kids do not stand over each other. What we've got left is a subtle, that's the word, that's hard, that's

really hard. No violence, it's usually driven by anger, it's not a premeditative violence, like I'm going to get you, it's none of them, well very seldom is it that. So what I'm saying is I think the kids are happier at school (*Junior classroom teacher*).

During the times I was present as a participant observer I did not witness any physical violence, and heard only a very few minor verbal altercations.

Problem behaviour was recorded in the school's student management database. The table below shows the categories under which the problem behaviour was reported, and the number of incidents of each type that had been recorded in the year prior to my work in the school. The Principal or Assistant Principal entered the information into the database when a problem behaviour incident was reported by a teacher or other staff member. The labels that were used to categorise the behaviour were pre-existing generic components of database software. It does not appear that descriptors of categories were provided to staff. This information was provided by senior management, in response to my request, by being pulled up on screen and printed off at the time.

Type of Behaviour:	Number of incidents:
Defiance	13
Property	3
Disruption	11
Sexual	1
Physical	35
Boundary	7
Verbal	10
Off task	4

Who is involved in challenging behaviour?

Year 7 and 8

A consistent theme in the interview findings was that the Year 7 and 8 students were seen to be the main influencers and instigators of antisocial behaviour at Anahera School. Interview comments did indicate that younger children also initiated antisocial behaviour, but there was no specific theme identified. A teacher comment illustrates the perception of the Year 7 and 8 as using problem behaviour: 'Well I think the behaviour always comes from the top, from the seniors so quite often what they said, what they did influenced the behaviour of the younger ones'.

Past and present Year 7 and 8 classes (11 to 13 year old children) were regarded both positively and negatively by school staff. In a positive sense, it was seen that the school climate had improved because a previous group of particularly difficult children in these classes had moved on from the school, making it a better place to be for those remaining.

This year the element, since last year when all the Year 7 and 8's have moved on and gone to high school, and so forth, the climate within the school has been different. There hasn't been so much bullying' (*Junior classroom teacher*).

But the Year 7 and 8 students were still seen by some teaching and administration staff as the problem group. One senior classroom teacher commented that the last 'real problems' in the school were about to leave: 'They are having a significant impact on the school and probably will do so until they leave'. This teacher was referring to the last cohort of Year 7 and 8 students who had gone through the school under previous management and teaching structures.

Some participants felt that the Year 7 and 8 students should not be in the school at all because of the significant negative influence that they had on the rest of the students. One teacher commented that they would be better moving on to intermediate school like many other students of their age. This opinion was in reference to the recapitulation process the school had undergone about ten years earlier to change its official status from a contributing (Year 1 to 6) to a full (Year 1 to 8) school.

I'd like to see 7 and 8's gone, is my overall vision, because I've said before, the transition period, I think they need to be transitioning with every other 10, 11 year old at that age, not waiting and then being the minority while the majority's already done that. I think by the sixth year they should be confident enough and have enough self-esteem to venture out to the big whole (*Senior classroom teacher*).

Data on problem behaviours from the student management database showed that 34% were carried out by Year 7–8 students (12% by one student), 10% by Year 6 students, 37% by Year 5 students (22% by one student) and 18% by Year 4 students (15% by one student). When individual students with significant numbers of behavioural incidents are taken out, the

records confirm that students in the Year 7 and 8 classes were collectively involved in more problem behavioural incidents than any other year group.

Tempering the teachers' hope that the departure of the last cohort of these troublesome Year 7 and 8 students would contribute to ongoing change and a safer school for students was the comment:

But just today, I saw an element of groups of kids, not just the senior sort of kids, because the seniors were out. It was the middle school and the junior lot, they were all running after and ganging up on one particular person or siding with one side, so there were two factions, one against the other and so that's scary, because these are our potential Year 6 and 7 and 8s (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Boys

As for gender, school antisocial behaviour problems and conduct disorders are reported to be much more common in males than females (Martin, 2003). This literature finding was reflected in the gender break down of problem behaviours reported at Anahera School, with male students being much more likely to be involved. The student management database for the previous two years recorded that male students were responsible for approximately three quarters of all instances of antisocial behaviour.

Immersion unit

Students in the immersion unit were not reported to be involved with instances of antisocial behaviour. Teachers and parents suggested that this striking difference was because of the teaching philosophy used in those classroom programmes. The immersion unit classes are taught in Te Reo Māori and grounded in Māori beliefs and culture. The two immersion unit classes, one junior and one senior, were situated in adjacent classrooms at one end of the main building, centrally located in the school. A theme from the interview data showed that the climate was different in the immersion unit, compared with the rest of the school. A parent of children in these classes commented:

Culture, climate of the school is different in the [name of unit], to me it's a safer environment because they are sort of like isolated, not isolated but they are quite separate from the other school and the [name of unit] compared to the rest of the school the wairua is, I suppose wairua is a better word, the wairua's better there

and the children are far happier, they're more settled, they respect their teachers and I think that's the reason why I choose to keep them in that part of the school.

The Associate Principal expressed the belief that the hui structure (whole class meetings and discussions) and the level of pastoral support given to students in the immersion unit, especially in times of trouble or stress, accounted for the difference. This approach helped students work through issues in an inclusive whānau type approach that contributed to the lower level of behavioural incidents. Other participants, including the Principal, also spoke about the level of pastoral care and support for students within the immersion unit.

When and where did challenging behaviour occur?

The student management database for the previous two years showed that most recorded incidents of problem behaviour occurred either in the classroom or in the playground. It may be assumed that incidents in the playground usually occurred in break and lunch times. Aside from the problem behaviour incidents occurring in the playground and in the classroom, the third category (other) captured incidents that occurred on the way to or from school, or outside the school grounds.

Location:	% of recorded incidents:	
	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
Classroom	50	41
Playground	31	56
Other	19	3

Break and lunch time

Break and lunch times, when students had free time, created circumstances that contributed to increased occurrence of antisocial behaviour at Anahera School. The Caretaker indicated that break times when children were in the playground were difficult:

Yeah, nothing really recent, but you only need to walk around especially on the fields at lunch time, there are a few that are often fighting, or crying you know, if they're dishing it out they're getting it. There's a certain few at the moment that I see that are always coming to me and saying either, or someone else is coming to me and saying they've been mucking around or fighting.

Further evidence that break or lunch times were when instances of antisocial behaviour were likely to occur was reflected in the time and energy that staff put into ensuring that these

previously unstructured periods became very organised to include activities like games, sports and music. A parent commented ‘That’s another thing that the teachers on the staff are trying to do, is get activities happening during lunch time so they don’t fight’. Students were also aware of the need for structure and entertainment at break time: ‘More activities in classes during lunch breaks and most of the time really and just stop any more fights around our school, that’s the only trouble’ (*Senior student*).

According to the Principal, the lunch time sports programme has been something that the school has tried on and off over the years. The Principal had assigned a management unit position to one teacher to organise lunch time sports and get it going really well. While observing in the school, I witnessed the lunch time sports programme in action. During informal discussion about the importance of the lunch time sports programme, one junior classroom teacher commented: ‘It’s the same thing that I’ve been seeing with the lunch time sports programme. You know these kids look like they need help to be occupied; they can’t do it on their own’. Another teacher commented:

I suppose over the last two years we’ve programmed the children or helped them get into a system or a routine of being independent and making choices that were effective and successful choices for whatever it might be that they do (*Senior classroom teacher*).

The lunch time sports programme was also commented on by an administration staff member: ‘They love it so much that they come even if their team’s not playing, and they try and take over someone else’s team who doesn’t turn up’. The students I interviewed also agreed that the lunch time sports programme had had a big impact on play time and lunch time behaviour.

While participants reported generally positive feelings about the lunch time sports programme, the above data (p. 78) shows that implementing the programme had been accompanied by an increase in problem behaviour incidents in the playground.

Classroom

The classroom was the other important setting where antisocial behaviour occurred at Anahera School. The development of the *Anahera School Behaviour Management Plan – Taking Responsibility Programme*, described in the school’s administration handbook, was

the response to a significant number of problem behaviours occurring in classrooms at that time. The school's programme was a variation on the *Taking Responsibility Programme* developed by Stephanie Thompson (2005), and published material from Thompson's book was included in the administration handbook. Developed and published in New Zealand, this programme is described as helping students make quality choices and learn self-control (see website (Essential Resources, 2012)). The programme seemed to have been adopted by Anahera School in response to a review of the student management system that occurred two years prior to my work there.

The school's *Behaviour Management Plan* included generic information and a set of statements about behaviour and conduct for students and staff in the school. This information provided an example of practices to aspire to for teachers and other staff in relation to behaviour and behaviour management procedures, but was not tied down to specific themes. There was no information or evidence of any specific training being provided for teachers on the principles of positive behaviour support (Ministry of Education, 2011). The behaviour management programme itself was a seven-step guide for teachers to follow in response to incidents of problem behaviour in the classroom,

Step one required teachers to have their own classroom behaviour management plans in place. An example of a management plan is included in the school's administration handbook for teachers to base their ideas on. The suggested classroom management plan emphasises the development of class kaupapa, or principles. Examples given were: show respect and responsibility; move sensibly at all times; listen and speak attentively; and be the best we can be. The plan then suggests reward and consequence steps be used. Suggested consequences include: verbal warning; name on board; in class detention (15–20 minutes); buddy class (15–20 minutes with work to do); senior teacher (Taking Responsibility Programme); and Room 7 Taking Responsibility Programme (with incident reports and home contract). There is no detail of what behaviour attracts what type of consequence. Suggested rewards include: class points (target a reward with a specific focus); group points (reward at the end of each week); individual points (goal rewards, certificates, etc); and peer points (for major change in being responsible). I did not specifically observe these rewards being used while I was in the school, but that they could have distributed on a day other than my research day.

There was no logical progression in the suggested reward system. The consequence system appears to be a combination of a time out system and the detention period that is extracted from the *Taking Responsibility Programme* (Thompson, 2005). Aspects of the suggested classroom consequence system seem to integrate with other aspects of the wider seven-step programme described below, but it was not clear which parts of the programme fitted where and when.

Step two in the sequence saw the child sent to a buddy class for a period of time out and reflection. Students were sent to a buddy class when classroom strategies were 'insufficient'. The child remained in the buddy class for 10 minutes and was then asked to go back to their own classroom. This step appeared to be similar to the step described in the suggested classroom behaviour management plan above, where the child was sent with work to another teacher's room.

The collegial support network used in the context of the School Behaviour Management Plan at step two provided teachers with the option of giving themselves and the student time out when situations get heated by temporarily moving the student to the room of another teaching colleague until things settle.

You know for me I take a lot of children to the senior rooms. I say, 'Can (this student) stay in your room for work?' They say, 'Sure, fine'. And you know incorporate them in the classroom where possible. For me I would use [name of teacher] in Room 4. Usually if a pupil is to be released I would send them to [name of teacher] and ask her if she can look after them (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Step 3 was a revisit of Steps 1 and 2. This meant that if the behaviour was repeated in class after the student came back from the buddy class the first time, then the strategies used in Steps 1 and 2 were repeated again.

Step 4 was reached if a student had been sent to a buddy class twice in one day or had 10 Sad Points. Sad Points were accumulated over time for indiscretions such as swearing (10 points), talking back to the teacher (5 points), telling untruths (2 points), calling out (2 points). The Sad Point system was linked to the *Taking Responsibility Programme* (Thompson, 2005).

Being at Step 4 meant that the child was then automatically progressed to Step 5 where the student was placed on the Taking Responsibility Programme (TRP). TRP at Anahera School required the student to attend a 10–15 minute lunch time period of detention that was supervised by the Assistant Principal. In TRP, the programme required the student to complete a report sheet including a plan on how he or she was going to improve their behaviour. This plan had to be signed by the student, parent, and teacher.

All violent assaults (physical and verbal) led directly to Step 6 where an incident report was completed the Assistant Principal or Principal who made contact with the home. At Step 6, the student also spent 10–15 minutes at lunch time for two days in detention on the TRP programme. Swearing at teachers and physical violence leading to serious health and safety concerns could potentially result in a stand down or suspension. The zero tolerance component of the programme was the immediate escalation of a student to Steps 6 and 7 for physical violence and defiance toward a staff member. Zero tolerance will be discussed more specifically below.

This system illustrates the development of a common language and understanding about the categories that a specified antisocial behaviour fitted into, and the school wide processes that were initiated as a response to the behaviour. To some extent, the categories and processes described created a perception of what behaviours were problems. Inconsistencies in the assessment of which behaviours were considered problematic were evident in the fact that teachers were expected to have their own behaviour management plan in place in their classrooms. Teachers were also required to design their own specific system for reward and consequence of behaviours. One teacher thought her approach to discipline was softer than others:

Oh, sometimes. With my students I'm a bit softer on them and I give them, yes sort of steps and chances. I warn them and they go up to the next step. My behaviour is to do with financial points so giving them points but in dollars. They relate to that money stuff! (*Middle classroom teacher*)

As these systems differed in each class, there were also inconsistencies in the assessment of what was and wasn't a problem behaviour in each classroom, resulting in rewards and consequences for classroom behaviours that were not necessarily consistent across the school.

Understanding challenging behaviour?

An overall analysis of problem behaviour at Anahera School showed that most problem behaviours were exhibited by male students in the senior classes of the school who were not in the immersion unit. Physical assault (kick, punch, hit, bite) or non-compliance (defying the directives of a teacher or adult) were the two most commonly reported forms of antisocial behaviour.

Reported antecedents to behavioural incidents provide evidence of the sorts of factors that led to occurrences of problem behaviour, and help to explain why the behaviour occurred (Koegel & Koegel, 1989). I completed an antecedent analysis of behavioural incidents at Anahera School from behavioural incident reports recorded in the student management database during the two years prior to my work in the school. The antecedents were established from what staff had entered into the 'what led to the behaviour' field on the database. These data were often non-specific comments, short and lacking in detail, for example, 'class doing a playground rubbish duty'.

An example of the identification of an antecedent behaviour recorded in the database occurred when Student 1 had been cheeky to Student 2. Student 2 called Student 1 a 'dickhead'. Student 1 hit Student 2 with a shoe, scratched him, and then ran away. The incident started at a relatively low level, then escalated in intensity, and resulted in a physical altercation between students. From the teacher's description of this incident, it was evident that Student 1 was also annoyed because another student in the room had taken his ball just prior to the reported incident. While the direct antecedent to this behavioural incident was the name calling, the indirect, but arguably more influential antecedent to this incident was that Student 2 had had his ball taken away from him. There appeared to be no satisfactory way for the student to deal with that injustice - either independently or with support.

I analysed a total of 49 problem behaviour incidents recorded in the student management database for the two years in question, to determine the nature of the antecedent that had occurred prior to the incident. These antecedents and related behavioural incidents occurred in the locations described above (p. 78). Once all the antecedents were identified, they were they were categorised and grouped according to six presenting themes.

Antecedents of problem behaviour (from Anahera School student management database)

Category	Specific example of antecedent	Number	%
1: Student to student interaction in unstructured setting – no teacher present	Student 1 thought Student 2 was going to take his YuGiOh! cards	19	39
2: In classroom, structured lesson with teacher present	Student presenting work to class group - Student 1 laughed out loud, Student 2 said ‘shut up’	11	22
3: Sports or physical activity	Student 2 tried to take ball off Student 1 in a game of dodge ball, Student 1 got angry	6	12
4: In classroom, unstructured activity with teacher present	Student 1 wanted to do rubbish consequence with other students - assumed the request was denied	5	10
5: Not stated	N/A	5	10
6: Home circumstance	Student was tired - had gone to bed at 3am the night before	1	2
Total		49	100

The first category (student to student interaction in an unstructured setting – no teacher present) captured antecedents that arose during student interactions in the absence of a teacher or organisational structure in break time. Teacher absence was not the antecedent, but rather the theme that linked the antecedents together. In the example given relating to this particular theme, it was the interaction around the student’s playthings (YuGiOh! trading cards) and the threat the student interpreted from this interaction that he was going to have his cards taken away, which was the actual antecedent to the eventual fight. The feelings attached to the outpouring of emotions and physical actions from Student 1 were likely to be related to loss of a treasured possession, and maintenance of ownership. In the absence of an adult, there seemed no other avenue of redress.

The second category included antecedents which occurred in the presence of a teacher and an organised structure. In the example given, it was a student feeling judged or humiliated in front of a class group by a peer who laughed at her that led to an eventual physical assault on the other student. Again, the category is not the antecedent, but rather the theme that linked this and other antecedents together under a common aspect. It is possible that the antecedents for such incidents occurring in a structured work setting could be related to the difficulty of the task, feelings of failure, embarrassment, or feeling singled out in front of peers.

The third category included antecedents which evolved during sports, games or physical activity. In the example given, the antecedent was Student 2 trying to grab the ball off Student 1. A fight between the two resulted. In another incident, some students were left to entertain themselves during a sports period. The situation got out of control and a fight ensued, featuring moves students had learned at karate. Unstructured and unsupervised sports or physical activity was the common theme that linked antecedents in this category, and showed that sports and physical activity is a risk time for students as they may not have the ability to regulate their emotions or cope effectively with competition or losing.

The information in the above table shows that categories related to the setting of events became apparent from all antecedents identified. Unstructured times where a teacher was not directly in control or present (play or break times) were when the greatest number of reported incidents occurred. Fewer incidents were reported during structured classroom lessons with a teacher present. Home circumstance was a category used for an antecedent that was directly influenced by the home setting, in this case, the student reportedly having had very little sleep, appearing to be tired and grumpy at school the following day. Incidents that did not have an obvious antecedent reported or described in the database were placed in the not stated category. This does not mean that there was no antecedent – rather, that it was not reported. In one incident, it was reported that a sexually explicit note had been written by a student. The antecedent could have been a dare from another student, retribution against another student, or a need for attention.

The information in the table shows that although some problem behaviours did occur during structured lesson times with the teacher present, half of all problem behaviours occurred during periods in the school day where students were unsupervised or during activities that were not organised, when a teacher was not present or not directly involved or closely monitoring activity. A significant number of problem behaviour incidents were recorded by teachers without identifying any specific antecedent. This has implications for ongoing analysis of behaviour, limiting the potential for pro-active school planning to avoid such incidents in the future, as well as for staff development to assist teachers to understand problem behaviour and its function for the students who use it.

The findings discussed above show that more antecedents to problem behaviour incidents arise in down time situations, where no activities were organised and where no teachers were

present or on duty. This is of concern for teachers at Anahera School, who are working towards helping their students to become more independent and self-managing. There did not appear to be any obvious processes or programmes in the school to help students to learn about appropriate behaviour in unsupervised situations.

Who viewed challenging behaviour as a problem?

Teachers, non-teaching staff, students and parents in the Anahera School community all identified forms of problem behaviour occurring in the school. This ability to identify antisocial behaviour, and data about the extent and types of antisocial behaviour, indicates that such behaviour has had significant impact and consequences within school life in recent years. As evidence of the measures taken to curb antisocial behaviour problems, the school engaged with school wide initiatives to reduce their impact. Two years before my research began, the school had been involved in a course called *Non-Violent Crisis Intervention* (Caraulia, 1980), which was designed to support schools and other groups in managing individuals who are in crisis or in highly anxious states, and likely to use physical violence. All teaching staff took part in this training.

In a conversation I had with the Principal about the impact of this training on the approach taken by teachers to managing behaviour, he said that teachers had taken pieces of this intervention on board, but were not sure which pieces, or how much impact they had actually had on improving behaviour. One teacher had more specific comments about this training, and the impact it had made on teaching practice at the school:

I reflected upon myself in class upon different scenarios that happened after that training. I went down to the junior levels and sat on one of their little chairs so I wasn't towering over them. The majority of it worked I think. The stop/think cooling down period for the ones that were over the top. It was hard to find anything that was going to work besides restraining them (*Senior classroom teacher*).

Teacher perceptions of student behaviour

Teachers I spoke to generally acknowledged that they were challenged by the problem behaviour displayed by some children at Anahera School.

I love coming because it's a challenge for me, I like the atmosphere. The kids, although it took a while for me, like it took about half a year to settle in, for the kids to actually get used to this new teacher, ...and of course I had the naughtiest kids and about three or four levels in my class, so it was really hard going but I still enjoyed them, you know I still enjoyed the naughty ones because it was a challenge for me and they enjoyed coming to school (*Junior classroom teacher*).

There was a perception amongst school managers, teachers, and parents that antisocial behaviour was not a problem in the immersion unit. There was also the perception that there were more antisocial behaviour problems in the senior school as opposed to the junior school. This perception is important and powerful for two reasons: firstly, it sends a message to the wider schooling community that if a child is in the immersion unit, they are unlikely to get involved in antisocial behaviour, and therefore will not need to deal with the consequences such behaviour carries. Secondly, the other teachers in the school offer something different and potentially less appealing or less effective than what is offered in the immersion unit.

Even though participants acknowledged that a positive change had occurred in the culture of the school overall, with less problem behaviour than before, the school climate was still regarded as volatile. One teacher commented, 'No, I think over time it has worked, but there is still a culture in this school that given a chance it will explode, they are looking at a chance to explode'. Differences in perceptions of problem behaviour became evident as participants outlined their philosophy and approach to managing antisocial behaviour. Some teachers preferred a close relationship with the children, and wanted to be available to children helping them to deal with their problems.

For me especially with the senior boys on the other end, a lot of them will come down and just not talk, you just put your hand on their shoulder, just like that and it's a huge thing, I just do that, you don't have to cuddle them, I just say 'how's it going bro?' and they come down and talk, sit outside and talk, they don't get enough of that, I don't think they get enough of just touch on the shoulder, say you're doing a great job, even though he didn't (*Senior immersion unit teacher*).

