

# Cultural Taxation: The Experiences of Māori Teachers in the Waitaha (Canterbury) Province of New Zealand and their Relevance for Similar Australian Research

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This article draws on data from a research study (Torepe, 2011) that investigated the lived experiences of six Māori teachers who recently graduated from the Hōaka Pounamu (Graduate Diploma in Immersion and Bilingual Teaching) course at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. The primary objective was to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences and various challenges confronting this group of experienced Māori language teachers working in English-medium, state-funded schools. This article describes the qualitative research methodology that was underpinned by a Kaupapa Māori narrative research philosophy. It then explains why the study's findings support and strengthen those of previous studies conducted in Australia. Most notably, they draw attention to the concept of cultural taxation and the Crown's principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi. Given the large number of Māori children attending Australian schools and similar challenges confronting Indigenous Australian teachers, this research will be of interest to an Australian audience.

■ **Keywords:** cultural taxation, Māori, Indigenous, teacher, retention, Australia, New Zealand

*Titiro ki muri, kia whakatika ā mua*  
(Look to the past to proceed to the future)

This article begins by describing the research problem, objectives and methodology that underpinned an M.Ed. thesis (Torepe, 2011). The thesis explored the lived experiences of six Māori teachers — who had recently graduated from the Hōaka Pounamu (Graduate Diploma in Immersion and Bilingual Teaching) at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. The description of this research will precede a discussion of the key findings. This discussion will relate these Māori teachers' experiences to those of Indigenous Australian teachers participating in similar research conducted by Reid and Santoro (2006) and Santoro (2007) among others. Finally, it considers the potential implications of the thesis research findings; particularly in relation to the international problem of 'cultural taxation' and its relevance to the application of the Crown's 'principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi' in New Zealand schools (Hayward, 2009).

## The Research Problem and its Significance

Māori education has long been a source of contention between Māori and the Crown and, at different times, highly politicised. This was evident in the aftermath of the public release of the Waitangi Tribunal's (2011) Indigenous Flora, Fauna and Cultural Intellectual Property report (WAI 262). Among other things, the Tribunal recommended that the responsibility for nurturing and delivering mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) in the New Zealand education system should be shared between Māori and the Crown as per the Crown's principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi guidelines (developed by the Crown's judiciary from 1989 onwards). This, the Tribunal proposed, would necessitate the establishment

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of appropriate (Treaty-based) 'partnerships' between the two parties at various levels of the education system.

This recommendation to adhere to the (Crown's) Treaty principle of 'partnership' was also central to the New Zealand government's strategy for Māori education, *Ka Hikitia — Managing for Success: The Māori Education Strategy 2008–2012* (Ministry of Education, 2008). Though the expectation of fulfilling government policy guidelines for enhancing Māori schooling outcomes is placed on all teachers, it is widely accepted that Māori teachers have greater expectations placed upon them by the New Zealand schooling system (and Māori communities) to deliver these policy outcomes. This is certainly the case in so-called 'mainstream' schools dominated by an innately Eurocentric ethos (Mitchell & Mitchell, 1993; Bloor, 1996).

As a minority ethnic grouping, Māori teachers have been, and often remain, marginalised in their workplaces (Marks, 1984; Archie, 1993; Mitchell & Mitchell, 1993; Livingstone, 1994; Bloor, 1996). Therefore, the wellbeing of Māori teachers was considered to be an issue worthy of research. Notwithstanding official strategies and guidelines to raise the academic achievement levels of Māori students (*The Māori Education Strategy: Ka Hikitia — Accelerating Success 2007–2012*, Ministry of Education (2007); *Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*, Ministry of Education (2011)), there appeared to be only a relatively small body of research that specifically addressed the real needs of Māori teachers as a distinct group within the teaching workforce. Virtually, all of that research has focused on North Island settings (Mitchell & Mitchell, 1993; Livingstone, 1994; Bloor, 1996; Ministry of Education, 1999). All of this, consequently, added to the significance of the research undertaken by Torepe (2011).