Other teachers preferred to keep more distance between themselves and the student: 'I mean, sure these kids try and try but one that wants to be their friend all the time, definitely not that kind of teacher. Yeah, just one that's not too involved' (*Middle classroom teacher*).

The senior immersion unit class showed differences in the approach that was taken to working with students, compared to the mainstream classrooms.

I show the results because - they keep saying to me, why's your whānau so in harmony and so I say - I spend more time at the beginning of each term building a certain relationship, a respect relationship. I spend two days. They [teachers in mainstream classes] go straight into the curriculum the first day and I can understand why kids have a problem when you hammer them on the first day with curriculum rather than sitting down, conversation and having a meal together (*Senior immersion unit teacher*).

Consistency

The notion of being consistent in classroom behaviour management was one that I regularly explored and discussed with interview participants. Participants referred to consistency in the sense of keeping things familiar and predictable: 'They like that consistency and they like to see the same thing' (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*) or in needing to stay collectively committed to a plan that has been decided on or implemented: 'Consistency is something we lack and something we struggle with. If you're going to put things in place, make sure that you live up to them' (*Administration staff member*). Both teachers and parents agreed that being consistent and providing consistency for the children was important when working positively with children, and maintaining a productive learning environment at Anahera School. A senior classroom teacher commented:

What I wanted to do was keep a consistency with the kids so that they knew, and I knew, that they were getting the same dose of everything and the same kōrero, and, I'm surprised it worked.

Comments from junior classroom teachers endorsed the need for consistency: 'Yes that's what it is, to be consistent with [the children] all the time' and routine: 'Well I think for the kids, like my kids have a routine'.

One parent comment connected the need for consistency with being Māori:

I think more so for Māori kids too, they like that consistency and they like to see the same thing, Māori people don't like change and they freak out on change and if you start getting a different teacher in the classroom every other week, they

lose that, I don't know what it is, but it's very important for Māoris to have consistency and they don't like change much, which is something they will have to learn (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

While these adult participants generally agreed that having consistency was important to maintain positive behaviour at Anahera School, some claimed that maintaining consistency was not something that Anahera School was especially good at:

If you're going to put things in place, make sure that you live up to them. I mean you're expecting these children to do these things, but make sure there are steps in place for that child to do them, otherwise they think, 'oh well it doesn't matter' and it's not a good thing for these children to learn, that it doesn't matter or they don't care, you know, so I think consistency (*Administration staff member*).

Participants recognised that improvements did not guarantee a stable state, since problems dealt with earlier could recur:

It feels as if it's moving forward, that it's improving, but it sometimes feels like you're taking three steps forward and two back, so it's not always a forward movement and you slip back and at those times you seem to be going back to things that 'oh god, I thought we'd sorted that' ... these old issues keep coming back (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Playground duty

Some teachers saw it as their role to be 'on duty' for the entire day at school. Two junior classroom teachers used lunch times to work through problem behaviours as they arose. As one explained:

It's the best thing that both myself and [name of colleague] would do. Always in our rooms; hardly going. Yeah, so and when you take these kinds of measures it just guarantees a lot more successful learning will happen... because you'd have a successful learning time and it's really honing in on the children and looking at how they think and what triggers them off like that (*Junior classroom teacher*).

There were another group of teachers who did not see the need for this type of availability and they took the time to have a break, for example, smoking a cigarette outside the school

grounds. 'Out by the shops, the smoker's area. This school had a large staff before, and I would say about 70% were smokers. Big influence' (*Junior classroom teacher*).

The habitual absence of the smoker's group was commented on by another participant as a factor that contributed to inconsistency of approach and lack of unity among the staff:

If I could change anything, one thing I would change with our teachers is to make them closer than what they are. Have you ever noticed that there is a smoker's group? They all head up there - that is their little circle. The non-smokers - they're in here. If I could change that, I would change that too, to get our staff closer together (*Board of Trustees member/Grandmother*).

The school's smoke free policy forbade smoking within the school grounds, which meant that teachers who were smokers felt obliged to leave the school grounds at lunch time on a regular basis. This resulted in fewer teachers remaining on-site to maintain discipline and uphold school procedures during unstructured periods of the day. This situation had the potential to leave the non-smoking teachers feeling aggrieved, since they had to cover the gaps if an incident occurred during this time. Teachers have the right to choose how to use their lunch break, if they are not committed to a specific meeting or duty on any particular day. But the smoking issue highlights an inconsistency of approach. The individual needs of teachers who were smokers were more important, or at least more urgent, than any collective approach to unstructured lunch times, which was the part of the school day when most incidents occurred. Teacher responses to problem classroom behaviour and related learning experiences differed: some teachers elected to engage in close monitoring and teaching episodes with children who presented with instances of problem behaviour during their lunch time, regardless of whether or not they were on duty, while others exited the school grounds to smoke (regardless of whether or not they were on duty).

Was challenging behaviour viewed individually or collectively?

The findings indicate staff agreement that problem behaviour existed at Anahera School. This perception was largely informed by significant challenges the staff had experienced when dealing with student antisocial behavioural problems in recent years. Participants were clear about the difference between what it had been like in the school in years past, and what

it was like currently, having experienced improvements. The memories of times past, however, remained very fresh.

The way teacher participants viewed and responded to problem behaviour was not based on collective understandings or approaches. Parts of the school were perceived by many to be experiencing real success in working with children. The absence of problem behaviour in the immersion unit showed that what was occurring in this part of this school was working well. The immersion unit philosophy was different from that in other parts of the school, and seemed to be envied by other teachers. The junior part of the school, including the junior immersion class, was also experiencing success.

The importance that many participants placed on the need for consistency indicates the school view of what was required to support these children. Many thought it necessary to have a consistent approach, but analysis suggests that individuals viewed and responded to problem behaviour from an individual perspective, thus creating an inconsistency in the school's approach. The school behaviour management plan was set up as a systematic approach to address the inconsistencies, since individual classroom plans were not linked by common expectations.

After a few months of carrying out observation in the school, I had observed a wide variety of reward and consequence systems. As I noted in my research diary, this was further evidence that the school was grasping at solutions and strategies; some teachers trying things and others not, with no consistent follow through by staff and no data gathered to measure success. This observation highlights the absence of a school wide approach unifying staff both philosophically and practically. A commitment to togetherness was evident in the work of teachers in the immersion unit, and in the junior school. These pockets of committed togetherness were achieving results - but philosophies and ideas about how to understand and respond to antisocial behaviour did not extend in a unified way across the entire school.

Zero tolerance

In the four years prior to my research at Anahera School, the management and teaching staff had engaged with school wide initiatives to bring about a change in the school climate. As well as the development of the Anahera School Behaviour Management Plan, the school had also made other significant attempts to create systemic change through school wide

initiatives. The second of these followed a more traditional school response by reducing ‘tolerance’ for antisocial behaviour, removing children who did not respond to teachers’ classroom management approaches. Known as zero tolerance, this approach used clear, consistent consequences that were also reactive and focused on stopping the problem behaviour.

The zero tolerance concept was woven into the Anahera School Behaviour Management Plan. It followed a decision made by the school to draw a very obvious line of consequences around physical and verbal violence. Interview participants frequently commented on zero tolerance, more so than the actual behaviour plan that underpinned the concept. The implementation of zero tolerance appears to have been a watershed moment in the recent history of Anahera School, the drawing of a line that signalled to the school community that the school was not prepared to put up with antisocial behaviour. There was some suggestion that, prior to the implementation of zero tolerance, consequences of unsafe behaviour were minimised, such as the following comment:

We kind of cotton balled them in days gone by because it was such a harsh community in reality out there, we sort of over protected them to a point, so I wouldn’t like to see it go back to that because that took a long time to get out of, to break that cycle (*Senior classroom teacher*).

The zero tolerance policy set out clear expectations and consequences for any student using physical or verbal violence. He or she was immediately escalated to Step 6 and 7 of the school’s behaviour management plan and the application of the relevant, largely punitive consequences. The process after a serious incident quickly moved to engaging with school management, and with a parent or caregiver, with a formal letter home. Once involved in the zero tolerance process, the school engaged the student in a three step process. First, the student was taken home, or the parent was contacted to collect them from school. In a case of repeated misconduct, the next step was a formal process in which the student was stood down for a number of days, and the matter referred to the school’s social worker. The third and most serious step saw the student being suspended from school, with the matter referred to the Board of Trustees. At this point, the Board of Trustees decided if the student would return to school, and under what conditions, or be excluded. If a student was excluded, the Board was obliged by statute to approach three other local schools with a request that they enrol the student.

Zero tolerance was well received by many teaching staff as a framework to guide their response to situations where a child was presenting severe behaviour problems. It also gave staff certainty that the situation would be followed through with substantial consequences.

Zero tolerance in the playground that was really good... all of a sudden we knew exactly what we could do. We knew that the moment a child punched someone else, we could put them on TRP [the Taking Responsibility Programme, see p. 79 above] because it was a detention-type action, so we knew those actions that met that criteria and then we had to work through the other classroom type stuff which was send them to buddy, all that kind of stuff, but we had to try and manage that sort of thing within the classroom (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Some teachers felt, however, that zero tolerance was not consistently maintained after it was implemented, resulting in confusion and disappointment that the process did not deliver what the expected results:

When it first came out they enforced it, yes everybody's right on to the board, then all of a sudden it drifts away and then you see all these naughty kids and you think, 'Oh how come he's still here?' ... You know they go zero tolerance, zero tolerance, but they're fighting in the playground and you don't even see the person expelled or anything. You know, the boys come over here and they go 'F... you', and you know, what's happened to the swearing at the teacher thing? (*Junior classroom teacher*)

Other teacher comments also acknowledged that while it was zero tolerance by name, it was not necessarily zero tolerance in practice. 'It was zero tolerance, but it's not really' (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Adding to the difficulty of implementing zero tolerance, The Education Review Office (ERO) review visit shortly before my research began had challenged the stance the school had taken. It appears ERO questioned the legality of the school's process of sending students home after serious incidents.

Now if that child was on there several times [TRP] with the same behaviour they got sent home. When ERO came in, they pointed out to us, or asked us if that was a form of suspension that we hadn't considered and so TRP in that sense was modified (*Junior classroom teacher*).

On one hand, zero tolerance set a new expectation for behaviour, and gave teachers tools to use, but on the other hand, staff struggled with consistent implementation, and the school policy did not necessarily comply with its legal obligations under official stand down and exclusion policies. In this sense, the zero tolerance system did not really do what it said it would, and the teachers were aware of this disjunction.

The fence

About six months before I began my research, a fence had been erected around the school. Prior to building the fence, the school grounds were open and freely accessible, and were used as a thoroughfare by all and sundry to shorten the walk from one side of the suburb to the other. The school was frustrated by the way the local community treated the school grounds. The removal of large amounts of litter, frequently including such items as broken bottles or syringes, was a regular part of the caretaker's duties on a Monday morning. Removal of graffiti, and repairing property damage, were significant costs incurred by the school. People would often walk through the school grounds during the school day, sometimes in an intoxicated or aggressive state. From the school's point of view, then, construction of the fence was a clear and important improvement, and a way to create a safer environment for the children during the school day.

The fence created some complex dilemmas, however, for the Anahera School community to negotiate. Initially, the school received criticism from the local community for constructing the fence.

People have got a different perception that we put the fence up to keep the kids here. That wasn't the reason and we've spent quite a while ever since the fence went up, explaining to people that we put it up to keep the riffraff out. You know, they would walk through the grounds at lunch time. We go to extreme lengths to make sure our kids are safe at this school, we really do, and that was the reason for the fence and it's worked wonders. Not only has it worked in the children's safety part of it, it's also worked like, as the amount of rubbish and you know, the amount of work the caretaker has had to do has dramatically decreased because of it (*Administration staff member*).

So, while construction of the fence resulted in a safer environment for the children, the local community saw it from a different perspective: they felt shut out of the school.

When we first put the fence up the community were so negative. They said ‘Oh you’d think our kids are in jail or something’, but after a couple of months or something they said, ‘Oh that’s a really good idea’ because people were coming to sit on the field to drink alcohol during class time and one parent even came in and started swearing at her daughter asking, ‘Where’s my ounces [of marijuana]?’ in front of the whole class. Yeah, she just walked straight into the classroom - I was shocked (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

The construction of the fence was a powerful statement to the community around the school, and it challenged the notion of local governance in the New Zealand schooling system where school Boards of Trustees are made up of local community representatives. Some people perceived the fence as a symbolic statement to the community that the school rejected some of the values apparently accepted by the adults of the local community, since they were considered harmful for the students. One teacher endorsed the view that the fence disconnected the school from the community:

My feeling, it’s like a jail in here. I think it’s a barrier between us and the community. I tried to explain it at a meeting once, I said, ‘You put that up and you create a barrier between us and the community.’ I said, ‘Vandalism can be fixed, broken windows can be fixed, relationships between us and the community can never heal unless we do something about it’ (*Senior immersion unit teacher*).

Providing structure during break times

The lunch time sports programme was another school wide improvement initiative implemented by the school during the time I carried out my research, based on the widely acknowledged belief that children are less likely to exhibit problem behaviour if they have something purposeful and enjoyable to do. The teachers knew the children needed structured activities during lunch time, so they developed a lunch time sports programme that involved the organisation of team competitions for games such as basketball or netball, in which class groups competed against each other in a tournament style format.

You need to look at our kids and see what their interests were, like, how could we occupy them number one. Not occupy them in a way that you sit over there in a

corner and you are busy but occupy them in a way that they were learning new skills and learning how to get along with one another. So a lot of that came from sports (*Senior classroom teacher*).

The results suggested there was value in the effort that was going into facilitating the lunch time sports:

Yes it has, it's definitely working, working really well. It's nice to see that when they are playing the games they don't get so aggressive anyway, but when they start to lose they get a little bit angry ... but I like that in kids for sports and just blowing the whistle or something, they can't argue with that (*Administration staff member*).

The sports programme became more difficult to continue in wintry conditions:

There hasn't been so much bullying. I didn't seem to notice it in the early stages but I'm seeing it come back now and what was happening I think in Term 1 and Term 2, the kids had heaps of activities. We had [names of teachers] out there playing games with [groups] of kids, so the kids were busy, busy, busy. Since the winter months the playing of games hasn't been so great because the field has been closed and that kind of stuff and we haven't had the sort of equipment that they could be using (*Junior classroom teacher*).

This comment highlights the fact that as well as fine weather, keeping the lunch time sports programme going relied on a few key individual teachers. There were difficulties maintaining the programme when particular teachers were not available to participate:

We seem to take it on ourselves, but only a few teachers are doing it, so the breakdown is that the kids go hard out with whatever activity's arranged but as soon as that teacher's not there, there are problems and it falls down (*Senior immersion unit teacher*).

There was also inconsistency in the application of a routine to make the eating of lunch a more organised process. Although the origin of this routine was not made clear by participants I spoke to, some held an expectation that the children were supervised to sit down and eat their lunch at the start of lunch time, before they went to play. Teachers were aware that this system was not being implemented consistently:

Not fully satisfied. For me personally if the rule is that the children are sitting outside to eat their lunch that's the way it should be. But unfortunately it's not like that. There are children walking around with food and what they do with food is that they drop it. It's a continual and it teaches not to be consistent (*Junior classroom teacher*).

School uniform

Another school wide initiative the school had recently introduced was a school uniform, which was made compulsory for all children to wear. This school wide initiative was supported consistently by the school and the community. While there was some initial resistance from the community based on the purchase cost, by the time I was carrying out my research in the school, there seemed to be a general feeling that the uniform was a positive innovation. Participants indicated that the uniform had instilled a sense of pride and unity amongst the students; something that looked smart and identified them, binding them together as one whole. 'Before the uniform came in, a lot of the kids were head down ...and the uniform came in and they're head up' (*Senior immersion unit teacher*). Another teacher remarked that some children initially thought the uniform was on loan to them: 'And we had to explain that no that's your uniform, that belongs to you and the children were like 'oh really, can I really own something so nice and colourful?' (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Food programme

Many schools in low-income areas in New Zealand receive assistance from various social agencies to provide breakfast or lunch, or both, on at least some days each week, to any students who wish to avail themselves. A 2011 media report claimed that at least 75% of decile 1 and 2 schools had schemes in place to feed their students (Collins, 2011). Such initiatives supplement the government's *Fruit in Schools* programme, which has funded decile 1 and 2 schools to provide one piece of fruit a day for every student since late 2005 (Boyd, Dingle, Campbell, King, & Corter, 2007).

Shortly prior to my research in the school, a breakfast club had been started by the school caretaker to feed the students on two days of the week, before the school day began. It had been noticed that children were coming to school having eaten little or no breakfast, and this was impacting on their ability to function effectively in the classroom environment.

They're irritable the kids and I ask them what's wrong and if they've eaten this morning, and they say no because mum or so and so didn't or dad didn't... They're transient - mum, dad, mum, dad, move around a lot. Food, haven't got any lunch or haven't had breakfast (*Middle classroom teacher*).

The school implemented various ways of getting food into children like the breakfast club, cooking a hot meal for children at a minimal cost, and sandwiches donated by charity groups such as St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army. At Anahera School, the challenge of working with hungry children also provided a basis for debate, echoing recent national debates taking place in news media and political circles (see, for example, www.stuff.co.nz/national/10291563/Cartoons-seen-as-insulting). At Anahera School, these discussions centred on how best to meet student needs, while not undermining parental responsibilities by taking over their role. By feeding the children who arrived at school hungry, the school and other support agencies sought to give the children the best chance of being prepared for learning, believing it was in the best interests of the child. However, some were uneasy that such schemes sent a message to the parents and caregivers that the school would cover parental responsibilities. This could possibly leave families with money that would otherwise have been spent on food, to spend on other, possibly harmful things. Another criticism of the schemes to feed children was that they used up time and money that could be expended in other ways to support learning programmes. In my research diary, I recorded a conversation held during break time about this debate as follows:

The discussion occurred with a senior classroom teacher and a Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB). The problem this teacher and the RTLB identified was that the parents were sending children to school without lunch, knowing that they would be given lunch at school. In other words, the school had inadvertently created a dependency for the parents, because this was an easy way out. In response, during this discussion I shared my experiences from [country name] where I had witnessed the people develop a donor mentality as a result of the aid that had been pumped into the country. The children and adults put their hands out for something free, before turning their hand to a spade.

The other side of the debate recognised the level of poverty in this community and the genuine needs for food of some of the local families:

I go pig hunting and chop it up, I know what families are genuine; those families who are struggling and not because of drinking, I know every family around here that are genuinely poor (*Senior immersion unit teacher*).

The powerful socioeconomic and political forces that result in poverty and inequality are bigger than the school's capacity for influence or change. Key factors including truancy, transience, non-attendance at meetings, and hunger are all barriers to children's learning and development and to collaborative problem-solving involving both school and community. The next section examines the perspectives of the local community on the school's initiatives to improve the learning and behaviour of the students.

Were school wide initiatives viewed collectively?

Anahera School staff identified the need for the implementation of initiatives to change the climate in the school. The two most universal and successful changes were the perimeter fence and the school uniform. Initiatives to address the use of antisocial behaviour, however, only succeeded when individual staff committed their time and skills to achieve a degree of success. Participants discussed the school wide initiatives regularly in the interviews. They also talked about lack of consistent support to maintain change processes. This lack of consistency caused frustration for some teachers, who thought if a school wide rule or expectation was created, then it should be maintained by everyone. Undermining consistency, the reality was many teachers reacted based on their individual perspectives, rather than with a unified, collective approach to the policy.

School wide implementation struggles

While the school wide initiatives described above were effective in helping staff to manage and reduce incidents of problem behaviour, there were barriers and struggles that impeded the potential of the initiative. Some struggles were under the school's control, at least hypothetically, and others were not. The two main areas of tension were the maintenance of consistent teacher support over time for a programme, idea or expectation. The second was a disjunction between the values and expectations held by the school staff and those displayed within the local community.

Internally there was a struggle or tension between the thinking of those who developed each school wide initiative, and those who were tasked with maintaining the initiative on a daily basis. The lunch time eating routine is a good example (see p. 89 above). The observed variation in how this was carried out did not necessarily reflect serious disagreement, but there were subtle factors that affected teacher commitment to the routine. One such factor was that teachers who smoked were in the habit of leaving the school grounds at break times, with the unintended consequence that the school was left understaffed at those times.

The internal struggle also played out when those who had committed to the change initiative were participating in organised lunch time sports activities. While the thinking and motivation to develop the programme were sound and accurate, the successful maintenance of the programme relied on only a few teachers. When one or more of those people were on sick leave, or were called away for some reason, the sports programme was disrupted, and the probability of problem behaviour occurring in the playground increased as a result.

The struggle also played out between the school and the external authorities charged with maintaining national educational policy, such as ERO. The zero tolerance concept, implemented through the Anahera School Behaviour Management Programme, increased hopes of a safer environment in the school. A zero tolerance stance indicated that severe and unsafe behaviour would never be tolerated in the school again. In hindsight, this expectation was always going to be hard to maintain, since there are almost always grey areas to be considered in the details of a behavioural incident. But ERO challenged the system the school had implemented, seeking to ensure that the school's policy took account of students' rights to receive an education up until the age of 16. The New Zealand Education Act decrees that a child cannot be excluded from school without due process being followed. Tension arose as teachers' initial expectations about having troublesome students removed from their classes had to be modified. This created confusion and frustration for teachers who had publicised the school's zero tolerance of antisocial behaviour, and now had to modify it to comply with the school's legal obligations under the Education Act.

There was also a struggle between the school staff and Board of Trustees, who developed the school wide initiatives described above in what they believed were the best interests of the children, and those in the local community who held different sets of values. This struggle was evident after the fence was constructed, leaving the local community feeling

disrespected. It seemed the level of collaboration between the school and their local community was in some ways very low. One parent on the Board of Trustees stated, 'No, the school doesn't access the outside community very well and the community doesn't get involved in the school'. This comment referred to teachers' inability to interact with nearby residents in a meaningful and purposeful way.

The nature of the relationship between any school and its local community is complex and important, but perhaps even more so in a low-decile community. Anahera School needed the community, in particular the parents, to assist them by helping to support their learning programmes, but at times the teachers felt the community was not forthcoming with this support. At the same time the community seemed to be hearing a negative message from the school, to the effect that the school did not agree with the values it perceived the community to hold.

You have to talk to them at their own level, because they've all got a bit of an attitude too, not all of them, some of them and a few, if they think that you're putting them down or something, they won't talk to you. The whole community's like that (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

Staff at the school perceived the values and lifestyles of people in the Anahera community to have a huge influence on children's preparation and participation in school, and therefore the children's ability to learn:

I suppose it's the socioeconomic [level] of the area, the unemployment, the dysfunctional families, and the solo families, all that and poverty, that impacts on the students and it impacts on the school, definitely. It's the nature of the community being a low-decile school, all that, I suppose I don't want to say all those negative elements out there in the community, or list them, but definitely that's what's impacting on the children getting to school and learning (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

The school's perception of the community and its influence on the children is a significant reason why many of the school wide initiatives were developed. It is as though the school and the community were competing for influence over the children. In addition, school personnel seemed unaware that the systems of punishment and exclusion they developed were likely to be ineffective without more sophisticated approaches that taught appropriate

behaviour, and rewarded the target behaviour when it occurred. The school recognised the impact of poverty, unemployment, and transience in the community, and worked to ameliorate the effects of hunger and drug addiction and build a more cohesive school community. However, there was no evidence of individualised planning to support children with the greatest need for behaviour support.

Māori culture in the curriculum

As I continued collecting data at Anahera School, it became obvious that something was happening in the immersion unit that made students feel safe and valued. Data on behavioural incidents were seldom if ever recorded about students in those classes. The students appeared to enjoy their classroom environment, and all the teachers at the school acknowledged a difference in the way the immersion unit operated. This difference seemed to be partly related to the teaching skills used, and partly related to the fact that the language and cultural content featured in the immersion unit made students feel proud of themselves as Māori.

The junior immersion unit teacher made it clear that she did not want to make comparisons between the immersion unit and the rest of the school: 'We're all Māori. We can all have a part in this wairuatanga that's been created within Māoridom, but it's not really about us and them, it's about the whole school experience'. This comment showed humility and acknowledged the greater good of the whole school. The immersion unit teachers saw their role as helping the children learn to think and converse in the context of Māori ways of being and doing, through the Māori language. 'Well, it's really just karakia that govern the behaviour of tamariki [children]. It's not about the meaning of wairua as you say, but the wairua is in there and having our karakia, and that's what you feel'. When asked to elaborate on aspects of Māori culture that facilitated the concept of wairuatanga, the teacher commented:

The other part is being Māori, I suppose, and thinking Māori and getting away from just learning how to be a Māori and sharing what we have. It's not about being selfish or anything like that, it's just trying to get that manaakitanga [caring for others] within the whole school, throughout the whole school, because we have my own class, but in the whole school as well.

The immersion unit teachers explained that the essence of being Māori was embedded in the cultural values that shaped the way people behaved toward others:

But being Māori, you know, with the tikanga as well, holding on to our tikanga, everything that's, you know, the things that are tapu, knowing what's tapu, knowing the tikanga within the classroom, knowing the tikanga within Māori, in the marae, and knowing the tikanga within everywhere, in their own homes as well. It's pretty much your values. Being Māori, it's all part and parcel of it.

Other participants commented on the value of the kind of teaching in the immersion unit for the rest of the school as well: 'I [would] still like school to speak Māori. I like that because we never had it, so I'd still want to push the Māori unit, really push it across the school (*Junior classroom teacher*).

I believe if the whole school was in total immersion there'd be a huge difference. But that's not to say that [name of unit] is a really top-notch learning environment because it's got its problems, same old problems in Year 2. But I feel they are a lot better off than the rest of the school because of that total immersion (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

An experienced teacher who returned to work at Anahera School in an advisory capacity was impressed with the senior class in the immersion unit, and the way that teacher worked. In my research diary, I noted:

Something is happening in that class that makes students feel safe and valued, but it is being pitched in the context of Kaupapa Māori philosophy. It does not matter where you live or what culture you come from, sound teaching practice is based on very similar properties - high expectations, clear boundaries, good de-escalation techniques for potential behavioural problem incidents, respect for children, and a passion for helping children to succeed. [Teacher name] is doing these things within the cultural context with which he knows and lives, and of which these children and families want to be a part.

No doubt a combination of factors contributed to the different behavioural outcomes in the immersion unit classes. Parental choice was a likely factor in the way children in the immersion unit behaved and performed. The criteria for entry into the immersion unit was

that children needed to have attended a kohanga reo or have sufficient language support in the home to sustain their language development. The previous investment parents had made in their children's Māori language development and immersion in Māori protocol, and their ongoing commitment to their children's learning within a Māori paradigm, was likely to be an important factor. Children in the mainstream classrooms at Anahera School were unlikely to have such influences in their lives.

Other factors that could have contributed to different outcomes in the immersion classes were a solid grounding in Māori culture, and skilled teachers with a passion for making a difference. Cultural understanding of the children at Anahera School was clearly valued. But cultural responsiveness in the classroom required more than simply being a Māori teacher, or a teacher of Te Reo Māori. On the question of whether or not successful teachers at Anahera School had to be Māori, many participants felt that while being Māori was important, teaching skills were also vital.

I think that it would be good if you were Māori but it would also be good if you were a professional Māori. That's the best one to be, really. Professional, as in some people might be your aunty; I mean, love your aunty to bits, but [kids] won't listen to her in the classroom. Or an aunty who just loves to do art but there are other things that these children need, too (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Another participant also made comparisons between a professional teacher and an aunty or uncle:

Māori teachers are good but they come across at times like the auntie that you don't like or the uncle who's a prick, they come across like that. It's different a non-Māori teacher coming in, they're looked at differently. I think they're given a little more respect because kids around here are brought up in a whānau with the grumpy auntie, the asshole uncle (excuse the language). They tend to treat their teachers like that (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

While it certainly helped to be Māori when teaching Māori children in Māori, it was not enough just to be Māori to be a good teacher of Māori children. The teacher had to be a skilled professional, passionate and objective, as well as being embedded in Māori culture. The teacher needed to know how he or she could weave this understanding into helping children achieve and feel successful. Evidence in this study has shown that while it was

important to be a Māori teacher in schools with a high proportion of Māori students, it was also important to be a ‘professional Māori teacher’, with the skills and attitudes expected of the teaching profession.

One component of contemporary Māori culture that facilitated positive feelings of success and achievement at Anahera School was kapa haka. Kapa haka was not only something the children enjoyed, they were good at it as well. Kapa haka competitions and festivals were held for primary school groups at local, regional and national level. These competitions regularly attracted large audiences, and the competitive sections were judged on the language, accuracy and creativity of their performance. Historically, Anahera School had done very well in these competitions: ‘Our kapa haka group, it always comes first’ (*Senior student*). Since excellence in this field is not valued within public culture (as much as, for example, prowess at rugby), however, this success seldom made the headlines in local media. One senior student reflected on what the suburb was known for, ‘because most people in [name of suburb] they love music, doing the haka’. Kapa haka was an activity that represented that which was good and successful, both in the suburb and at Anahera School. Kapa haka was fun, and people wanted to be part of it; it drew school and community together, and it celebrated Māori culture. The competitive aspect of kapa haka meant students and tutors had to strive for excellence in performance.

Kapa haka provided leadership opportunities for those students who might otherwise have not had the chance to lead. Even students known for their antisocial behaviour were sometimes leaders in the kapa haka. One such student was frequently mentioned by school staff participants and described as a potential leader. Staff members were disappointed because they had put a lot of time into this young man and he had left secondary school early through the stand down and exclusion process for antisocial behaviour.

Māori cultural protocols were clearly evident and in use at Anahera School. Māori protocols were not added on to lessons or events; rather, they were ‘business as usual’ components of a day at school for children and staff in every classroom. The way Māori protocols were used was further evidence of the changes Anahera School had made in response to the high Māori population of the local community. Two such protocols that were clearly evident were pōwhiri and hui, discussed in more detail below.

As described in Chapter One (p. 4), the pōwhiri is a Māori protocol that has become a common way of welcoming visitors in many schools and other institutions around New Zealand. Transferred from the marae into educational and other contemporary settings, use of the pōwhiri signals an importance placed on being Māori. Pōwhiri is a way of formally and politely introducing people to a new setting. In comparison to Western greetings that often involve just a handshake, and perhaps a welcome speech, the pōwhiri is a process of induction into a setting or organisation that pays respect to both visitors and hosts. Through pōwhiri the visitors become part of the establishment. The pōwhiri negotiates for visitors the gap between not feeling part of a setting or organisation, and feeling part of an organisation in a structured and meaningful way. It's about belonging together.

I guess it's a smaller version of a marae really, of what goes on in life. It's a smaller version and if we're having any manuhiri we acknowledge them, acknowledge that the children have to be observant, they have to be alert, they have to be observant about who's in here, who was talking and who was doing what, so they can acknowledge them in their kōrero, in their mihi. You know, we don't learn it, it's not a rote learnt method (*Junior immersion unit teacher*).

The pōwhiri also has the function of providing a platform where the strengths and positive aspects of a person's skills or personality can be acknowledged and celebrated as they enter their host's place. This has the effect of building a person's self-image as they begin their journey with a new group of people. The pōwhiri is often a self-esteem building exercise for the welcomed visitors. As described in Chapter One, I experienced the pōwhiri personally when I entered the school as a researcher for the first time (see p. 4 above).

A hui is another cultural protocol often seen in use at Anahera School, and which was commented on regularly by participants. The word 'hui' is often translated into English as 'meeting' or 'gathering'. In the Māori sense, however, a hui is much more than this. A hui has set processes that usually involve prayer (karakia) and song (waiata) at the beginning. Matters for discussion are addressed in the middle of the process, with all participants having the opportunity to speak. The hui is usually concluded with karakia, waiata and food.

Hui are used for many purposes, and in my role as researcher at times I was present in class hui situations, and at times when hui were being discussed. For example, the senior immersion unit teacher called a hui to tell the parents that they needed to get their children to

bed earlier. The school used hui as a morning assembly process. One teacher described a morning syndicate hui where a student was rewarded for wearing her uniform nicely:

And then they just started with our morning hui out here, we would just see ‘Who’s this little one? She’s got her uniform, she’s got her shoes.’ We would just go right up to her and her hair was tied up and looks beautiful (*Junior classroom teacher*).

The hui structure and process was valued by participants for what it provided to the children and the teachers. A senior mainstream classroom teacher believed it was the hui structure and level of pastoral support given to the students in the immersion unit, especially in times of trouble or stress, that helped them work through issues in an inclusive whānau type way. The hui process was also viewed because of the values it upholds, which some children at Anahera School may have lacked in their home environment. In reference to the karakia used in a hui, one teacher said, ‘Karakia is tapu, a very, very tapu time, it’s sacred and the expectations are that children be absolutely still’.

The ERO team made a point of asking that the junior syndicate whānau hui, which occurred four mornings a week, be made shorter because it was cutting into morning learning time. This could be seen as a judgement that invalidly dismissed the learning value involved in beginning the day with prayers and reflection, being reminded of school rules and processes, talking about upcoming events, and celebrating successes. The morning hui could well have been essential in helping facilitate a child’s successful transition between home and school. Added to this, time spent in the morning hui was also likely to be valuable in developing the children’s social and communication skills.

Chapter Five: Engaging with the community

This chapter examines the school's engagement with the community, and the strengths and tensions of this relationship. The implications of these strengths and tensions are presented in relation to their impact on the children's achievement.

Most of the members of the Anahera School community lead regular, law abiding lives. 'There are a lot of positive families, there are a lot of families who are striving for the better of their children, there are some supportive families out there, [in] the community' (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*). Most of the parents and caregivers modelled positive expectations to their children, and pride in their identity as Māori. Those people who were engaged in antisocial or illegal behaviours were in a small minority.

Some participants expressed a wish to see students take more individual responsibility for the life that lay ahead of them:

Yes, the culture for this school is about really getting in their heads. It's actually the learning part of their brain. They have to crank it up and start being critical thinking kids and that goes right back to how we deal with the curriculum, because I mean, they're pretty resilient, you know, they can live on nothing but it's about being ready for the world (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Empowering the children with basic life skills for keeping themselves clean and healthy was part of the role of teaching children at Anahera School.

We'd give out combs and brushes and little clips, elastics, and quite often we'd say if your parents can't brush your hair in the morning you give it a go so that you can look just as nice as this one. And then talk to the children about washing their uniforms and we'd say, you go home, you've got water. You get a bit of soap and you wash it like this and then you dry it and rinse it out and put it on the line. Teaching them to be resourceful. To start to look at themselves with pride. Putting the ball in their court, saying 'You can do this' (*Junior classroom teacher*).

The teachers understood that the children at Anahera School were at times expected to look after themselves and younger family members, undertaking household tasks and parental duties. The teachers and school management put time into helping the children to help themselves.

There are a lot of children at the school who are disadvantaged because their parents are not as supportive. Sure, they love them but their love is different from a parent who looks after their child, wakes them up, gets them breakfast and lunch, and makes sure that they are organised and off they go out the door. A parent who is still asleep and ... the children are getting up by themselves. You usually find the younger ones are looked after. It's just that the older they get, they can look after themselves now, really, and sometimes the children maybe forget their hygiene, their health is not as important (*Junior classroom teacher*).

The teachers understood the reality of the home situations of these children; they appeared to have become resigned to the point of having little confidence in the parents to adequately prepare their children for school, and to be responding by making efforts to equip the children with motivation and skills to better look after themselves.

Under the 'self-managing schools' system inaugurated by Tomorrow's Schools (Wylie, 1999), New Zealand parents are encouraged to play a significant role in the governance of their child's school through voluntary service on the Board of Trustees. One Board of Trustees member, who was also a grandmother and caregiver of a student at Anahera School, expressed her clear understanding of the Board of Trustees as being the teachers' employer:

My passion is to get the best teachers possible to educate our children. Get the best resources and push. If that means that teachers need to go out, let's certainly push that. We need nothing but the best for our school and I will take nothing less.

As part of my research at Anahera School I spoke to four Board of Trustees parent representatives, but these were among the small number of parents or caregivers who visibly interacted in a constructive and ongoing way with the school, during the time I spent there. It seemed that the staff, management, and Board of Trustees felt they had to manage, with or without the active support of many of the parents.

The focus that we have is on the kids that attend this school, not on what the parents think of our school; even though we are accountable to them in things we put in place, still, our first and foremost concern is how it's going to affect the kids that are attending our school (*Administration staff member*).

Limited engagement by parents with the school meant that the staff felt uncertain about the community expectations of the school, since lines of communication between the school and their community were limited. When asked how parents would feel knowing that many of the children at Anahera School were achieving at levels below behind most other children in the country, one teacher spoke about the school's lack of success engaging with parents.

I don't know what the community thinks anymore. You know, once upon a time I thought they cared and then everything we've tried in the last three years to get them in, like we've put effort into portfolios, and to get them back here - there's no parent feedback back. Unfortunately the place they approach is when you're out in public on a social occasion when they've usually had a few drinks. That's the last place you want to talk to a parent about their child and they'll sort of jump at that opportunity, whereas you've got to keep professional and say 'Oh sorry, come in and see me on Monday' or 'Come in after school on Tuesday' and then they switch off and you become hidden... I'd like to see the community a lot more involved because a lot of them are at home during the day.

At the time, none of the teaching or administration staff lived in the suburb where Anahera School was located, and many staff expressed disapproval of much that happened in the suburb, with some activities pursued by some local residents regarded as antisocial, and sometimes illegal. The main problems stemmed from high levels of unemployment in the community, leading to poverty, reliance on welfare, and associated problems such as alcohol and drug abuse.

Now one thing you need to understand about our parents around here is that their lives are their lives. They're used to not necessarily doing things the right way, and they're used to people interrogating them, so they're very closed... This is all the world [the students] know. It's cars hooning up and down; that's just part of their world and for them to go to some part of the country they would just think it's so quiet (*Administration staff member*).

Many children who attended Anahera School seldom left the local community. The teachers expressed a wish to show the students a wider variety of experiences, over and above what they encountered in and around their homes. One teacher expressed this as planting a ‘little seed [of] some kind of normality’. The staff understood that part of their role in the lives of the students was to show them there was ‘something else out there, that they do have choices in life, they don’t have to be like mum, like dad, like uncle. It’s not the only road that’s there.’ Staff members reflected on the difficulty of this task: ‘it’s a very hard thing to teach young children that...They know it’s good to come here, but...they bring their baggage with them’.

Teachers, administration staff and board members at Anahera School believed that the children could achieve well, and were prepared to communicate this to them and involve them in decision-making processes. The staff believed that through academic achievement, good health care, and personal responsibility students would be able to work themselves out of the poverty and associated problems in their home and community situation. There were also differences in the lenient (cotton-balled) way children were often treated at school, in contrast to the harsh discipline they might experience at home. The school appeared to have been in a re-assessment phase, deciding on the emphasis they should take to help the children move from the point of requiring support, or a crutch, to make safe decisions about behaviour towards being more able to self-manage. There was an emphasis on helping children to learn to take responsible risks and on managing impulsivity. This encouragement from the school seemed to occur with or without the parents’ agreement and support.

Proud to be Māori

One theme expressed by participants was that the Anahera School parents wanted their children to have experiences related to their own culture as Māori. One student said, ‘Being Māori, yeah, I think we are proud of being Māori.’ It was apparent that the community wanted their children to be able to walk tall in both the Pākehā and the Māori worlds.

It’s getting Māori kids to feel good to be Māori; it’s nothing to do with curriculum, it’s nothing to do with language, it’s making them feel [good] to be Māori’ (*Senior immersion unit teacher*).

In regard to language medium of instruction, the school's charter stated that immersion unit classes would use Te Reo Māori as the language for all instruction, while in the so-called mainstream classrooms Te Reo Māori was to be used for 51 to 80% of instruction. Anahera School was therefore classified as offering Māori bilingual and immersion education, even though staff indicated they did not in practice achieve the stated aims for language of instruction. 'Well, we receive bilingual status, but we're nowhere near [the] bilingual [level] we are funded to have' (*Senior immersion unit teacher*). It was apparent, however, that many in the community wanted their children to learn both English and Te Reo Māori.

A lot of the families around here prefer their children to be bilingual or to go through mainstream. Only a small section of this community actually put their children in total immersion so it comes down to the choice of the parents (*Parent*).

Notably, times when the community came in large numbers to support school events were for Māori cultural events like kapa haka. A student explained, 'well, because most of them have fun when they're doing kapa haka, because most people in [name of suburb], they love music, doing the haka'.

The parents came and wherever the kapa haka was performing, they made sure they were on the bus and travel with them, or they would make their way over there. It was huge (*Senior immersion unit teacher*).

Māori gangs in the local community

A more difficult aspect of Māori identity with which the school was obliged to contend was the prevalence of gang members, and their associated activities, in the local community. Māori gangs emerged in New Zealand as part of the suite of changes to Māori society that ensued from mass urbanisation of the Māori population following World War II, encouraged by Māori political struggles in response to the prejudice they faced from Pākehā, and the loss of traditional Māori social structures and cohesion. As one of the lowest socioeconomic areas in the country, it is unsurprising that the local community of Anahera School features a strong element of Māori gang life, with Black Power having traditionally been the dominant gang in the area. The name Black Power reflects the political basis of the gang, styled after the Black Power movement that sought social justice for African-Americans in the US from

the late 1960s (Marks, 2011). One teacher, who knew many of the local gang associates, explained:

If you compare this community with that area [another local suburb], I prefer to live here because it's my gang. There's about six [gangs in that suburb]. I know the people around here and I feel safer here than [there].

This teacher related a previous experience he had had with the local Black Power members. They had asked him to teach them Te Reo Māori and he had agreed on two conditions: first, that certain known tinny (drug) houses were closed, and second, that no new gang members be patched (initiated). This contract worked for a period of time, until one day when he was at the local urban marae, which was situated close to Anahera School. He noticed that two new gang members were being 'patched', which broke the deal he had made, so he ended the Te Reo lessons.

While gangs routinely receive bad press that reinforces the negative stereotypes for many middle-class New Zealand citizens, most Māori people are well aware of the disjunction between the image and the reality, since they have personal knowledge of gang members in their own circles, as did the teacher quoted above. In any case, the traditional Māori gangs such as Black Power and Mongrel Mob have matured, reaching a state of equilibrium in their localities, and are often part of positive social initiatives, such as making sandwiches for low-decile schools, or participating in summer water safety programmes for children (Scott, 2014; Stuff, 2015). There was some indication, however, that newer, younger gangs were starting to infiltrate the suburb, which would upset the balance of power and probably increase the incidence of gang-related trouble near Anahera School.

I've also seen, because they had a meeting at the marae, the [name of another gang]. Oh my god, what are they doing here? Because they're from [another town in the region] so they shouldn't be here in [name of suburb]. I sort of had a think about it and thought, 'Oh my god, they're recruiting some guys from [name of suburb]', which they have (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

The drawback of living near homes occupied by gang members was reflected on by a parent:

I used to have Black Power neighbours and they had, like, three, four parties a week. But sometimes they used to have this big fat massive fight and my kids would quickly close the curtains, turn the TV up really loud, even the radio was

going just so they couldn't [hear]. But it was really hard because it was daytime and they were all partying out the front, so the whole street could hear and see.