## Objectives

As a result, Torepe's research primarily sought to give voice to six South Island Māori teachers, teaching in the Waitaha area (Canterbury province), who were invited to share their narratives about returning to their respective primary and secondary schools and classroom settings (after completing the Hōaka Pounamu course). All of these teachers were employed by English medium schools. The key objective of was to acquire a range of cross-sectoral insights into the practical challenges faced by this group of Māori primary and secondary school teachers; especially as they strove to introduce Māori epistemologies and ontologies into their schools.

Torepe's research (2011) was also designed to contribute to a small but growing body of New Zealand research literature that addresses the unique workload and cultural pressures placed upon Māori teachers by their Boards of Trustees, principals, colleagues and Māori communities. The research objectives and methodology underpinning this project emerged from ongoing

discussions with colleagues, mentors and friends over a 12-month period. Dialogue with potential participants, and key stakeholders, was undertaken concurrently; an approach that reflected kaupapa Māori theory and research frameworks particularly those of L.T. Smith (1999) and Kana and Tamatea (2006). The following questions guided Torepe's research:

1. What goals did this group of (Waitaha-based) Māori teachers set for themselves and why?
2. What challenges and opportunities did these Māori teachers face, both professionally and personally, after they returned to school?
3. What strategies did they use to negotiate these challenges?

The objectives and questions underpinning this research were significant because no research had previously been conducted to explore how Māori teachers, after completing the Hōaka Pounamu (in-service) teacher education course, transitioned back into English medium primary and secondary schools. Moreover, this research strived to identify issues impacting upon the retention of Māori teachers and how these, in turn, related to the efforts of some local (Waitaha) schools to adhere to the Crown's principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi (Hayward, 2009).

## Methodology

The research was distinguished by a qualitative research methodology underpinned by a Kaupapa Māori narrative research philosophy. Given that this research was conducted by a researcher (Torepe) from the Ngāi Tahu iwi (tribe), working with Māori teacher participants from different iwi backgrounds, it was important to develop a methodology consistent with a kaupapa Māori philosophical framework. The methodology was, accordingly, informed by the works of Bishop (1992; 1996; 1998), Bishop and Berryman (2006), Irwin (1994), Kana and Tamatea (2006), Smith (1992a; 1992b), Smith (1999) and Te Awakotuku (1991).

The research process was characterised by two overlapping phases of data collection. The first consisted of the collection and analysis of a detailed written questionnaire. The questionnaire contained a combination of factual, dichotomous and open-ended questions. Participants completed this questionnaire which sought demographic information and information about influential learning experiences that participants had encountered on the Hōaka Pounamu course that they wished to incorporate into their classroom practices.

The questionnaire also sought to elicit information about the participants' use of te reo Māori (the Māori language) prior to and after completion of the Hōaka Pounamu course. Information was also collected about their participation in cultural activities within their

respective whānau (family), hapū (subtribe) and iwi (tribe/tribal) settings. This information provided a solid foundation for discussion during the second phase of the data collection.

The second phase was characterised by individual interviews supported by a semi-structured interview schedule. The primary objective of this second phase was to conduct further investigation into the significant challenges and opportunities the interviewees identified after a year back in the classroom (following completion of the Hōaka Pounamu course). It also sought to prompt the interviewees into critically reflecting upon the strategies they used to negotiate these challenges and opportunities.

The goals that these teachers had set for themselves, at the completion of the Hōaka Pounamu course, were also considered and reflected on in this second phase of data collection. The semi-structured interviews of this phase enabled participants to share their experiences of the first 12 months back at school. The interview technique also allowed participants the freedom to comment on specific content of the research without being confined by overly structured wording or format. With the permission of participants, all interviews were audio-taped, transcribed and returned to the participant for verification and correction.

To conduct a robust analysis of data, each transcript was read and the researcher noted patterns of recurring themes among the transcripts. The researcher (Torepe, 2011) then compared the findings and identified a number of dominant themes in the interview narratives. In order to make sense of the data, a cross-case analysis occurred. Full interview transcripts were developed, and lists of quotes extracted from the interview transcripts were given to the research participants to check in accordance with the principles of *utu* (reciprocity) and *whakapono* (integrity). These transcripts assisted the participants to reflect upon their answers to questions during the interviews and enabled them to make any amendments they deemed necessary in hindsight. A colour-coding system was also adopted for identifying any emerging themes and subthemes from the interviews and preinterview questionnaires.