Anahera students clearly knew about gangs, as this student comment showed: 'Cos, like, if you've got a child and the parent is [in] a gang, the child obviously wants to be like its parent, and starts making up goons [a reference to fighting]'. In one class I was observing, during a classroom activity a student used the raised fist symbol, which is the sign used by Black Power. The teacher immediately told the student this action was inappropriate and unacceptable, whereupon the student changed to another sign.

Some Anahera School students and their families are caught up in the clash of cultures between gangs and society at large. Gang life and its effects on the surrounding residents can often be deleterious to school participation and achievement. One teacher told me about a student who showed potential at school, but was involved in the initiation process for joining a youth gang chapter:

I've had a Year Eight [student] this year and I see her good in the classroom, head down working hard, making progress, starting to enjoy it. [She was to] go up to high school for the interview and [instead] the mum took another kid, the mokopuna, to somewhere else. They can't see that she just - oh, we finally got this girl looking forward to secondary school because she's right at risk, she's a junior [gang name].

Socioeconomic status

The Anahera School community is located in an impoverished residential area, in which a high percentage of households relied on social welfare benefits. For the past several decades, families such as those who made up the community around Anahera School have borne the brunt of economic re-structuring under neoliberal economic policy, which has decimated New Zealand's manufacturing sectors. Those who once built the economy as manual workers have also been disenfranchised by increasing levels of mechanisation in primary industries such as agriculture and forestry. These macro-economic changes meant that families in this community were increasingly forced to engage with a range of support agencies just to scrape by, often suffering humiliation in the process.

I think it's a pride. For so many years this area has been the bane of [name of town]. The place not to live and 'don't go up there'. And we just have one another to depend on and support us. And a lot of them because their schooling didn't go so well, they don't know how to approach people for help in outside agencies. All they've had from outside agencies is that, 'Oh well you live up there, we can't really help you (*Administration staff member*).

Many in the school community had become tired of people coming in from outside thinking they could help. One teacher expressed this view:

We've had so many people come into our community and try to fix things, what hurts the most is that they come in and leave at the end of the day, whereas we're here every day, every night, right through. They come in, expect us to fall to their needs and we've become a community of taking anything that's concerning money: 'Oh well, we'll take it and we'll spend it how we want and then we wait for the next fixer up to come in'.

The school was likely to have been perceived by many families as another outside agency that gives help and leaves. Most of the staff were better educated than the parents and caregivers of the school, and lived elsewhere. It was almost inevitable that members of staff would at times make value judgements about parents and caregivers of the school. For example, one staff member expressed disapproval for attitudes encountered from members of the community:

They expect everything to come to them, and the only people that succeed are the people that get out and do something about the way they live. It's not rocket science that when your grass grows, you mow the lawn, you know? And I said to this parent [who expected a broken washing machine would be repaired and paid for by others] 'no, that's not how it works' but that's what they do, they use and abuse them because they don't understand how these systems work and they've always done that to people around here. I don't like it, I really don't.

Faced with the daily struggle to survive, people in the community were tight knit and supported each other strongly.

Comradship, definitely. You know if anything goes wrong, like we've just had one of our, not old mums, but a lady who did a lot in our community, she's just

passed and when you see everybody...no matter how long they've lived here, they will come and pay their respects...Because they're from [name of suburb], they will come and it's not only them, it's all the families that have grown and moved away, they all come back. That's good (*Administration staff member*).

Absenteeism and transience

In the ERO report on Anahera School that was completed just before my study began, attendance was identified as needing significant improvement. The report described the attendance levels at the school as 'unacceptably low' and stated that the school needed to manage absenteeism in 'more proactive and effective ways'. One teacher associated low attendance with the low esteem in which education was held by the community:

If the kids are brought up in a good atmosphere, you know, learning atmosphere - you know, they've participated in a lot of things since they've been little - they will learn better when they come to school because of course those parents will send them to preschool and kōhanga, all those places, or they'll actually emphasise education.

A very high rate of student mobility exacerbated the low attendance rate. Up to 70% of children entered or exited the school throughout the year. One teacher explained that if parents 'don't like what you're doing' they would say, 'I'm pulling my kid out' and enrol the student elsewhere only to discover that 'it's too far to run them to town, so they put them back in here'. Another teacher referred to the mobility of local families: 'If things don't go right, they up and move, that's where our high transience levels come from'.

The high level of transience had significant impact for both the school and the children. The school found it difficult to maintain accurate achievement levels when so many students moved in and out of the school each year. The Principal talked about wanting to selectively report on the academic results for children who had been in the school long term (more than two years), which he thought would more fairly reflect the quality of the learning programme the school offered. This idea is supported by research illustrating the significant negative influence of transience on achievement (Hattie, 2007). Schools like Anahera are likely to receive criticism for low academic levels, yet the serious impact of high transience may not be taken into account.

Parental engagement with the school

The school was struggling to engage with their parents and caregivers, most of whom seemed reluctant to enter the school gates, except for kapa haka performances (see p. 112 above). Barriers that prevented most of the parents from engaging with the school were often discussed by participants in this study. One school initiative was to invite families who had soon-to-enrol children to a hui to introduce them to the school and discuss student achievement levels. ‘Well that’s something we’re working on at the moment, and we tried it last night at our hui, we got, one, two, three, four, five parents’ (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

There just doesn’t seem to be a link and a link up with the school accessing the community. They try, or should I say, we try, and we try and we try, but we still can’t bring them over, bring them together, basically. I’m not too sure how we’re going to do that. As a Board we’re trying to come up with some strategies to sort of bring the two together now, the school and the community, but from what I hear it’s always been that way. Ever since I’ve been here it’s a struggle to bring the two together (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

Faced with these difficulties, Board of Trustees members and school staff were contemplating following recent advice from the Ministry of Education to use home visits as another way to encourage parents and caregivers to engage with the school.

So it might have to come down to that, go door knocking and [have] coffees with them. Make them more comfortable with us and hopefully get them to come on board, just one day of the week, or to read with their child or just one book a week or something like that. Because it’s quite obvious they won’t come to us. (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*)

At the same time, however, it appeared the school personnel were overlooking opportunities to engage in some key collaborative initiatives in the community. One Board of Trustees member and mother noted that school staff did not attend local community meetings that were occurring at the time. When she spoke to the staff about this, they suggested, ‘Why don’t you go to the hui and represent us?’ She reflected, ‘Is that it? Is that the solution, that I go and come back with their minutes? So the school does have some part to it, some responsibility, they’re failing there’.

The absence of parents from school meetings did not mean they did not care about their children's progress at school. Most Māori parents in impoverished communities have negative memories of their own experiences at school (Selby, 1999). They may also have wanted to avoid being given bad news about their children, or feared value judgements being made about them by the teachers.

But I can also see the other side from working within the school and if the child's not doing their homework or haven't done it or they're not learning, they're looking out the window, then there's a tendency to blame parents as well. It's a lack of support at home maybe, a lot of judgements are made that there's something socially wrong with the children (*Administration staff member*).

One teacher speculated on the difficult lives many of the parents had lived, quite unlike those of the teachers. 'A percentage of the community still carry their anger on their shoulders, so they make up their minds. My life's going to be hell, who cares? So they join the gang, that's exactly that.'

There was evidence that some of the parents and caregivers of children at Anahera School had low literacy and numeracy levels themselves.

I think some of the parents, not all of them, are at the same level, learning level as their children. Some of them don't even know how to read and write and they're going into their forties and they still don't know (*Board of Trustees member/Mother*).

For parents in this position, the messages given by the teachers could be difficult to understand. Some parents and caregivers may not have been able to read the school report, and even if they could, they may have been pleased their children's achievement had surpassed their own. It is easy to see how all of the above factors - the reputation of the community, a history of negative schooling experiences, lack of money, and their own low levels of education, would combine to understandably make parents feel they could be placed in a degrading, disempowered position by coming to the school to discuss their children's learning and academic progress with the teachers.

The only times that school and community came together in numbers was during a Māori cultural event like a kapa haka festival or a tangi (funeral). The school had embraced the importance of hospitality and sharing of food at such events:

Māoris have always been like that, food's always been around - you have to have food [or] else it wasn't a good hui. You always remember the kai. Mightn't be so much the big meeting but when you go to have kai afterwards, 'Ah man, what a beautiful kai.' People never forget the kai. I think that's what it is and I think that's what [the principal] is trying to do too, because he tries to sort of involve them in a sausage sizzle when we have our interview things (*Junior classroom teacher*).

Māori culture was a very powerful connection where the school and the community found common ground.

It's a warm culture. It's based around Māoridom. It's not wholly and solely just about Māoridom though, so I think that's a good thing, too, because some of these children are from Māori backgrounds in descent but don't actually live the Māori lifestyle, if you like (*Senior classroom teacher*).

The potential for a relationship between the staff and the parents based on Māori culture and their shared concerns for the students was obvious in this schooling community. For the sake of the children's development and learning, the potential has to be harnessed.

Chapter Six: Anahera School

This chapter has two parts: the first describes the fictional school at the centre of this research, with a synopsis of historical and demographic details about the school and community. The second section comprises a series of fictionalised vignettes, which together capture a typical day in the life of Anahera School, written based on the original empirical data collected in the school.

Part I: Introducing Anahera School

Anahera School is situated in a medium-sized town in an economic region based on the dairy, beef, horticulture, and exotic forestry industries. Most of the region is rural and isolated from major metropolitan centres. This region has one of the largest percentages of Māori children in schools, out of all the school regions in New Zealand. The population in the region is predominantly bi-ethnic Māori and Pākehā, in contrast to the major urban centres of Aotearoa New Zealand, which are much more ethnically diverse (Education Counts, 2007).

Anahera School opened in 1955 with five staff and 160 pupils, mainly Pākehā, in Year 1–6, in a thriving community established for workers on a large national construction project. This was a time when the post-WWII Māori urban drift was starting to gain momentum. In the 1970s-1980s, the construction company sold many of these houses to the Housing Corporation of New Zealand, providing affordable housing and enabling many Māori families to move to live in the area. As Māori moved in, more family members joined them, and new family networks started to build in the urban setting.

Between 1981 and 1986, the region experienced rapid increase in the Māori population at more than twice the national rate. This demographic change was partly attributed to a process of return migration to traditional Māori home areas, as economic opportunities declined in the cities, in the wake of significant job losses in manufacturing and primary industries. This economic downturn was exacerbated by the neoliberal de-regulation of business and re-structuring of the public sector, undertaken between 1984 and 1990, which radically altered the character of the New Zealand economy (Belich, 2001; Murphy & Cloher, 1995).

In 1996, Anahera School established an immersion Māori language classroom. In 2004, Anahera School converted from Year 1 - 6 to Year 1 - 8, to accommodate the needs of the Māori families of the school, who felt the local intermediate schools did not reflect their culture or identity to the extent they desired for their children. Today, the school roll of 100% Māori students is less than 150 students in 8 classes, with an average of approximately 18 students per class, including two full immersion classes, and several bilingual classrooms. A Kohanga Reo and a bilingual kindergarten also operate on the school site. Anahera School is situated near a small number of shops, a medical centre and community support groups, together forming the hub of this community.

The purpose of the Education Review Office (ERO) is to evaluate and report publicly on the education and care of students in school and early childhood services. Shortly before I started work in the school, ERO reviewed Anahera School, as part of their normal triennial audit cycle. This ERO visit had a significant impact on the school during my research, because the report was not positive.

Though gains in improving the school culture were acknowledged, student attendance rates were reported as unacceptably low, and the school roll was dropping each year. ERO reported the school had few procedures for identifying risks to its effective operation, and put pressure on the school to address their attendance and learning problems. In addition, a lack of effective financial monitoring procedures had adversely affected the school's financial situation. An absence of effective self-review procedures and comprehensive strategic planning had resulted in reactive governance and management. ERO recommended intervention under Part 7A of the Education Act (1989) in order to improve student attendance, engagement in learning, professional leadership, quality assurance systems, financial management, self-review, and strategic planning, signalling the intention to return to the school within 12 months to review progress. A Limited Statutory Manager was appointed to take over some principal and BOT responsibilities, in order to bring about the required changes.

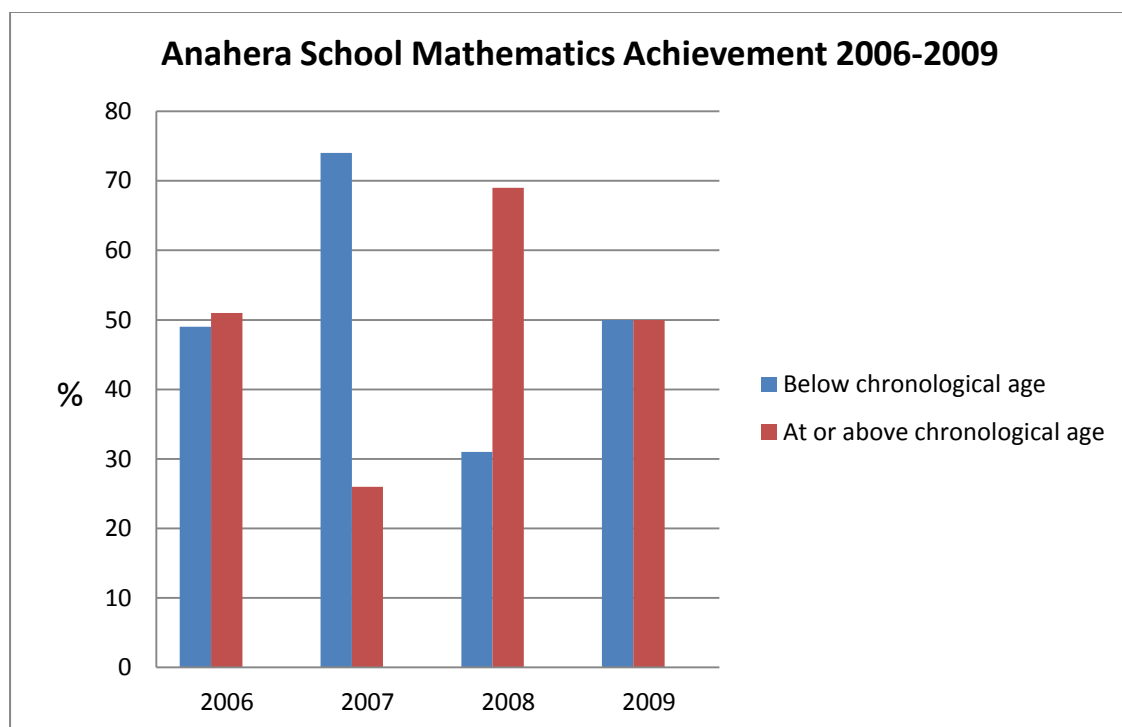
Achievement levels at Anahera School

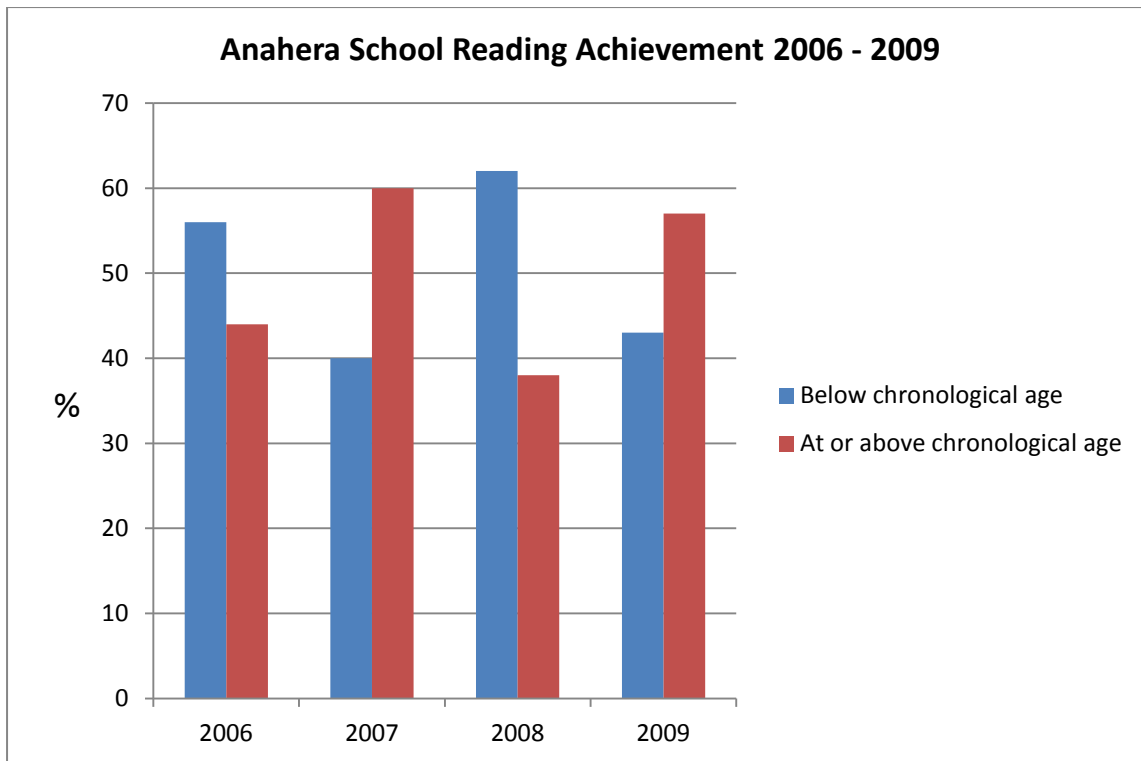
Within a month of starting data collection at Anahera School, I had a discussion with the principal about the school's achievement results. It became apparent that the school had

struggled with teacher competence in assessment processes in years past. We also talked about consistency of teaching and assessment approach among the teachers who have been in the school over time. Apparently there have been teachers in the school who have had issues of competency in both teaching practice and assessment, and these have impacted on learning achievement and the quality of the school's assessment data.

I was also aware that the ERO team who visited earlier in 2009 reported in a letter to the school community their observations that, while conditions for teaching and learning had improved, not all teachers were taking advantage of them. They concluded that as a consequence, levels of student engagement could have been better supported.

Achievement results at Anahera School in the core curriculum areas of mathematics and literacy during the period of 2006 to 2009 are shown below, including those students in the Immersion Unit. The information was accessed from achievement data presented at a staff development and planning meeting which I was invited to attend. The raw data presented at that meeting has been summarised to show the percentages of students in the Years 1–6 range working at or above, and below their chronological age in mathematics and reading.





Working through the school achievement data was a difficult process as there was no evident methodological pattern to the assessment tools and procedures used. It was not clear whether the student achievement results were consistently recorded or accurate. Teachers were gathering the data in different ways, using individual methods: there was no systematic data collection across the school. Academic results for 2010 could well have showed improvement, but were outside the period of data collection for this study.

Part II: A day in the life of Anahera School

The school day starts before the school day starts

“Who is going to say karakia before we start our breakfast?” was the question that boomed around the unused classroom full of children, seated and waiting to eat. It was 8.30am and this was Breakfast Club at Anahera School. The coordinators of the club who were adult volunteers from the local community had been at school since 8am setting up breakfast for a group of children who were regular attendees. The school day officially starts at 9am but for this group, the school day starts earlier. Breakfast was simple but hearty - toast, cereal and a hot drink – a good nutritional start to the day for any child.

Hands shot into the air as children volunteered to start the prayer - one was chosen. The room quietened quickly, the prayer was started by an individual was joined in unison by the rest of the group. After this the children were invited to start eating. A senior student who was female arrived about 10 minutes after the group had started. She was accompanied by two younger siblings. She looked flustered but in control, she carried a sense of maturity beyond her 11 years borne out of life’s experiences. As was her daily routine, it was her responsibility to get her brother and sister to school each morning. She had done well – it was a task that would have tested any parent.

If the school knows kids are hungry when they enter the classroom in the morning, what else would they do but feed them? Leaving them sitting in the classroom hungry is hardly a professional response. “The kids just get irritable if they haven’t eaten in the morning”, said Whaea Stevie, who was one of the adult volunteers at the Breakfast Club. “No lunch and no breakfast for many of these young ones,” added Whaea Stevie, “so it’s up to us to feed ‘em.”

Some parents may be avoiding their responsibilities. Some may have plenty of money for food but simply can’t be bothered to pack a lunch for their child – especially if they know the school will provide. But what if the parent simply doesn’t have money to buy food that week? What if they have been a victim of domestic violence the night before and are too traumatised to organise lunch? What if their addiction has got the better of them again? Do these parents love their kids any less? This debate is not about the degree of a parent’s love for their child. Who has the right to judge a parent, who does not live life in their shoes?

This argument is about the capacity to care. Let's not assume that because a parent is struggling to care for their child that they don't love them any less. For some parents it must be a burden, knowing that they didn't put food on the table for their children, for whatever reason.

The bell rings

The bell rings across the school at 9am. The children converge on the classrooms like swarms of bees humming with excitement. Mr J has experienced this phase of the school day many times before. Mr J has been a teacher of some twenty plus years, preferring to teach in lower decile schools where he feels the kids with real character are. Teaching in low-decile schools has been a mixed blessing though. The kids are the real deal and return respect in exchange for being shown respect. Mr J has also seen the repercussions of the influence of poverty on children's learning potential. Plenty of kids as smart as any other have the hand brake of disadvantage and inequality applied to their learning potential because life is hard, there are other higher priorities in their life, and they believe that kids like them do other stuff in their lives other than progress through higher secondary and tertiary education like Pākehā kids in schools down the road.

As the kids filtered into his classroom to sit on the mat, Mr J had a keen eye out for Stanley. He had not seen him for nearly four weeks. As he called the roll he got to Stanley's name, put an x in the box and made a mental note that after two more days of non-attendance he would have to report Stanley to the truancy service. Mr J had tried to call Stanley's parents but the numbers were disconnected. He went around to the house but found that a new family had moved in and there was no sign of Stanley.

Stanley was a smart, talented kid. He was a good academic and a nippy rugby league player, who had been selected for his local representative team during the last week he attended Anahera School. He had potential to lead kapa haka in the future. The only problem for Stanley was his daily attendance at school, and his regular movement between schools. This was the third time he had been back to Anahera School since he was a 5 year old. He must have been to about nine other schools around the country. He averages about 8-9 months in each school.

Mr J has seen cases like Stanley's many times before – lots of kids at Anahera School become deemed truant or transient. Talented kids who arrive at the school, develop a foothold of relationships and academic growth, and then are gone, often without any notice. Sometimes Mr J got a call from their next enrolling school, sometimes not. Maybe he had been in this game for too long, or maybe he was a bit tired and stressed today, but Stanley's case bugged the hell out of Mr J and he couldn't seem to get it out of his mind.

Mr J took his job very seriously. He had put considerable time into developing a relationship with Stanley, as he did with all of his students. It was the injustice of Stanley's situation, and those of the many others like Stanley, that frustrated him. How are kids supposed to get fair access to educational opportunities when the adults in their lives or those that they are in the care of continually move kids to different schools, time after time? It might be convenient for the adult's circumstances at the time, but it is damaging for the children's social and educational development.

About two weeks after Mr J had informed the authorities that Stanley had met the threshold as a truant, he received a call after school from the local Youth Justice coordinator – she wanted some educational history on Stanley. “What happened to Stanley? What did he do?” asked Mr J. The Youth Justice coordinator described the situation Stanley had got into – he had taken a sling shot to his new school, fired it off and accidentally hit another student in the eye. The parents are pressing charges. To save face the school excluded Stanley. He is now at home as all the other schools that were approached refused to enrol him. He now hangs out around his local shopping centre during the day, waiting for his friends to finish school. After receiving the call, Mr J walked back to his classroom, packed his bag and went home. He couldn't face being at school any longer that day. He needed an outlet for his frustration and the boxing bag in his garage felt like the best option. Good kids, talented kids falling between the cracks without support structures in place to help them recover their position. Mr J started to punch the bag.

Puffers Club

The lesson before lunch seemed to be dragging on forever today and Mrs S's need for a cigarette was starting to dominate her mood. She was starting to yearn for her quiet place

across the road from the school grounds where she could get the nicotine monkey off her back and prepare to get herself through the afternoon without losing it with the kids.

The bell rang and Mrs S sent her kids out for lunch then ducked over to the staff room to use the toilet before she went across the road for a smoke. Her conscience told her that she should check the new duty roster to see who was on today. She hoped like anything that it wasn't her – all she needed at the moment was some peace and quiet, the kids had been really ratty today. To her dismay she found that she was on first half of lunch with Miss B, the newly qualified teacher from the middle school. Miss B will be OK on her own for 10 minutes, Mrs S convinced herself. I will just pop over the road first, have my smoke, and then join her for the last 20 minutes. Miss B won't even know, and if she does figure it out, she isn't likely to say anything as she is new and won't want to upset anyone.

Mrs S inhaled on the cigarette, enjoying the familiar sense of release. She had made a commitment to herself a thousand times to quit smoking but the commitment never stuck. Besides, she was a teacher, and teaching was stressful. After a few minutes she was joined by Chris, the other senior school teacher. Two of the four members of what was called the 'Puffers Club' at Anahera School were doing what they did each day. The Puffers Club members knew each other well and were politically tight – they had influence over decision-making because they had so much time together to discuss and complain about the day-to-day issues in the school.

Mrs S heard a siren some distance away but didn't give it any further thought. They continued to chat about their forthcoming weekend activities. Mrs S became conscious of the siren again because it was louder this time, and seemed to be heading in their direction. Mrs S stubbed her cigarette out and started to head back to school. She had spent longer than 10 minutes at the Puffers Club. Mrs S's heart started to pound in her chest as she saw the ambulance pull into the school gate. In the playground a group of teachers surrounded a student who was lying on the ground. Miss B, her duty partner was one of them and she looked visibly upset. Mrs S established that Leanne, the child with severe epilepsy from Room 3, had had a seizure in the top corner of the playground. Miss B was first on the scene but there was no one else on duty to back her up.

It was no surprise when Mrs S opened her email that afternoon and found a message waiting for her from the boss. The crisis was over for Leanne; she was stable in hospital and would probably be back at school in a day or two. Miss B had managed to get one of the children to run to the office to for help and get Leanne's EpiPen – she had essentially managed the whole event on her own. The conversation with the boss was short and to the point. There wasn't a lot that Mrs S could say other than accept responsibility for not being present for duty when she should have been, and apologise for her lack of professionalism. The hardest conversation was the one she now needed to have with Miss B – she felt awful, and all for a cigarette.

Everyone struggles with their own monkey on their back. Sometimes when we are fresh and full of energy, the monkey is easy to get rid of. Other times, when we are fatigued and fed up, it is harder. It is easy to understand why Mrs S pinched a few minutes for a quick fag. She would have done it before, and so would many others. This is the unmentionable side of recent policy changes that made all school grounds completely smoke free by law. It is not so much that Mrs S went off for a quick smoke and one of the children had a serious health situation while she should have been on duty; it was that her behaviour reflected a wider pattern at Anahera School.

Mrs S's behaviour was reflective of a culture of adult behaviour in the school that played out in an inconsistency of the application of school routines and processes, and a lack of team work which in the end influenced how kids' behaviour and other situations were managed on a day-to-day basis. The teachers weren't working as a team and couldn't rely on each other to deal with a lively playground where kids always had issues that needed sorting. Some teachers completed their duty religiously, some were not as committed. The behaviour of the teachers influenced the behaviour of the students in the playground because the kids knew that some teachers would be present and vigilant, and some were not, some addressed behavioural issues, some turned a blind eye, some were confrontational, some were scared – some didn't seem to appear at all.

Teachers are often critical of parents' inconsistencies in their responsibility to their children, but teachers must also take a critical look at their own behaviour. Kids respond well to consistent behavioural expectations in school through the presence of a strong and committed culture of care and vigilance. Problem behaviours among students can be reduced, and a

safer playground environment can be achieved, if every member of the staff shows commitment. To achieve a state of consistency across staff procedures and protocols schools don't necessarily need highly intensive or expensive instruction or international models of best practice – just a consistent commitment to a well-planned and common cause.

Kapa haka practice

In the second half of lunch, Jimmy and his mate stopped playing their basketball game and ran over the Room 15 where Matua Sam was waiting for the group of boys and girls. This was Jimmy's favourite activity of the week. It was a time when he felt that he could just lose himself in the activities, the songs, the actions and not worry or think about anything else. This was kapa haka practice and Jimmy was not the only kid who loved it. "The kids have fun when they're doing kapa haka" said Matua Sam, most people love music, doing the haka around here."

Matua Sam called the group of kids to attention and immediately had a quiet group ready for the next instructions. There was something about their behaviour and attention to task when these kids were at kapa haka, as opposed to their other lessons throughout the day. It wasn't that the kids were all that badly behaved in the other lessons, it's just that they were better behaved, more focused, more determined to get it right at kapa haka. When they were here they had a look in their eyes and an expression on their face which meant business. Their facial expression said that they had absolute pride in what they were doing: they were part of kapa haka, and kapa haka was part of them.

The group was getting ready for an inter-school competition in a few weeks. As they went through their rendition of a particular piece, the room felt like it was shaking on its foundations, the noise was deafening, and the energy in the room was dense and alive. The passion and the power were amazing. The next song was the same, and the next and the next. Kapa haka fuelled their passion like nothing else in the school. Many of the kids involved in kapa haka weren't actually doing that well at school academically – struggling might be a better way of describing it. But these kids can commit to a task and achieve success even though they struggle in class most of the time. Kapa haka unearths their passion, and brings crowds of parents and onlookers to the school, especially those who never come to school events otherwise.

My body is at school, but my mind is at home

The after lunch session at school was always tough for Christina. Her teacher, Mrs H, always read a long story when the kids got in from play. Christina liked the stories but almost always felt like she wanted to fall asleep. On more than a few occasions Christina had fallen asleep and after she had woken up she felt really embarrassed because the other kids laughed at her. Just as Christina felt herself nodding off again she heard a car roar along the road outside of the school, stop at the junction, then do a screaming burn out as it turned right and headed down the other side of the school boundary. Her twin brother looked at her, smiled and rolled his eyes. Some of the other boys in the class were also smiling at each other when they heard the noise of the car. They treated older men who drove their cars like that as heroes who they emulated in play during break and lunch time. Christina and her brother both knew the familiar sound of that particular car, the funny horn that sounded off, and the driver's antics – Uncle Blackie was back in town!

Uncle Blackie hadn't been around home for a while. Mum told Christina that he had been on holiday for a while and that the Queen had paid for it all. Christina knew what she would find when she and her brother got home after school today. When Uncle Blackie came home there was always a big party. Heaps of the family came round and got on the beers, put on the music, stayed up late, and she and her brother had to clean up the mess in the morning. When the parties occurred, Christina and her brother basically had to look after themselves until the adults sobered up. When Uncle Blackie wasn't on the beers Christina liked him – he was funny. When he was on the beers Uncle Blackie changed – he got all staunch and usually started a fight with someone. She hoped Uncle Blackie wouldn't stay too long because he was just trouble really.

Christina suddenly heard her teacher's voice calling her name. As she slipped back to reality from her dream-like state she found she was the last one on the mat, all the other kids were back at their tables and had started an activity. Christina missed the end of the story and the instructions for the task that followed it. She hadn't been asleep this time; her mind was just on other things – miles away from what was going on in the classroom. Mrs H didn't have an angry sound to her voice; she was just trying to get Christina's attention back from where her mind had taken her. Christina loved Mrs H: she was the best teacher she had ever had, way better than her teacher last year, who was just grumpy all the time.

Christina and her friends didn't like grumpy teachers who were always in a bad mood. They liked teachers that cared and showed them love and understanding. They also liked teachers that weren't a pushover – firm but fair was the best. The kids knew that they were naughty at times, and they knew that they needed to be told off some times, but there was a difference between being told off once in a while, and having to deal with a grumpy teacher all the time. In fact Christina and her friends, particularly the boys in the class just played up even more when they got a grumpy teacher.

Lots of the kids at Anahera School distinguished a good teacher from a bad teacher by how grumpy they were, and whether they talked in a grumpy way. Kids can be refreshingly honest and insightful in their feedback about education, schools and teaching. Their assessment of what makes a good teacher is based on a fairly simple concept. What do they actually mean when they say they don't like grumpy teachers? Kids say they like their teachers to speak to them nicely, teachers who are fair and consistent with them, and who show respect, not act like a grumpy Auntie they encounter at home. They want someone who acts like a teacher, and knows stuff like a teacher. The kids have expectations of their teachers, and don't like it when teachers don't shape up.

Kids must interpret a lot about a teacher from what they see in their body language and hear in their tone of voice. It seems to be more about how the teacher behaves and speaks than what the teacher actually says and knows that is important to kids. Teachers who work at Anahera School constantly walk a fine line. They have to take care to pick their battles, and have a strong appreciation of the baggage that children carry with them from their home and community into school each day.

Christina's teacher Mrs H doesn't live in the community that surrounds Anahera School, but she understands it from the many years she has taught in the school. She understands that there are days when you can push an expectation on a child, and there are days when it is best left unsaid. These are kids that when pushed into a corner come out fighting because that is what you do in this community. Mrs H has seen less seasoned teachers at Anahera School verbally corner kids while berating their actions - only to earn a strong reaction back from the student. The inevitable loser in situations like this always seems to be the student because they are a kid who should have known better than to speak to a teacher in that way. In reality it was often the teacher who provoked and escalated the situation through their approach.

Mrs H feels for the students in situations like this and feels that there is another side to the story that adults just don't get sometimes, and that they don't take responsibility for. Sure, some kids are no angels, but there are ways and means of dealing with an issue between a teacher and a student that at the very least does not make the situation worse. These kids can fire up quickly and the way a teacher chooses to speak to a student can certainly make a situation more or less confrontational.

When a kid goes off at a teacher it inevitably ends with the student stood down or excluded. Mrs H often feels that the teacher involved needs a stand down as well. Mrs H knows inherently that the kids at the school can be worked with and supported through their issues if the right teaching skills are applied, and in the knowledge that many of the kids at Anahera School are in their own daily struggle that many of them will choose not to discuss. It is a struggle that Mrs H herself never really had to negotiate. She came from a middle class background where there was food on the table every night, a dad that worked hard for the public service, and a mum that displayed good knowledge of the fundamentals of child care. It is a struggle that Mrs H appreciates and respects however, and it informs her subtle but powerful approach with the children.

Staff meeting at 3.15pm

After watching Christina and her brother walk out the gate and head home, Mrs H made her way to the staffroom, made herself a cup of coffee and took a seat ready for staff meeting. Today they were receiving some professional development from a special needs expert who was going to show them how to work better with kids with behavioural problems. Mrs H had learnt to keep an open mind about professional development – some was worthwhile, some was a waste of time.

The guy that arrived at Anahera School that day was an interesting bloke – different to many that had been before him – Stephen was his name and he clearly wasn't from this neck of the woods. Stephen was actually of Welsh decent. "This should be interesting", thought Mrs H. A pale white Welsh man trying to convince a group of predominantly Māori teachers how they should do their job with special needs kids. The school got a lot of Pākehā specialists coming into the school. Mrs H was struggling to keep her open mind at this point, but was curious to see how this was going to pan out.

Stephen was introduced by the Principal and then was given to floor. Mrs H expected that Stephen was going to launch into the subject material through the use of a power point presentation, and spout off about how they should be doing it like many before him. “He was on a hiding to nothing”, though Mrs H – “these staff can be harsh on outsiders”. What happened next surprised Mrs H and the rest of her colleagues. Stephen stood up and after the usual pleasantries, started to tell a really powerful and moving story about a teacher’s struggles to work with kids with behaviour challenges in a school situated in a very poor community in an inner city suburb. The story was an account of a teacher’s week within the classroom with all the highs and lows that you would expect to occur if you knew what teaching was like in a school like that.

The story hit the mark with the group - everyone was completely focused on Stephen as he concluded. To the group the story matched their context almost perfectly. Mrs H got up out of her seat, picked up her bag of marking that she would finish in front of the TV that night, and headed out into the car park to get in her car. She actually felt good about herself and the efforts she was putting into her kids. Stephen both acknowledged her knowledge and professionalism, and contributed to her understanding. “Nice one Stephen”, she thought, “you came from a completely different country to me and the kids that I teach, but you treated me respectfully, and you made me feel that what I do counts in the greater scheme of education and teaching. “Let’s hope we get another one like him next time”, she thought to herself.

Another day at Anahera School comes to an end as Jim the caretaker locks the gates, lights a cigarette, and hops into his car to head home. Tomorrow morning he’ll be back again to open up at 7am sharp.

---ooOoo---

Chapter Seven: Discussion

This chapter synthesises and discusses all of the data of various kinds examined in this research project, to distil out the main themes, concepts and learnings, presented in the sections below as findings arising from my work in Anahera School.

While we know that teachers can make a substantial difference to the achievement of students (Alton-Lee, 2003), ethnic differences in educational achievement are largely explained by socioeconomic (Marie, Fergusson, & Boden, 2008). Research on the impact of poverty on children's development indicates that children's performance in school is more likely to be hindered when poverty and social deprivation is apparent in children's lives (Biddulph, Biddulph, & Biddulph, 2003; Child Poverty Action Group, 2014). When children attend schools which are widely different in social-class composition, the gaps between the achievements of schools mirrors closely the gaps between social classes in them (Walshaw, 2007). New Zealand research by Harker (2000) was consistent with many overseas studies and claimed that between 70-80% of the schools variance in achievement is due to the student mix, and 20-30% is attributable to the schools themselves.

The influence of poverty on a child's learning potential leaves children less well prepared for learning than children from a higher socioeconomic family before they start school, and during their schooling years (Boston & Chapple, 2014). Tunmer and Prochnow (2009) refer to the concept of *literate cultural capital* as a generic term referring to reading-related factors at school entry, which are a product of activities in the home that support early literacy development. In regards to the development of these skills, it is apparent that children from poor families receive fewer opportunities, modelling and resources in their early years to develop these skills than children in higher socioeconomic homes (Boston & Chapple, 2014).

The 'Long Brown Tail' and students of Anahera School

This project used a qualitative research paradigm to build detailed, rich understandings of the learning context at Anahera School, which serves a community severely affected by social disadvantage, characterised by high levels of unemployment, mental and physical health problems, crime and incarceration, and associated issues such as sub-standard housing and highly transient families. Anahera School represents several hundred schools in New

Zealand with high proportions of Māori and Pasifika students, in which teachers are struggling to support learners to achieve at the expected national standards. Therefore, the data presented above on Anahera School and its community paint a picture that is relevant to the lives of students who are represented by the Long Brown Tail, as well as their families, and those who work with them.

The very idea of a ‘tail’ invokes the question ‘tail of what?’ To interrogate the dominant metaphor of Māori (and Pasifika) education, namely the Long Brown Tail, is to reveal the thinking behind it as universalising and normative, essentially continuing the assimilating agenda of schooling for Māori laid down from the start (Stewart, 2014). The idea of the Māori student population as a problematic ‘tail’ on national educational performance is the dominant discourse of Māori education, which gives rise to key policy drivers. On the other hand, to simply ignore Māori underachievement is unethical and unacceptable. The existence and idea of the Long Brown Tail reflects Māori experiences over generations, including issues such as linguistic difference, the era of corporal punishment for speaking Māori, Native Schools, the Māori boarding schools, and many different Māori education projects and initiatives over the years around the country, including the most nationally significant of the modern era: Te Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori.

Concern about Māori achievement (as well as Pasifika and students with special needs) has prompted the development of specific education policy strategies at a national level to raise achievement amongst these groups (discussed above on page 38). The findings from this research project are important for New Zealand education officials and professionals involved in developing, implementing and monitoring these policies. Policy makers would benefit from deeper understandings of the lives and histories of the people at the centre of this thesis research. Without these understandings, there is the risk that policy work is based on a set of uncontested assumptions about the cultural, social, economic, historic and educational context that affect most Māori families.

The concern about education professionals operating from a basis of uncontested assumptions is one I understand from personal experience, because it happened to me as a white, middle class government official working with low-decile Māori schools. This experience catalysed an additional research focus on the insidious impact of deficit discourses on educational policy processes.

This research builds on and contributes to knowledge about the origins of child poverty in New Zealand, and the impact of poverty on Māori educational outcomes. The key learnings from the research project are discussed in the following sections.

Reducing the influence of poverty on children's learning

At the heart of the research project findings was the struggle by teachers at Anahera School to reduce the influence of poverty-related factors on children's learning potential, because the children who attended school came from a from a low socioeconomic community. Research shows that ethnic differences in educational achievement are largely, but not entirely, explained by socioeconomic factors. At Anahera School, these factors included:

- transience and non-attendance;
- hunger;
- lack of sleep;
- limited exposure to life outside their community;
- limited parent involvement; and
- dysfunction in the home.

These factors were identified as obstacles to student engagement and learning. Teacher practice and school systems, however, were also identified as obstacles to children's learning when they conveyed inconsistent learning expectations for students.

The detailed observations at Anahera School magnify and bring to life the wider problem of Māori student preparation for learning, in schools where poverty affects children's lives. Many Māori students struggle to make up the gap between themselves and the expected levels of skills and knowledge on school entry. Acknowledging this 'gap' might invite accusations of engaging in deficit theorising about the potential of these young people, but such an accusation would be a mistake. Of course these young people have the potential to succeed. This research project is focused on the deep issues that are apparent in the struggle at Anahera School. If we do not understand the struggle and the factors underpinning it, then how can we direct our efforts to overcoming the gap through policy and practice? Officials need a deep understanding of the nature of the problem at a micro-level before they can

attempt to address it at a macro-level, because in schools like Anahera, they are struggling on regardless, without significant gains.

At the micro-level, teachers at Anahera School were aware of the children's gap in preparedness to learn. From an academic point of view, this gap is described as the child's level of literate cultural capital, which is formed by their experiences and interactions with communicating, reading and writing activities in standard English, before and as they progress through the schooling system. These experiences form a set of skills, attitudes and emotions about reading and writing. A student with high levels of literate cultural capital has a head start in their ability to learn to read, write and converse. The inverse is also true: a child with low levels of literate cultural capital is at a disadvantage on school entry. This is the norm for students in low-socioeconomic communities, whether Māori, Pākehā or from any other ethnic group. Proportionately more Māori live in low-socioeconomic communities than Pākehā, which is a key reason for the gap in achievement when compared to Pākehā.

The teachers at Anahera School tried to address the lack of skills and resources that children displayed when they came to school. Examples of ways they did this were to: teach the students basic life skills at school; feed the students at school to reduce the influence of hunger; and develop school wide systems for managing behaviour. The school also constructed a fence to create a safer environment. The key question is: were these measures effective for accelerating student achievement? Furthermore, are they working at other low decile schools around the country? Current national achievement data would suggest that measures such as these are not having sufficient impact to overcome the socioeconomic and ethnic education gap.

The influence of poverty on children's learning is a massive problem that low-decile schools are struggling to counter, with the resources to which they have access. This leads to the question of whether schools should be expected to counter this problem on their own? Schools are one key place where the influence of low-socioeconomic conditions on a child's life becomes formally visible to the government and its systems, through such mechanisms as attendance and achievement data. This is a symptom of the problem that is identified in statistical measures as the Long Brown Tail. What sits underneath is a combination of factors in children's lives that a school will struggle to address. Schools will continue to try to address these social and health related deficits in children's lives because teachers almost

always care and want to make a difference. The presence of low-socioeconomic-related influences in children's lives creates complicated problems for the education system, which have no specific answers.