This study was subject to the rigors of the University of Canterbury's Human Education Ethics Committee. Moreover, as previously mentioned, the *tikanga* (ethical principles) of a kaupapa Māori research framework also guided this research. Within a Western research paradigm, there was also a requirement for written information to be given and consent to be obtained. Consequently, an information sheet was provided to participants detailing all potential risks. Similarly, a consent form was forwarded to participants outlining the objectives and details of the study. This documentation clearly outlined and explained issues around participants' anonymity and the use of pseudonyms to diminish any possible risks of identification. An information sheet and consent form was also sent to the principal of each school where the par-

ticipants taught. All precautions to protect the privacy of participants and the identity of their schools were taken. Statistical data, relating to each participant and school, was also aggregated to minimise the risk of identification.

Participants were recruited using professional networks and relationships built over a period of 13 months during the Hōaka Pounamu course (taught by the researcher) and the ongoing collegial relationships that were maintained during the months following the completion of that course. A high level of trust and respect (*whanaungatanga*) was established prior to a formal approach. This assisted requests for individuals to participate in the study and was the result of *kanohi kitea* or the 'seen face'.

It was also necessary and a cultural prerequisite, that a sense of *whanaungatanga* be established prior to my formally approaching individuals to participate in any study (Bishop, 1996; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Smith, 1999). Further to the idea of *whanaungatanga*, a Collegial Research Reference Group was also established to enhance the quality assurance processes central to the smooth development of this research. This group comprised Torepe's supervisory team (Dr Richard Manning and Professor Angus Macfarlane), plus colleagues who had a vested or significant interest in the research and other colleagues who were able to serve as critical friends.

## Findings

Six themes emerged from the data and these are now discussed in the passage that follows. They included (i) the challenge of teaching within Eurocentric institutional cultures; (ii) additional cultural expectations (or cultural taxation); (iii) collegial cultural misunderstandings; (iv) isolation (professional); (v) participants' sources of professional support and (vi) workload issues. These findings, discussed below, align with research conducted elsewhere in New Zealand (Mitchell & Mitchell, 1993; Livingstone, 1994; Bloor, 1996; Ministry of Education, 1999) and also mirror trends in Australian literature describing the experiences of Indigenous Australian teachers (Reid & Santoro, 2006; Santoro, 2007).

## Teaching in Eurocentric Institutional Cultures

A number of issues were raised by the participants that related to the innately Eurocentric nature of the workplace environments that they worked in. While some participants emphasised challenges associated with the attitudes and beliefs of some (non-Māori) staff, students and their wider (non-Māori) communities; others were more focused on the ramifications of their respective schools' institutional cultures. The alienation of Indigenous teachers is not unique to Waitaha or the wider New Zealand schooling system.

Santoro (2007) conducted two different studies investigating the experiences of Indigenous teachers and ethnic

minority teachers in Australian schools. Santoro (2007) found that the cultural knowledge, experiences and expectations of learning and teaching (that these teachers possessed), were often not respected by their peers and/or the wider (non-Indigenous) school community. Furthermore, Indigenous and ethnic minority educators were often marginalised by the workplace cultures of Eurocentric schools. Like Santoro's (2007) study, this research found that when Pākehātanga (i.e. whiteness) is consciously and unconsciously reinforced by school management, colleagues and the wider community; then 'white' (i.e. Pākehā) attitudes towards the ethnic 'other' (i.e. Māori) can have a significant impact on the tone or wairua (spirit/ethos) of a school.

The concept of pumanawatanga used by Macfarlane (2004) in his Educultural Wheel model refers to 'school tone, classroom morale, and teacher attitude' (Macfarlane, 2004, p. 96), aligns nicely with Santoro's (2007) notion of school 'tone'. The participants emphasised that the importance of pumanawatanga to Māori teachers, students and whānau, should not be underestimated. They stressed that, ideally, ensuring a healthy institutional culture of pumanawatanga should be at the core of all schools' strategic plans and classroom teaching plans.

For those participants, interviewed, who taught subjects other than te reo Māori; the difficulties of implementing kaupapa Māori in their classroom and school seemed to be much greater. Attempting to incorporate te reo Māori into wider curriculum subjects often proved challenging. In some instances, a level of justification was required as Pākehā (White) students frequently challenged the use of te reo Māori in non te reo Māori subjects. This problem was best encapsulated by one interviewee who explained that:

You have to have a certain amount of justification for certain children, because they start to challenge it ... you'd get one or two kids that want to know why are we doing it [te reo Māori] in Māori, why aren't we doing it in English.