To address educational inequity, proportionately more operational funding is provided to schools situated in lower socioeconomic communities. As described on page 36 above, the decile system was implemented to promote more equal access to learning-related experiences, such as class trips, for children from poor communities by distributing more operational funding to low-decile schools. But decile funding does not overcome the imbalance of tangible and intangible resources for learning that impacts on students from poor communities. While we know that socioeconomic advantage or disadvantage has a powerful influence on children's preparation and access to learning, and a significant barrier to change for Māori within the education system, there is more to Māori underachievement than inequitable wealth distribution and the associated social and health implications. In the next section more covert factors related to teacher expectations are discussed.

Teacher expectations

Teachers and parents interviewed for this study were clear that they recognised potential in the children of Anahera School, and that they saw it as important to raise their own expectations of the children. A memorable quote from a junior classroom teacher captures this focus and strategy of the school at the time: 'We just raised our expectations.'

Expectations that teachers hold about their students are an important factor in student achievement. Unlike health-related factors such as unwashed clothes or weeping sores, 'teacher expectations' is an intangible element consisting of attitudes, assumptions and prior experiences of a teacher, and expressed through behaviours that facilitate or hinder student learning. The notion of teacher expectations and the factors that inform them are related to the mind-set of deficit attitudes and assumptions that were displayed in my first draft thesis submission. Teacher expectations are beliefs that one holds both consciously and subconsciously, which have significant impact on a one's understandings and judgements of others.

The research about teacher expectations can be considered in relation to effects on the potential educational achievement of students from low-socioeconomic communities, including Māori. Teachers often inaccurately judge students and form expectations about them on the basis of their cultural background, family wealth, or gender. Teachers therefore influence student achievement through their behaviour. This phenomenon is at the least unfair, and at its worst, displays prejudice against poor, indigenous, differently-abled, and other minority student groups, and its effects are cumulative. New Zealand research shows that teacher expectations are highest for Asian students, followed by Pākehā and Pasifika students, and lowest for Māori students, even when their achievement is equivalent to other students.

Teacher expectations can thus be regarded as a factor which acts either as a facilitator or as a barrier to the achievement of Māori within the education system. This understanding adds further explanation to the conditions observed in contexts such as Anahera School, where students are potentially struggling not only against poverty-related factors, but also against teacher attitudes concerning their potential to learn. The influence of teacher expectations is not only apparent in low-decile schools; it is equally influential in higher-decile schools as well.

Understanding the phenomenon of teacher expectations, and lessening the impact of this potentially damaging influence on Māori achievement, should be an important focus for education officials and leaders at a wider policy development and teacher education level. This is not just about ensuring that teachers possess knowledge and understanding of the importance of teacher expectations as part of their teaching practice: it should also be about helping teachers to find the time and space to reflect on their practice, and implement their learnings. My experience of exploring my own assumptions and thought patterns about education, schooling and Māori achievement leads me to believe that any process of self-analysis on the teacher's part will not come easily or automatically, and will need the support of critical friends to support the process (Pennington & Brock, 2012). To address the problem of teacher expectations warrants a formal, organised process of supervision, which is not currently a standard component of teacher practice in New Zealand, but is part of current ongoing research (Teacher Expectation Project, 2015).

As well as teachers, policy makers and education leaders also need to understand the

influence of teacher expectations, discussed in the next section as part of how education discourse works.

Discourses of deficit and teacher behaviour

Foucault's concept of discourse was highlighted in Chapter Two as a useful tool for understanding the complexities of Māori education. The process of developing unbalanced discourses of Māori education bears investigation, since these discourses play a potential role in changing what teachers believe about Māori achievement.

Discourses are continually informing and influencing our judgements and actions. Data gathered from Anahera School showed examples of how discourse works in this environment, in particular the beliefs about parental lack of support for their children's learning and overall progress, including their lack of presence in the school for events like parent interviews and school meetings. A theme in the data from Anahera School showed that some teachers had become resigned to the point of having little confidence in the parents to adequately prepare their children for school. This was a powerful and potentially damaging discourse amongst the staff, almost insinuating that some parents have stopped caring about their children's learning. Studies have shown, however, that teachers' negative impressions of parental support for their children's learning can be unfounded.

Teacher discourses about parents' lack of support for learning at Anahera School bear closer examination. For some parents in this community, school is only one priority, which may not rank as highly as others in their lives. It may well be the case that maintaining a roof over the family's head, putting food on the table, or coping with addiction consumes a great deal of effort for some people. It may be that parents trust the school to do their best for their children, and leave them to get on with the job in the belief that there is little more they could add to their children's academic development. Many of the parents in a community such as Anahera may be so intimidated by a school environment that they stay well away, particularly if there is an inter-generational history of educational failure. No clear answers are available, but assuming that 'parents don't care' about their children's education is far too simplistic, and serves to punish those in society who are already powerless.

The micro-level discourse about parent support for children's learning at Anahera School is mirrored at the macro-level by the national discourse of Māori achievement within the New Zealand education system. The origin of the discourses of Māori achievement in New Zealand is informed by the history of Māori in schools, underpinned by powerful Eurocentric beliefs about the relative inferiority of Māori culture, language and learning potential.

Today, such overt discourses of deficit about Māori achievement are likely to be challenged. As a society we have become more aware and less accepting of concepts of racism, prejudice and privilege compared with 150-200 years ago, when racist discourses about Māori held the status of 'truth' supported by Victorian science, creating an effect in society by which most Māori were alienated and marginalised within the New Zealand schooling system. Although discourses of deficit are more openly challenged today, however, they still exist and still exert influence.

Deficit discourses about Māori have also fuelled corresponding discourses among Pākehā that inform a sense of rightful advantage over Māori, seemingly evidenced by the obvious educational and life opportunities to which they had access. This is a local form of the concept of 'white privilege', discussed above on page 45. White people are overtly or covertly taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative and average. These beliefs play out in daily examples of white privilege, such as a white person being able to rent accommodation in an area they can afford and in which they want to live. Another example is that white people can turn on the television or turn to the front page of the paper and see people of their race widely represented.

Discourses of white privilege and deficit theory have consistently boosted Pākehā, and marginalised Māori, throughout New Zealand history. While discourses of deficit and prejudice may be more openly challenged today, this does not mean they no longer exist. Such discourses are more likely to be pushed below the surface of everyday conversation because it is not 'politically correct' to openly air such thinking. The influence of such discourses is still prevalent, however, particularly when applied to teacher expectations, as discussed above on page 138.

It is obvious that many Māori remain marginalised within the New Zealand education system today. As described above on page 23, achievement results show that Māori are over-

represented at low attainment levels in the New Zealand education system. The fact of low socioeconomic living conditions of many Māori families sustains this discourse. This situation has the potential to perpetuate and further reinforce the ideology in New Zealand that Māori cannot achieve as consistently and highly as other cultural groups.

Education officials and school leaders need to acknowledge the presence and power of deficit discourses of Māori education, as well as their connection to teacher expectations, and therefore student achievement. My experience shows this is not a subject that is discussed openly and freely at government or policy development level. Airing the notion of deficit discourses in the education community could be a sensitive and tricky task in the current neoliberal political climate, because it concerns intangible aspects of teacher practice, which are not easy to define, let alone measure. Such a discussion needs to be positioned within the context of the history of Māori education, with recognition of the influence of history on contemporary educational results. The importance of understanding the history of Māori education is explored in the next section.

The importance of understanding history

The history of Māori education forms a major topic of the Literature Review in Chapter Two above for two reasons. Firstly, at a general level, to understand the present, we must understand the past. Secondly, at a personal level, learning more about the history of Māori education was instrumental in challenging my assumptions about issues of racism, ethnicity, inequality, privilege, prejudice and power in education.

A so-called ‘egalitarian’ view would argue that all New Zealanders have equal access to the same education system, and equal opportunity to succeed: Māori just need to work harder. But this perspective is not supported by evidence relating to the influence of low socioeconomic conditions on children’s learning. Such views simply continue ‘the process of blaming the victim’ (Valencia, 2010, p. xiv) and have become, in effect, part of the deficit educational discourse. This is a very frustrating situation for educators who observe a cyclic, interconnected pattern of underachievement influenced by poverty, but exacerbated and perpetuated by deficit discourses and teacher behaviour. Deficit discourse is a complex problem that opposes the foundations of democratic thinking and is therefore an important

topic in relation to education for social justice in multicultural, economically stratified societies such as New Zealand.

It is 35 years since Matiu Rata spoke in Parliament about Māori never feeling more let down (see page 33 above). Applying his words to the community of Anahera School, and the existing cultural, educational and socioeconomic conditions there, one wonders how they would assess progress for Māori since that time. Indeed, social indices provide evidence that things have become much worse for Māori, since Rata shared his thoughts in 1979 (R. Walker, 1990, pp. 227-228).

A critical understanding of this history is important for education officials and national education leaders. Many education professionals (and others) have undergone training about the Treaty at Waitangi, but I believe educators need more knowledge than they are currently accessing in order to gain a deep understanding of the issues impacting on Māori achievement. Education officials, leaders and teachers should be exposed to knowledge about the history of Māori education, the influence of poverty, teacher expectations and the power of discourse to allow them to form a deep, rounded perspective on the challenges and issues for Māori within the education system.

Māori ethnicity and resistance to disadvantage

The Kapa Haka photograph in the foyer of Anahera School captures a strong sense of Māori pride on the part of the students: a moment when it feels good to be Māori, to be representing their school, and to be successful. Kapa Haka, the Immersion Unit, and the inclusion of Māori culture, language, and people in the learning programme went some small way towards acknowledging the birthright of the students as Māori: a way of compensating for the history of monocultural alienation suffered by generations of Māori in the education system, and the resulting social disadvantage that these children struggled against every day. This is the deeper meaning and true value of culturally responsive pedagogy (Bishop, O'Sullivan, & Berryman, 2010).

Current policy: tweaking or aiming for sustainable change?

Education policy is clearly an important factor to consider in seeking understanding as to why the system has not delivered for Māori, and another area of knowledge required by education officials, leaders and teachers. Under the current neoliberal mode of operation in New Zealand government, the reason for student under-performance focuses on teacher practice and school systems (see page 42 above). This is a convenient strategy that distracts emphasis from the major contributing reason why some students are not doing as well as others: that is, the influence of poverty. Teacher practice seems within reach and ‘fixable’ for the governments on a three-year political cycle, whereas the influence of poverty is a much bigger problem to tackle, requiring an injection of funding that New Zealand may not be able to sustain in the longer term.

While teachers clearly do influence student achievement (see page 43 above), Māori student underachievement has been a longstanding problem facing New Zealand education, and evidence shows that it is going to take more than a single ‘silver bullet’ solution. The solution must be multi-faceted, drawing on a range of concepts to inform the way forward. To focus on changes in classrooms without changing the fundamental living conditions that support children within the system is merely ‘tweaking’ the education system. It is futile to expect these adjustments to make a significant difference to levels of Māori achievement, unless the socioeconomic conditions in which they live are also addressed.

As discussed on page 39 above, *Ka Hikitia* is the Ministry of Education’s strategy to change how the education system performs for Māori students to achieve education success. *Ka Hikitia* states:

Every Māori student has the potential to make a valuable social, cultural and economic contribution to the well-being of their whanau, hapū and iwi and community and to New Zealand as a whole. A core principle of *Ka Hikitia* – accelerating success 2013-2017 is that all Māori students have the potential to excel and be successful (p.15)

Ka Hikitia is valuable in its current form, and as a policy strategy it is evolving, with the second iteration currently in force at the time of writing. In the socially and politically acceptable terms in which it is written, however, it does not explicitly address the major underlying reasons why many Māori students are achieving poorly in school. Furthermore *Ka Hikitia* does not address the overt deficit discourses that are a pervasive influence on

Pākehā thinking about Māori achievement throughout the New Zealand education system. Such discourses manifest in teachers' often inaccurate judgements of students when they form expectations about their potential on the basis of their cultural background, family wealth, or gender. Added to this, Ka Hikitia does not address the notion of 'white privilege' as discussed above on page 45. Pākehā educators are in the main unconscious or unaware of the influence of white privilege as an alienating effect on Māori through dominant cultural assumptions. The notions of deficit discourse and white privilege are 'prickly' issues within mainstream society that are not spoken about or documented openly, because they are politically and socially sensitive for Pākehā to engage with, and lead Pākehā to feel uncomfortable about their place in society.

Addressing major issues like the influence of poverty on Māori achievement, deficit discourse and white privilege need to be brought out into the open, otherwise we are once again merely 'tweaking' a system that will otherwise fail to address the foundational problems that underpin it. This point is reinforced by the fact that Māori (and Pasifika) students continue to dominate the low end of education statistics in New Zealand.

Two ideas are offered below as recommendations for the amelioration of Māori educational underachievement. One option focuses on addressing the intangible influence of discourse through teacher expectations. The other option focuses on managing the tangible effects of impoverished living conditions on students.

Difficult learning for education professionals

Challenging people's mind-sets on topics such as prejudice and privilege within education is likely to be uncomfortable for some. Breaking down the barriers to help teachers overcome stereotypes of ethnicity, culture, language and gender is essential to becoming high expectation teachers, however, and thereby enabling students to make accelerated progress from a platform of more equal opportunity. An action-based solution would be to initiate a system of learning experiences through structured professional learning and development (PLD) for school staff, education officials, and teacher education providers.

While offering PLD may sound like a simplistic solution to address a very complex problem, I believe there is an opportunity and a method to engage education professionals in

conversations and learning about these sensitive issues. While content is important in any PLD related experience, I believe it is the way the PLD is facilitated that is key to its effectiveness in reaching the hearts and minds of those involved. In my experience a lot of PLD experiences that are implemented across big organisations are run in conference style format, where information is delivered to large groups of people over a specific time frame of one - two days. While I understand the logistical and financial reasons for this, I believe the process of learning cultural responsiveness needs to be structured in a different way.

As an experienced facilitator of education based professional learning groups I have witnessed many group conversations commence and evolve around 'prickly' issues like privilege and prejudice within education. The conversations can take place safely and sensitively with both Pakeha and Māori around the table. This work is effective when a culture of trust is built amongst those involved, and when the group has an opportunity to meet multiple times to enable a positive group culture to develop under the guidance of an experienced facilitator. I have also found that small group settings of 8-12 people are best to achieve such a culture.

I have found that groups such as this have to be given licence to guide their own learning pathways and generate their own plans to address their areas of weakness. Ownership of the learning process seems to lead to ongoing willingness to maintain the conversation, even when assumptions are challenged. This type of format could be likened to a 'focus group' rather than a traditional conference format. In a conference type format the end point is largely pre-ordained by specific subject material. In a focus group type environment the point where the group ends up may be far less predictable as the method for learning is underpinned by inquiry based model.

While my doctoral study has generated a context where I gained access to learning cultural responsiveness as a product of the process and the experience, a planned and targeted PLD format like that described above would provide far more likelihood of reaching a wider audience with this subject material. While financial resources may be a barrier to this type of PLD method, new thinking and a different approach is required now to change the context around learning cultural responsiveness in the New Zealand education context otherwise we risk doing the same as what we have always done – which has not produced the results that we need. As discussed on page 139, ongoing structured supervision to support initial

learning is also recommended. To take this idea a step further, this form of PLD could be a pre-requisite of initial teacher education and on-going school and agency-based learning to challenge beliefs and unsettle thinking around Māori students' potential to achieve, in particular those from low-decile communities.

School as a social service hub

In accordance with the New Zealand Education Act 1989, children between the ages of 6 and 16 are required to attend school, with most children attending government-funded schools. The legalities of school attendance provide an opportunity to support the emotional, social and physical well-being of the community, because schools by default are social hubs of the community. Schools have been the centre of many communities' events and activities for many years. But what is being suggesting here is that, in order to address the influence of low socioeconomic living conditions, a school could take a more active and obvious role as a social service hub in the community, and be supported in so doing.

School effectiveness and improvement research identifies that some teachers, principals and whole school systems do defy the odds, reducing or eliminating the achievement gap for children from low socioeconomic communities (Walshaw, 2007). Successful schools make socio-cultural factors central to the operation of the school by compensating for children's initial social disadvantage, replicating in the school the services that middle-class children get in and around their homes (Harker & O'Neill, 2004). Studies on schools that have beaten the odds indicate that their approach is multi-faceted. There is typically an involvement of parents, the provision of homework centres and health facilities on campus, free summer schools, and help in the classroom from teacher aides or parents (Murnane & Levy, 1996).

The problem with attempts by schools to negate the influence of poverty-related factors on children's learning is that the problem feels too big and too expensive to 'fix' and becomes overwhelming. What do we start with? Providing more employment? Raising the standard of housing? Cash injections? Linking social welfare payments to school attendance? Compulsory school attendance until 18 years of age? None of these solutions is easily within reach, either fiscally or politically. There is a sense that governments have been unable to find solutions, and, as discussed earlier, have resorted to relatively minor policy tweaks in attempts to be seen to be making efforts to improve things.

A practical and sustainable central government policy shift would be to empower local health and social service providers to partner with schools to provide accessible services to parents and caregivers as they visit the school. This type of situation would provide contextually relevant services to communities and remove barriers of distance that families face in accessing these services elsewhere. Referrals would be based in strong local relationship pathways, and progress for the family could be tracked alongside educational record-keeping at the school.

An example of a school that has adopted a social service hub type of arrangement is Victory School in Nelson. Agencies that need to build ties with the people of Victory (a suburb in the city of Nelson) base themselves at the school, with assigned meeting rooms and offices, including a community health centre. The school also houses facilities that it shares with the public, including a community garden, sports areas and equipment. The school has been described as the ‘hub around which Victory’s renaissance revolves’ (Collett, 2010, p. 1).

The problem of child poverty and its influence on children’s learning potential is too large to be left to schools and teachers to tackle in isolation. Single government ministries also seem incapable of making a substantive difference working alone. Maybe it is time for a government ‘super ministry’ that pulls together the four key government priorities of health, education, social service and justice, to start to share resources and work more responsively to support families, collectively addressing the blight poverty places over so many lives.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This research has engaged with some of the most difficult issues within New Zealand education and wider New Zealand society today. Māori underachievement, the related issue of child poverty and deficit discourse influencing teacher expectations are significant problems. This thesis has investigated the connections between educational success, Māori ethnicity and child poverty, and how these connections are understood by teachers and education officials who work in low-decile schools.

My experience as a doctoral candidate has been a period of personal growth more powerful and valuable than any academic award can recognise. The journey has radically changed my view of the notions of white privilege, power, ethnicity, race and gender. While of immense personal value, the journey has not been straight forward or linear. What I understood of the doctoral journey prior to starting resembled a step-by-step process from beginning to completion. My doctoral journey certainly has not followed a methodical process like this. As Jerry Wellington (2010) cited in Rath & Mutch (2014) notes, the doctoral dissertation process is often described “like a flow chart than perhaps a truer portrayal such as a spider’s web” (p. 134). I have found comfort in the words of Peter O'Connor (2014): “the best doctorates start in an awful muddle...The thesis then gradually takes shape through talking, reading, and in the act of writing” (p. 70).

Synopsis of the thesis

Chapter One introduces the research topic, question and project in the context of key themes in Māori education today. Chapter One also begins to document personal experiences of working with Māori in education, presenting a ‘before’ superficial understanding of Māori education, and learning culturally responsive ways of addressing practice, pedagogy and methodology. Chapter Two investigates through the literature contemporary conditions of Māori education, and how these came about through the history of Māori education under European colonisation. Chapter Two also describes and discusses key concepts including discourse, policy and ethnicity for exploring and understanding child poverty and Māori achievement in the context of a neoliberal education system in New Zealand today. This

chapter highlights the impact of wider forces, including history, economics and discourse, on the contemporary conditions in low-decile schools.

Chapter Three describes how the research project proceeded under three main headings: theoretical framework, study design, and ethical considerations in relation to working with the teachers, students and whānau members of the research school. Chapters Four and Five feature the voices of the research participants in reporting the empirical data collected through interviews and observations. These data are organised by themes and divided between what happened at school in Chapter Four, and engaging with the community in Chapter Five.

Chapter Six completes the presentation of the story of Anahera School in two ways: first with a factual description of Anahera School and its community; and secondly through a series of fictionalised narrative vignettes. Taken together, these two accounts provide a rich engaging picture of daily life in the school.

Chapter Seven presents data that addresses the second part of the research question using auto-ethnographic and narrative approaches. Chapter Eight critically synthesises and summarises the key findings that address both parts of the research question.

Synopsis of the findings

The key finding of this research project relates to the established understanding of the powerful influence of discourse on people's uncontested assumptions that they use to form judgements of other people: why they do what they do; what they should do; and whether they are even capable of doing it in the first place. This phenomenon was observed and experienced many times throughout this project: from Pope's 19th-century statement that Māori needed to adopt European ways in order to become law-abiding citizens; to the literature showing that Māori achievement today is influenced by teachers' deficit thinking through teacher expectations; to the evidence that teachers at Anahera School tended to blame parents for their children's poor educational outcomes. My own experiences during this doctoral journey attest to the difficult territory one occupies when making claims to truth based on uncontested assumptions. This suggests that Pākehā know much less than they think they know about Māori, and Māori education, for the stories we have constructed for

ourselves, and those that have been constructed for us have become our reality, and that reality is often only a partial truth. This realisation is particularly relevant to Māori achievement in New Zealand.

Another key finding in this research project supports the established understanding that Māori student achievement in school is formed by many complex layers of interlocking tangible and intangible influences. Teachers and the education system are important, but relatively minor players in the greater scheme of why Māori students are struggling to achieve to the same levels as other students. This is why the story of Anahera School is one of a daily struggle by teachers in their quest to uplift their students' achievement. The school's influence does not outweigh the influence of the home and community context, poverty-related factors, and the influence of historically-powerful discourses that have marginalised Māori within education from the start. These factors dispel the widely-held egalitarian myth that all New Zealand citizens operate off a level playing field of opportunity for success in life. It also tells a story of why recent government policy changes have not turned the tide of Māori underachievement: it is because such policies are almost solely focused on education in isolation, rather than viewing education as part of an integrated, whole-of-government response.

In order to challenge their own or others' deficit discourses about student potential, and to inform future decision-making, teachers and education officials need a deeper understanding of the educational context they work in, and for which they are developing policy. These groups of people need more adequate understandings of the history of Māori in education and in society generally, and how this history impacts on the present. They need to understand the dynamics of child poverty and the daily struggle for children and teachers to overcome the disadvantages faced by children from low socioeconomic communities, which impede their attainment of national literacy and numeracy expectations.

This thesis project has demonstrated the efficacy of autoethnographic and narrative approaches for exploring the uncontested assumptions held by Pākehā educators and education officials, and hence uncovering the relationships between deficit discourses of Māori education, teachers' expectation, and Māori underachievement. The value of these self-reflective approaches as tools for PLD designed to encourage culturally responsive practice is a significant contribution made by the findings of this thesis.

Above all, teachers and education officials need the courage, the mandate and the resources to apply evidence-based solutions to the problem. Schools do make a difference to the influence of low socioeconomic factors when they compensate for children's social disadvantages by replicating services that middle-class children get in and around their homes, and by implementing a multifaceted approach. My experience suggests schools will rise to this challenge, but should not feel they have to operate on their own in so doing. This is a whole-of-community, whole-of-government responsibility, and schools are an obvious and accessible hub where this response can be coordinated.

Implications for further research

This thesis reports on an opportunity where I was able to drill down into the everyday details of life in an impoverished school community, in order to view the inter-personal dynamics and the external factors that affected the school. Some community members were interviewed during the data gathering process, but all were Board of Trustees members, so their ability to speak freely about the school was compromised. Further research could seek more information on the community's perspectives on school issues.

One theme found in the interview data was that some teachers held deficit views of many of the school's parents, and their willingness and/or ability to support their children's learning and development. Seeking the views of low-decile school communities about their engagement (or lack of) in schools would be helpful in the ongoing efforts to raise Māori achievement, and may provide interesting comparisons to views held by school staff. I expect, however, that it might be difficult to obtain and record the views of a balanced cross-section of people in a community such as that of Anahera School, because some community members could be highly suspicious of a researcher asking questions about their lives. These dynamics would need to be addressed, were such a project to be considered.

Another key theme in this research on which further research is needed is teacher expectations, and their influence on student achievement, particularly for Māori and Pasifika students and those from low-decile communities. How do teacher expectations form, before, during and after initial teacher education? Do newly-qualified teachers bring expectations with them, as accumulations of cultural capital when they enter training, or are expectations formed after teachers have entered the profession as an employee of a school? Addressing

these questions may support improvements in initial or in-service teacher education that helps teachers understand and therefore challenge why and how they hold these personal perceptions of student capabilities.

Limitations of the research

This research project was limited to a focus on only one school setting. This means that the findings may not generalise to other schools. Comparative data from other schools near Anahera School, or with similar characteristics, could be used to test the applicability of the findings. Many decile one schools in New Zealand are experiencing similar struggles to those described at Anahera School, and it is likely that the findings of this study will apply more widely.

As noted above, this study mainly recruited participants from the school staff and students, which meant that the ‘community voice’ is not as strongly represented in the data and findings.

Final thoughts

The completion of this thesis has been a struggle for me personally. The twists and turns of life played their part in dictating the direction of my research journey. I entered this process by choice, however, and I knew I always had the option to withdraw, should I really feel I needed to. Indeed, I seriously considered giving up my doctoral studies on a number of occasions, over the years since my first enrolment in 2007. Struggle of various kinds is also a theme for the students of Anahera School in their learning journeys. The difference between their journey and mine is that the law dictates they must attend school: they do not have the option to quit their studies.

In many ways, the students of Anahera School did well to achieve what they did. This may not mean that they met national expectations in that they achieved, but considering what they had to overcome to even get to school in the first place at times, I think many of them did well, as did their teachers. This does not make their struggle right or fair (tika) because they have to negotiate challenges in their lives that my children, for example, do not. It means

however that they overcame challenges to achieve what they did, and they deserve recognition for this.

My own children will probably do reasonably well at school, which in some ways reassures me, but in other ways troubles me. By virtue of the fact that they were born into a home with resources and a high level of literate cultural capital means that at minimum, my children are very likely to learn to read, write and do sums well enough to cope with the academic demands of their journey through the education system. Hopefully they will also be equipped with enough resilience to cope with life's social demands. While this process happens and replicates itself from prior generations within my family, there is also clearly a process of replication occurring in communities like that of Anahera School – but with different outcomes. History shows that many of them will leave school by the age of 16, and very few will qualify for university.

Is this fair? Of course not. But it reflects the reality of our society. Should all New Zealanders have the opportunity to enrich their lives with rewarding career options after school? Of course they should. Even though there is a commonly-held view in New Zealand that we all have equal opportunities to achieve and succeed, in reality we don't. The sooner there is general recognition of this, the sooner we may get to a place of addressing inequality of educational provision. While we hold on to the egalitarian notion of equal opportunity, we delude ourselves that hard work is the determiner of who succeeds, who becomes wealthy, and who does not.

At a deeper level still, perhaps it is the way we have come to measure ourselves within the education system or in society in general – by those who have more, and those who don't have as much. No one can deny that certain accomplishments or possessions in life are useful and beneficial, like the ability to read, or having the love and care of family, but apart from this, have our comparisons with others become too much of a determiner of success or failure, a dominant discourse in our society? These are perhaps investigations to pursue at a later date.

Glossary of Māori words

Definitions as used in this thesis, with reference to *Te Aka Māori-English online dictionary* by John Moorfield (see www.Māoridictionary.co.nz).

Anahera: angel

Hapū: sub-tribal kinship grouping

Hongi: to press noses, part of pōwhiri ceremony

Hui: meeting, to meet

Iwi: tribal kinship grouping

Ka Hikitia: title of national policy strategy to raise Māori achievement

Kai: food, meal

Kapa haka: Māori cultural performance group

Karakia: prayer, pray

Kaumātua: elder or elderly man of status within the *whānau*

Kaupapa Māori: Māori philosophy, Māori-centred and led approach or cause

Kohanga Reo: Māori language preschool

Kōrero: to speak, speech

Kura: school

Manaakitanga: hospitality, generosity

Māori: indigenous people of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Matua: father, uncle, parent

Maunga: mountain

Mokopuna: grandchildren

Ngā: the (plural)

Nō hea koe?: where are you from? (lit. where do you belong to?)

Pākehā: English, European

Pepeha: oral text of identity

Pōwhiri: ritual of encounter, welcome ceremony

Reo: language, voice

Tapu: sacred, restricted

Te: the (singular)

Tika: correct, ethical, the basis of tikanga

Tikanga: correct procedure, customs

Tūpuna: ancestors

Waka: canoe

Waiata: song, to sing

Wairua: spirit, soul

Wairuatanga: spirituality, aspects related to wairua

Whaea: mother, aunt

Whakairo: carve, carving

Whakapapa: genealogy

Whakawhitiwhiti: exchange, used in relation to discussion of ideas

Whānau: extended family group

Whanaungatanga: making connections with others through whakapapa and tikanga

Whenua: land

Appendices

Appendix A. Participant Information Sheet: Board of Trustee / Parent	158
Appendix B. Participant Information Sheet: Teachers and support staff	161
Appendix C. Participant Consent Form	164
Appendix D. Student Participant Information Sheet and Assent Form	165
Appendix E. Semi-structured interview schedule	166

Appendix A: Interview Participant Information Sheet: BOT / Parent

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (Board of Trustees / Parent)

Project title:

Influencing School Climate through School Wide Behaviour Intervention

Name:

Tim Andersen

Researcher introduction

My name is Tim Andersen. I am a student enrolled in the Doctor of Education course at the Faculty of Education, University of Auckland. I currently work for the Ministry of Education – Special Education as a Special Education Advisor.

Project description and invitation

I am writing to invite you to take part in a study into ways to influence school climate through school wide behaviour intervention in the [Name] schooling context. I would particularly like to work with a schooling community in [Name] to gain a greater understanding of the area of investigation. I would like to know more about the impact that the school climate can have on children's behaviour and learning and the cultural and contextual factors that are important in implementing a school wide behaviour approach. I am interested in the factors that influence teachers' views and interpretations of problem behaviour, and the influences that promote quality student - teacher interactions.

I am inviting you as a parent of (name) school because your schooling community reflects the cultural and contextual values that are typical of many schools within the [Name] schooling community.

The Principal and Board of Trustees of this school has given assurance that participation in this project will not have any effect on your relationship with the school or the grades of any student. Your openness and honesty are the major attributes requires of you as a participant.

Duration of Research Project:

The duration of the research project is from 27/04/2009 to 01/04/2010, or four full primary school terms.

Project Procedures

The research project will focus on two areas of study:

- Key historical events that have occurred in the school in the past 3 years relating to the creation of the current climate in the school
- The events surrounding the development of the school wide approach to behaviour and learning, and its influence on the school climate, as it evolves from its current state, through the action research process.

The method involved in conducting this part of the study requires willing participants to become involved in an interview with myself. This interview will take approximately 40 – 50 minutes, and will take place in a location of your choice. The sorts of questions I will ask you include:

- What is your perception or viewpoint of the climate that exists within (name) school?
- What features of the school community do you think might influence the (name) school climate? (Positive / negative)
- What things can you think of that (name) school have put in place to positively influence the school climate?
- How much of a factor is the teacher's role in the development and maintenance of a positive and safe school climate?

As well as interviews, other data gathering processes in the research project include:

- Observations of school wide routines and systems as children enter and exit the school at the beginning and end of the day, in the playground during break and lunch time, and during whole school settings (e.g. assemblies and concerts). Individual child and teacher names will not be recorded in field notes during these observations.
- Document Analysis of school records and policy documents
- A research Journal of my personal reflections

Should you have any questions regarding your potential involvement in the study please do not hesitate to contact me. Should you agree to participate you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Information storage/retention/destruction/future use

If you agree, the interview will be digitally recorded and later transcribed into a written format. If you ask for it we will send you a copy of the transcript. If on reading the transcript you wish to take out, add, or change anything you will be able to do so by contacting me on the numbers listed at the end of this letter, provided that you do this before 11/04/10.

Data gathered from focus groups will be stored in written and digital form. Field notes will be stored on paper and electronic data from audio recordings will be stored on an external hard drive, with back up copies made on external flash drives.

All data gathered in this research project will be stored in a locked cabinet at The University of Auckland – [Name] campus. The data will continue to be stored at The University of Auckland – [Name] campus for a period of 6 years after the conclusion of the research project on 01/04/2010. After this time all data stored on paper will be shredded, and electronic data will be deleted in the presence of a witness from the University of Auckland (i.e. supervisor or Head of Department).

Recorded interviews will not be shared with third parties with the exception of a person who transcribes the interviews. This person will have signed a confidentiality agreement prior to assisting with this task. Participants will be offered the opportunity to receive a digital copy of the focus group and / or receive a full copy of the interview or focus group transcript.

Right to Withdraw from Participation

All participants have the right to withdraw from participation in the research project at any time. Participants will be given the right to withdraw any data that they have provided from the research project up to 11.04.10.

Should you experience any psychological discomfort or disquiet as a consequence of your participation in the interviews, support will be made available. In the first instance please contact the *Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour – Māori*, who works in your school.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Following transcription and your approval of the transcript as an accurate record all names and identifying data will be removed. The school or individual participants will not be identified in the final thesis or any final reports or publications unless prior consent has been given. However, because this research project involves focus groups, interviews with small numbers of individuals, and interviews with well-known members of the community, confidentiality with respect to the school or participant's identity cannot always be guaranteed. A copy of the thesis will be delivered to your school on completion as well as an oral presentation(s) of findings to school community members.

Contact Details and Approval Wording

If you wish to contact, my supervisor, the Head of Department at the Faculty of Education, or myself in regard to any aspect of this research project, the contact details are listed below:

Researcher:

Tim Andersen
Ministry of Education – Special Education



Email: tim.andersen@minedu.govt.nz

Main supervisor:

Dr Margie Hohepa
Senior Lecturer



[REDACTED]
Email: m.hohepa@auckland.ac.nz

HOD – Faculty of Education:
Dr Colleen McMurphy-Pilkington

[REDACTED]

Auckland
New Zealand

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 extn. 83711.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 09 April 2009 for (3) years, Reference Number 2009 /20

Appendix B. Interview Participant Information Sheet: Teachers & support staff

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (Teacher and Support Staff - Interview)

Project title:

Influencing School Climate through School Wide Behaviour Intervention

Name:

Tim Andersen

Researcher introduction

My name is Tim Andersen. I am a student enrolled in the Doctor of Education course at the Faculty of Education, University of Auckland. I currently work for the Ministry of Education – Special Education as a Special Education Advisor.

Project description and invitation

I am writing to invite you to take part in a study into ways to influence school climate through school wide behaviour intervention in the [Name] schooling context. I would particularly like to work with a schooling community in [Name] to gain a greater understanding of the area of investigation. I would like to know more about the impact that the school climate can have on children's behaviour and learning and the cultural and contextual factors that are important in implementing a school wide behaviour approach. I am interested in the factors that influence teachers' views and interpretations of problem behaviour, and the influences that promote quality student - teacher interactions.

I am inviting you as a teacher at (name) school because your schooling community reflects the cultural and contextual values that are typical of many schools within the [Name] schooling community.

The Principal and Board of Trustees of this school has given assurance that participation in this project will not have any effect on employment relationships with the school. Your openness and honesty are the major attributes requires of you as a participant.

Duration of Research Project:

The duration of the research project is from 27/04/2009 to 01/04/2010, or four full primary school terms.

Project Procedures

The research project will focus on two areas of study:

- Key historical events that have occurred in the school in the past 3 years relating to the creation of the current climate in the school
- The events surrounding the development of the school wide approach to behaviour and learning, and its influence on the school climate, as it evolves from its current state, through the action research process.

The method involved in conducting this part of the study requires willing participants to become involved in an interview with myself. This interview will take approximately 40 – 50 minutes, and will take place in a location of your choice. The sorts of questions I will ask you include:

- What is your perception or viewpoint of the climate that exists within (name) school?
- What features of the school community do you think might influence the (name) school climate? (Positive / negative)
- What things can you think of that (name) school have put in place to positively influence the school climate?
- How much of a factor is the teacher's role in the development and maintenance of a positive and safe school climate?

As well as interviews, other data gathering processes in the research project include:

- Observations of school wide routines and systems as children enter and exit the school at the beginning and end of the day, in the playground during break and lunch time, and during whole school settings (e.g. assemblies and concerts). Individual child and teacher names will not be recorded in field notes during these observations.
- Document Analysis of school records and policy documents
- A research Journal of my personal reflections

Should you have any questions regarding your potential involvement in the study please do not hesitate to contact me. Should you agree to participate you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Data storage/retention/destruction/future use

If you agree, the interview will be digitally recorded and later transcribed into a written format. If you ask for it we will send you a copy of the transcript. If on reading the transcript you wish to take out, add, or change anything you will be able to do so by contacting me on the numbers listed at the end of this letter, provided that you do this before 11/04/10.

Data gathered from focus groups will be stored in written and digital form. Field notes will be stored on paper and electronic data from audio recordings will be stored on an external hard drive, with back up copies made on external flash drives.

All data gathered in this research project will be stored in a locked cabinet at The University of Auckland – [Name] campus. The data will continue to be stored at The University of Auckland – [Name] campus for a period of 6 years after the conclusion of the research project on 01/04/2010. After this time all data stored on paper will be shredded, and electronic data will be deleted in the presence of a witness from the University of Auckland (i.e. supervisor or Head of Department).

Recorded interviews will not be shared with third parties with the exception of a person who transcribes the interviews. This person will have signed a confidentiality agreement prior to assisting with this task. Participants will be offered the opportunity to receive a digital copy of the focus group and / or receive a full copy of the interview or focus group transcript.

Right to Withdraw from Participation

All participants have the right to withdraw from participation in the research project at any time. Participants will be given the right to withdraw any data that they have provided from the research project up to 11.04.10.

Should you experience any psychological discomfort or disquiet as a consequence of your participation in the interviews, support will be made available. In the first instance please contact the *Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour – Māori*, who works in your school.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Following transcription and your approval of the transcript as an accurate record all names and identifying data will be removed. The school or individual participants will not be identified in the final thesis or any final reports or publications unless prior consent has been given. However, because this research project involves focus groups, interviews with small numbers of individuals, and interviews with well-known members of the community, confidentiality with respect to the school or participant's identity cannot always be guaranteed. A copy of the thesis will be delivered to your school on completion as well as an oral presentation(s) of findings to school community members.

Contact Details and Approval Wording

If you wish to contact, my supervisor, the Head of Department at the Faculty of Education, or myself in regard to any aspect of this research project, the contact details are listed below:

Researcher:

Tim Andersen
Ministry of Education – Special Education



Email: tim.andersen@minedu.govt.nz

Main supervisor:

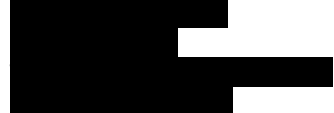
Dr Margie Hohepa
Senior Lecturer
University of Auckland



Email: m.hohepa@auckland.ac.nz

HOD – Faculty of Education:

Dr Colleen McMurchy-Pilkington



Auckland
New Zealand

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 extn. 83711.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 09 April 2009 for (3) years, Reference Number 2009 /20

Appendix C. Interview Consent Form

CONSENT FORM (Parent / Guardian - Interview)

THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF 6 YEARS

Project title:

Influencing School Climate through School Wide Behaviour Intervention

Name of Researcher:

Tim Andersen

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and have understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I understand that the Principal and Board of Trustees have given assurance that my choice to participate in this research project will not affect my relationship with the school or the grades of any student.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time without having to give a reason, and that I can also ask for the information I have provided to be withdrawn from the study up until 11/04/10.
- I understand that individual child and teacher names will not be recorded in field notes during observations of school wide routines and systems.
- I understand that should I experience any psychological discomfort or disquiet as a consequence of my participation in the interviews, support will be made available. In the first instance I should contact the *Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour – Māori*.
- I understand that I am able to view and make changes to transcripts of my interviews up until 11/04/10.
- I agree to be digitally recorded.
- I understand that a third party who has signed a confidentiality agreement will transcribe the digital recordings.
- I understand that data will be kept for 6 years, after which they will be destroyed.
- I understand that there will be a presentation of findings and that a copy of the completed thesis will be held at the school.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE
ON 09 APRIL 2009 FOR (3) YEARS. REFERENCE NUMBER 2009 /20

Appendix D. Student Participant Information Sheet and Assent Form

ASSENT FORM

(Student - under 16 Years of age - Interview)

THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF 6 YEARS

Project title:

Influencing School Climate through School Wide Behaviour Intervention

Name of Researcher:

Tim Andersen

I have been told what this project is about and was able to ask questions so I understood it.

I know that I have been asked to be involved in an interview and this has been explained to me.

I know that no-one will know what I say to the researchers in the interview. I also know that I can drop out of the interview at anytime if I want to.

I know that my choice to participate in this research project or not will not affect my grades and marks in my school work.

I know that if I experience any discomfort because of my participation in the interviews, my parent / guardian can get some help for me.

I agree to being digitally recorded.

Name: _____

School: _____

Signature _____

Date: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE
ON 09 APRIL 2009 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 2009 /20

Appendix E. Semi-structured interview schedule

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - TEACHER

Project title:

Influencing School Climate through School Wide Behaviour Intervention

Name of Researcher:

Tim Andersen

Introductory Comments:

Thank you for being willing to take part in this interview. I really appreciate you giving up your time. Can I first of all assure you that you will remain completely anonymous and no records of the interview will be kept with your name on it.

I have an interest in understanding how schools become safe and positive places for children to learn in. Sometimes children's behaviour prevents the school from being as safe and positive as it could be.

I am especially interested in the environment or climate within the school that influences children's behaviours and learning experiences, and how this climate itself is influenced. A school climate is made up of the attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms that underlie the way teachers teach, the level of academic achievement, and the operation of a school. Research shows that the climate in a school has a significant influence on how children behave and learn.

I am interested in the journey that you as a school have been on in the last 3 and your attempts and strategies to create the climate that currently exists in your school.

Before we start – are you happy with the word *climate* that I have used to describe the way the school works and operates and feels (yes / no) – or do you want to discuss it some more (yes / no - more)?

Key Questions

1) Can I first ask you to describe the climate that exists within the school?

Prompts:

- a) Behaviour
- b) Relationships
- c) Discipline
- d) Learning
- e) Decision making
- f) Management
- g) Parents
- h) Community

Key Question:

2) What cultural and contextual features of your school community are significant in influencing your school climate? (Positive / negative)

Prompts:

- a) Socioeconomic
- b) Kaupapa Māori philosophy
- c) Gang culture
- d) Crime
- e) Key individuals (positive and negative)
- f) External supports
- g) Religion
- h) Substance abuse

Key question:

3) What systems or strategies can you think of that you as a school have put in place to positively influence your school climate?

Prompts

- a) Behaviour management
- b) Learning support
- c) Parental involvement
- d) Teaching practice
- e) Leadership
- f) Staffing
- g) Reward / consequence
- h) Professional development

Key Question:

4) Of the systems that you have discussed above – which ones do you think are specifically unique to, and inclusive of your own school?

Prompts

- a) Reasons for answer / why)
- b) [Name] schooling community

Key Question:

5) What is the significance of the teacher's role in the development and maintenance of a positive and safe school climate?

Prompts

- a) Skill
- b) Experience
- c) Relationship
- d) Empathy / understanding
- e) Behavioural triggers / antecedents
- f) Learning
- g) Achievement

Key Question:

6) I often hear children blamed for their use of negative or anti-social behaviour in school – what is your response to this statement?

- a) Teacher / student relationship
- b) Home life
- c) Learning / achievement
- d) Behavioural expectations
- e) Reward consequence
- f) Antecedents

Key Question:

7) We often hear the statement – 'going forward'. In going forward, what do you think are, or should be the next steps in the journey for you as a school to make your school climate a better one for students and teachers to work within?

Prompts:

- a) Changes
- b) Additions
- c) Removal
- d) Attitude (staff, students, parents)
- e) Professional development
- f) Parental input

Closing Comments

That was the final question. Thank you very much for helping me and giving up your time. Is there anything else you wish to say in response to this interview

References

- Airini, McNaughton, S., Langley, J., & Sauni, P. (2007). What educational reform means: lessons from teachers, research and policy working together for student success. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, 6(1), 31-54.
- Alton-Lee, A. (2003). Quality teaching for diverse students in schooling: Best evidence synthesis. from <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/2515/5959>.
- Anderson, G. (1998). *Fundamentals of educational research (2nd Edition)*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Barrington, J. (2008). *Separate but equal? Māori schools and the Crown 1867-1969*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Belich, J. (1996). *Making peoples a history of New Zealand from Polynesian settlement to the end of the nineteenth century*: Auckland.
- Belich, J. (2001). *Paradise reforged: a history of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the year 2000*. Auckland: Penguin Press.
- Bell, A. (2014). *Relating indigenous and settler identities: beyond domination*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Benton, R. (1978). *Can the Māori language survive?* Wellington, N.Z.: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Berryman, M., SooHoo, S., & Nevin, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Culturally responsive methodologies*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group.
- Biddulph, F., Biddulph, J., & Biddulph, C. (2003). *The complexity of community and family influences on children's achievement in New Zealand: Best evidence synthesis*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Bishop, R. (1989). Freeing ourselves from neo-colonial domination in research: a Māori approach to creating knowledge. *Qualitative studies in education*, 11(2), 199-219.
- Bishop, R. (2003). Changing power relations in education: Kaupapa Māori messages for mainstream education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Comparative Education*, 39(2), 221-238.
- Bishop, R., & Berryman, M. (2006). *Culture speaks: cultural relationships and classroom learning*. Wellington: Huia Publishers.
- Bishop, R., Berryman, M., Cavanagh, T., & Teddy, L. (2009). Te Kotahitanga: Addressing educational disparities facing Māori students in New Zealand. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(5), 734-742. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2009.01.009
- Bishop, R., & Glynn, T. (2003). *Culture counts: Changing power relations in education*. Melbourne, Victoria: Zed Books.
- Bishop, R., O'Sullivan, D., & Berryman, M. (2010). *Scaling up education reform: addressing the politics of disparity*. Wellington: NZCER Press.
- Block, D. (2007). The rise of identity in SLA Research, post Firth and Wagner (1997). *The Modern Language Journal*, 91, 863-876.
- Boston, J., & Chapple, S. (2014). *Child poverty in New Zealand*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.
- Boyd, S., Dingle, R., Campbell, R., King, J., & Corter, A. (2007). Taking a bite of the apple: The implementation of Fruit in Schools: Healthy Futures evaluation report to the Ministry of Health. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Brookes, B. (2000). Nostalgia for 'innocent homely pleasures' : the 1964 New Zealand controversy over Washday at the Pa. In B. Brookes (Ed.), *At home in New Zealand: houses, history, people* (pp. 210-225). Wellington, N.Z.: Bridget Williams Books.
- Brophy, J. E. (1983). Research on the self-fulfilling prophecy and teacher expectations. *Journal of educational psychology*, 75(5), 631.

- Cammarota, J. (2011). Blindsided by the avatar: White saviors and allies out of Hollywood and in education. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 33(3), 242-259.
- Cappella, E., Frazier, S. L., Atkins, M. S., Schoenwald, S. K., & Glisson, C. (2008). Enhancing schools' capacity to support children in poverty: An ecological model of school-based mental health services. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 35(5), 395-409.
- Caraulia, A. P. (1980). *Nonviolent crisis intervention*. Madison: Crisis Prevention Institute.
- Carpenter, V. (2009). *Education, teachers and the children of the poor*. Paper presented at the Researching Professionals Symposium, University of Otago College of Education, Dunedin.
- Carpenter, V., & Osborne, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Twelve thousand hours: Education and poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: Dunmore.
- Cavallaro, F. (2005). Language Maintenance Revisited: An Australian Perspective. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 29(3), 561-582.
- Cavanagh, T. (2005). Constructing ethnographic relationships: Reflections on key issues and struggles in the field. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 11, 27-41.
- Cerulo, K. (1997). Identity construction: new issue, new directions. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 23, 385-409.
- Chamberlain, M. (2010). Blueprint for National Standards. Retrieved from www.edgazette.govt.nz/Articles/Article.asp?ArticleID=8187.
- Chamberlain, M. (2014). PIRLS 2010/11 in New Zealand: An overview of findings from the third cycle of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as method*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Child Poverty Action Group. (2014). Our children, our choice: priorities for policy. In M. C. Dale, M. O'Brien & S. St John (Eds.). Auckland.
- Code, L. (2011). They treated him well: Fact, fiction and the politics of knowledge. In H. E. Grasswick (Ed.), *Feminist epistemology and philosophy of science: Power in knowledge* (pp. 205-211). Dordrecht Heidelberg London New York: Springer.
- Collett, G. (2010). A win for Victory. from <http://www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/lifestyle-entertainment/3279351/A-win-for-Victory>.
- Collins, S. (2011, July 25). Our hungry kids: More schools feeding children, *N.Z. Herald*
- Consedine, R. (2012). *Healing our history*. Auckland: Penguin.
- Cronin, A. (2015). Gang feeds hungry school kids. Retrieved January 20, 2015, from www.stuff.co.nz/national/10630573/Gang-feeds-hungry-school-kids.
- Didham, R., & Bedford, R. (2004). Peopling the future: Interpreting the changing demography of New Zealand. In P. Spoonley, C. Macpherson & D. Pearson (Eds.), *Tangata Tangata: The changing ethnic contours of New Zealand* Auckland: Dunmore Press.
- Diller, J., & Moule, J. (2005). *Cultural competence: A primer for educators*. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth.
- Dominion Post. (2015). Gang members' children learning water safety. Retrieved January 20, 2015, from www.stuff.co.nz/national/64786377/Gang-members-children-learning-water-safety.
- Durie, M. (2004). *Māori achievement: Anticipating the learning environment*. Paper presented at the Hui Taumata IV: Increasing Success for rangatahi in education, Taupo, NZ.
- Edmonson, H. M. (2000). *A study of the process of the implementation of school reform in an urban middle school using positive behavioral supports: "Not one more thing"*.

- (Ph.D.), University of Kansas, United States - Kansas. Retrieved from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdwweb?did=727867631&Fmt=7&clientId=13395&RQT=309&VName=PQD>.
- Education Counts. (2007). Education statistics and research in New Zealand. from www.educationcounts.edcentre.govt.nz.
- Education Counts. (2014). Public Achievement Information (PAI). Retrieved 18 March, 2015, from <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/national-education>
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. P. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research: second edition* (pp. 733-768). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Essential Resources. (2012). The Taking Responsibility Programme. Retrieved 12 November, 2012, from www.essentialresources.co.nz.
- Ewing, J., & Shallcrass, J. (Eds.). (1970). *Introduction to Māori education*. Wellington: New Zealand University Press.
- Flick, U. (2006). *An introduction to qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Good, T. L. (2008). *21st century education: A reference handbook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Grace, G. (1991). Welfare labourism versus the new right: the struggle in New Zealand's education policy. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 1(1-2), 25-42. doi: 10.1080/0962021910010103
- Harker, R. (2000). Achievement, gender and the single-sex / coed debate. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 21(2), 203-218.
- Harker, R., & O'Neill, J. (2004). System-wide reform: the role of professional development for instructional improvement. In M. Olssen (Ed.), *Culture and learning: Access and opportunity in the classroom* (pp. 203-222). Greenwich: Information Age.
- Harris, A. (2004). *Hīkoi: forty years of Māori protest*. Wellington: Huia.
- Hattie, J. (2007). *Developing potentials for learning: evidence, assessment and progress*. Paper presented at the EARLI -12th Biennial Conference, Budapest.
- Hattie, J. (2013). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. New York: Routledge.
- Hornberger, N. (2009). Multilingual education policy and practice: ten certainties grounded in Indigenous experience. *Language Teaching*. from <http://www.gse.upenn.edu/sites/gse.upenn.edu/wpel/files/archives/v24/hornberger.pdf>
- Hunn, J. K. (1961). *Report on Department of Māori Affairs*. Wellington: Government Printer.
- Jones, A. (1999). The limits of cross-cultural dialogue: Pedagogy, desire, and abolition in the classroom. *Educational Theory*, 49(3), 299-316.
- Keddie, A. (2012). Schooling and social justice through the lenses of Nancy Fraser. *Critical Studies in Education*, 53(3), 263-279.
- King, M. (2003). *The Penguin History of New Zealand*. New Zealand: Penguin.
- Koegel, R., & Koegel, L. (1989). The treatment of severe behavior disorders: behavior analysis approaches. *Monographs of the American Association on Mental Retardation*(12), 1-190.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465-491.
- Macfarlane, A., Glynn, T., Cavanagh, T., & Bateman, S. (2007). Creating culturally-safe schools for Māori students. *Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 36, 65-76.

- Marie, D., Fergusson, D. M., & Boden, J. M. (2008). Educational achievement in Māori: The roles of cultural identity and social disadvantage. *Australian Journal of Education*, 52(2), 183-197.
- Marks, K. (2011). Dark side of a warrior culture. Retrieved from http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10750847.
- Martin, G. (2003). *The prevention of Severe Conduct Disorder*. Paper presented at the Severe Conduct Disorder (Juvenile Psychopathy): Towards an Evidence-Based National Strategy for Care and Prevention, Auckland, NZ.
- May, S. (2012). *Language & minority rights: ethnicity, nationalism and the politics of language* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- May, S., Cowles, S., & Lamy, M. (2013). PISA 2012: New Zealand Summary Report.
- May, S., Hill, R., & Tiakiwai, S. (2004). Bilingual/Immersion education: Indicators of good practice. from <http://jamaica.kdid.org/sites/jamaica/files/gcontentadmin/files/bilingual-education>.
- McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Independent School*, 49(2), 31.
- McKinley, E., & Hoskins, T. (2011). Māori education and achievement. In K. McIntosh & M. Mulholland (Eds.), *Māori and Social Issues*. Wellington: Huia Publishers.
- Millward, P. (2008). A long tail of achievement. In C. M. Rubie-Davies & C. Rawlinson (Eds.), *Challenging thinking about teaching and learning* (pp. 3-17). New York: Nova.
- Milne, A. (2009). Colouring in the white spaces: Cultural identity and learning in school.
- Ministry of Education. (2008a). How the decile is calculated. from <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/>.
- Ministry of Education. (2008b). Ka Hikitia – The Māori Education Strategy. Retrieved 9 November, 2012, from <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~media/MinEdu/Files/TheMinistry/KaHikitia/English/KaHikitia2009PartOne.pdf>
- Ministry of Education. (2011). Positive Behaviour for Learning Action Plan. Retrieved 9 November 2012, from <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/Consultation/~media/MinEdu/Files/TheMinistry/PositiveBehaviourForLearning/PB4LActionPlanBooklet2011.pdf>
- Ministry of Education. (2013a). Education initiatives. Retrieved 13 January, 2015, from <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/EducationInitiatives.aspx>
- Ministry of Education. (2013b). *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating Educational Success*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2014). The Māori education strategy: Ka Hikitia - Accelerating Success 2013 -2017. Retrieved 23 January, 2015, from <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/PolicyAndStrategy/KaHikitia.aspx>
- Ministry of Education. (2015). Better Public Services. Retrieved 18 March 2015, from <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/BetterPublicServices.aspx>
- Moon, P. (2013a). *Encounters: The Creation of New Zealand*: Penguin UK.
- Moon, P. (2013b). *Turning points: events that changed the course of New Zealand's history*. Auckland: New Holland Publishers.
- Mulholland, M. (2006). *State of the Māori nation: twenty-first century issues in Aotearoa: Raupo*.
- Munck, V., & Sobo, E. (1998). *Using methods in the field: A practical introduction and casebook*. Walnut Creek: Altamira.
- Murnane, R. J., & Levy, F. (1996). Evidence from fifteen schools in Austin, Texas. In G. Burtless (Ed.), *Does money matter? The effect of school resources on student*

- achievement and adult success* (pp. 93-96). Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press.
- Murphy, L., & Cloher, D. (1995). Economic restructuring, housing policy and Māori housing in Northland, New Zealand. *Geoforum*, 4(26), 325-336.
- Mutch, C. (2004). *Who pays the piper?* . Paper presented at the New Zealand Association for Research in Education Conference, Wellington, N.Z.
- Mutch, C. (2005). *Doing educational research: A practitioners guide to getting started*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Mutch, C. (2012). Assessment for, of and as learning: developing a sustainable assessment culture in New Zealand schools. *Policy Futures in Education*, 10(4), 374-385.
- Mutu, M. (2005). In search of the missing Māori links: maintaining both ethnic identity and linguistic integrity in the revitalization of the Māori language. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2005(172), 117-132.
- NZQA. (2014). NCEA. from <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/>.
- O'Conner, P. (2014). Mastering methodology: commentary. In J. Rath & C. Mutch (Eds.), *Emerging Critical Scholarship in Education: Navigating the Doctoral Journey* (pp. 70-75). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.
- O'Regan, H. (2006). State of the reo nation: Māori language learning. In M. Mulholland (Ed.), *State of the Māori nation*. Auckland: Reed.
- O'Sullivan, D. (2007). *Beyond biculturalism: the politics of an indigenous minority*. Wellington: Huia.
- Ongley, P. (1996). Immigration, employment and ethnic relations. In P. Spoonley, C. Macpherson & D. Pearson (Eds.), *Nga Patai: Racism and ethnic relations in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.
- Openshaw, R. (2009). Solution or problem? Te Kotahitanga as cultural politics. In R. Openshaw & E. Rata (Eds.), *The politics of conformity in New Zealand* (pp. 135-153). Northshore, NZ: Pearson.
- Payne, C. (2010). *So much reform, so little change*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.
- Pearson, D. (1990). *A dream deferred: The origins of ethnic conflict in New Zealand*: Allen & Unwin Wellington.
- Penetito, W. (2010). *What's Māori about Māori education?: The struggle for a meaningful context*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Pennington, J. L., & Brock, C. H. (2012). Constructing critical autoethnographic self-studies with white educators. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*(3), 225-250.
- Pope, C. C. (2008). Kaupapa Māori Research, Supervision and Uncertainty: "What's a Pākehā Fella to Do?". In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Doing cross-cultural research: ethical and* (pp. 61-71): Springer.
- Punch, K. F. (2009). *Introduction to research methods in education*. London: Sage.
- Rath, J., & Mutch, C. (2014). Emerging critical scholarship in education: navigating the doctoral journey. In J. Rath & C. Mutch (Eds.), *Navigating the doctoral journey* (pp. 1-12). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.
- Reyes, S. A., & Vallone, T. L. (2007). Toward an expanded understanding of two-way immersion education: constructing identity through a critical, additive bilingual/bicultural pedagogy. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 9(3), 3-11.
- Ritchie, J., Skerrett, M., & Rau, C. (2014). Countercolonial unveiling of neoliberal discourses in Aotearoa New Zealand.

- Rubie-Davies, C. (2008a). Teacher beliefs and expectations: relationships with student learning. In C. M. Rubie-Davies & C. Rawlinson (Eds.), *Challenging thinking about teaching and learning*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- Rubie-Davies, C. (2008b). Teacher expectations. In T. L. Good (Ed.), *21st Century education: A reference handbook* (pp. 254-265). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Rubie-Davies, C. (2014). *Becoming a high expectation teacher: Raising the bar*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Rubie-Davies, C., Flint, A., & McDonald, L. (2012). Teacher beliefs, teacher characteristics, and school contextual factors: What are the relationships? *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 82(2), 270-288.
- Sadovnik, A. (2007). Theory and research in sociology of education. In A. Sadovnik (Ed.), *Sociology of education: A critical reader* (pp. 3-21). New York: Routledge
- Scott, M. (2014). Gang feeds hungry school kids, *Waikato Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/10630573/Gang-feeds-hungry-school-kids>.
- Selby, R. (1999). *Still being punished*: Huia Publishers.
- Simon, J., & Smith, L. T. (Eds.). (2001). *A Civilising Mission? Perceptions and Representations of the Native Schools System*. Auckland: Auckland University Press.
- Sleeter, C. E. (2012). Confronting the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy. *Urban Education*, 47(3), 562-584.
- Smith, G. (2003). Indigenous struggle for the transformation of education.
- Smith, G. (2003). *Indigenous struggle for the transformation of education and schooling*. Paper presented at the Keynote address to the Alaskan Federation of Natives Convention Anchorage Alaska.
- Smith, J. (2009). Race gap exposed in NCEA results, *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Smith, L. (2005). On tricky ground: Researching the native in the age of uncertainty. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. (3rd ed., pp. 443-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Smith, L. (2006). Fourteen lessons of resistance to exclusion: learning from the Māori experience in New Zealand over the last two decades of neo-liberal reform. In M. Mulholland (Ed.), *State of the Māori nation: Twenty-first-century issues in Aotearoa* (pp. 247-259). Auckland: Reed Publishing.
- Smith, L. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples* (2nd ed., ed.). New York: Zed Books.
- Snook, I., & O'Neill, J. (2014). Poverty and inequality of educational achievement. In V. Carpenter & S. Osborne (Eds.), *Twelve thousand hours: Education and poverty in New Zealand* (pp. 19-43). Auckland: Dunmore.
- Solomon, D., Battistich, V., & Hom, A. (1996). Teacher beliefs and practices in schools serving communities that differ in socioeconomic level. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 64(4), 327-347.
- Spoonley, P., Macpherson, C., & Pearson, D. (Eds.). (1996). *Ngā pātai: racism and ethnic relations in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Spoonley, P., Pearson, D., & Macpherson, C. (Eds.). (1991). *Ngā take: ethnic relations and racism in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Starpath Project - University of Auckland. (2009). *Towards University: Navigating NCEA Course Choices in Low-Mid Decile Schools*.
- Stephenson, M. (2006). Closing the doors on the Māori schools in New Zealand. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 9(3), 307-324.
- Stewart, G. (2010). *Good science? The growing gap between power and education*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

- Stewart, G. (2014). The Māori body in education: from 'good with their hands, to the 'long brown tail'. In P. O'Conner & K. Fitzpatrick (Eds.). Auckland: Edify.
- Straubhaar, R. (2014). The stark reality of the 'White Saviour' complex and the need for critical consciousness: a document analysis of the early journals of a Freirean educator. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 45(3), 381-400.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Stuff. (2015). Gang members' children learning water safety, *Dominion Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/64786377/Gang-members-children-learning-water-safety>.
- Taonui, R., & Newbold, G. (2011). Māori gangs. In T. McIntosh & M. Mulholland (Eds.), *Māori and social issues*. Wellington: Huia Publishers.
- Tatebe, J. (2014). *The politics of discomfort: unsettling conversations about preservice teachers' engagement with socioeconomic disadvantage* (unpublished doctoral thesis), University of Auckland, New Zealand.
- Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand. (2009). Urban Māori - Urbanisation. from <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/urban-maori/1>.
- Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand. (2015). ? , from <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en>
- Te Hoe Nuku Roa. (1998). Baseline study, Manawatu-Whanganui, Gisborne, Wellington, Auckland regional results. Palmerston North: Massey University School of Māori Studies.
- Teacher Expectation Project. (2015). Project overview. from www.education.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/schools-departments/ldpp/ldpp-research/ldpp-research-projects/teacher-expectation.html.
- Thompson, S. (2005). *The taking responsibility programme: student worksheets*: Essential Resources.
- Tunmer, W., & Prochnow, J. (2009). Cultural relativism and literacy education. In R. Openshaw & E. Rata (Eds.), *The politics of conformity in New Zealand* (pp. 154-190). Auckland, New Zealand: Pearson.
- Turner, H. (2013). *Teacher expectations, ethnicity and the achievement gap*. (unpublished master's thesis), University of Auckland, New Zealand.
- Valencia, R. R. (2010). *Dismantling contemporary deficit thinking : educational thought and practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Van Meijl, T. (2006). Multiple identifications and the dialogical self: urban Māori youngsters and the cultural renaissance. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 12(4), 917-933.
- Walker, R. (1990). *Ka whawhai tonu matou: Struggle without end*. Auckland: Penguin Books.
- Walker, S., Eketone, A., & Gibbs, A. (2006). An exploration of kaupapa Māori research, its principles, processes and applications. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 9(4), 331-344.
- Walshaw, M. (2007). *Working with Foucault in education*. Rotterdam / Taipei: Sense Publishers.
- Waters, M. (1990). *Ethnic options: choosing ethnic identities in America*. California: University of California Press.
- Whitinui, P. (2008). Kapa haka counts: improving participation levels of Māori students in mainstream secondary schools. *MAI Review*, 3, 1-14.
- Wong, M. (2006). Researching in a Māori cultural context: The moral, ethical, and cultural obligations. In C. Mutch (Ed.), *Challenging the notion of the other: reframing*

research in the Aotearoa New Zealand context. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Wylie, C. (1999). Ten years on: How schools view educational reform. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.