Just as Bloor's (1996) study of the workloads of Māori secondary school teachers highlighted the additional responsibilities associated with being a Māori teacher, Torepe's (2011) research illuminated similar concerns related to the cultural expectations placed upon them by their colleagues and local communities.

## Additional Cultural Expectations

In addition to their usual teaching responsibilities, Bloor (1996) reported that Māori teachers were expected to develop and organise hui (meetings) and pōwhiri (rituals of encounter) as well as design and facilitate professional development activities for the benefit of their non-Māori colleagues. These teachers were also expected to facilitate communications between the school, its Māori parents

and whānau (families) and the wider Māori community. Bloor's (1996) teacher participants similarly felt a deep sense of duty for supporting the academic progress and general wellbeing of Māori students within their schools. They also felt that they were expected to cater for so-called 'problem Māori' students. Additionally, Bloor's (1996) study highlighted the fact that Māori teachers often felt they had to undertake the role of "ambassador-at-large" to advocate for anything deemed "Māori" in the school (p. 19).

While the participants in Torepe's (2011) research did not literally define themselves as being the 'one-stop-Māori-shop' in their school, as described by Bloor (1996) their narratives suggested that this was indeed how they perceived their professional roles. They each believed that their professional roles involved additional tasks which took many forms and often went unrecognised either financially or by written or verbal acknowledgement. The cultural expectations of non-Māori teachers emerging from this research clearly aligned with previous studies conducted in New Zealand (Archie, 1993; Mitchell & Mitchell, 1993; Bloor, 1996; Ministry of Education, 1999; Manning, 2008).

They also coincide with literature from Australia (Reid & Santoro, 2006; Santoro, 2007) and USA (Padilla, 1994; Samano, 2007; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2008). The participants in this research consistently stated that they were conscious of an unwritten expectation within their schools that they (Māori teachers) should fulfil the dominant culture's perceptions of what constitutes authentic (Indigenous) cultural requirements. This, they concurred, results in a mechanical and decontextualised 'dial-a-pōwhiri' school culture identical to that described by Manning (1998) and Whitinui (2007; 2010). For example, participants repeatedly recounted that they were often expected to organise and facilitate ceremonial roles such as kaikoranga (female caller of welcome) or kaikōrero (speaker) in pōwhiri (a formal ritual of encounter) that were often truncated or restricted by the requirements of mechanical school timetables.

This held significant cultural ramifications related to issues of cultural misappropriation and the cultural politics of authenticity. Further, the pressure of these additional tasks was often exacerbated by the frequently inadequate communications of their school management teams. Māori teachers were often only informed of pōwhiri and/or other customary events at the last minute, thus denying them adequate time to prepare rendering them further vulnerable to criticism from Māori students, parents and communities for facilitating the bastardisation of traditional rituals of encounter (i.e. pōwhiri). Another problematic task frequently identified by the participants in this research was the expectation placed upon Māori teachers to up-skill their non-Māori colleagues in relation to official Māori education policy guidelines and/or Treaty



of Waitangi-related (legal/ethical) matters. One participant, for example, typified these concerns:

I'm kind of reluctant to do everything, to run, to do critical awareness on stuff that should actually be senior management's job and I guess this year, I have done most of the things, not because I thought I should but I knew that if I didn't, I knew that nobody else would and I knew that other people weren't ready to run stuff or didn't have the skills or the confidence to say well this is what happens in a pōwhiri (Torepe, 2011, p. 58).

All of these findings coincided with an Australian study conducted by Reid and Santoro (2006). They indicated that majority of their interviewees also believed that:

The expectations placed on them in their workplaces because of the 'generic Indigenous teacher' label, [...] raised other issues related to how Indigenous teachers are often expected to fill the gaps in the knowledge of white teachers about Indigenous education and issues (p. 150).

Padilla (1994) labelled this practice as a form of 'cultural taxation', whereby 'ethnic' and 'Indigenous' educators are called upon to educate their ethnic majority (i.e. white) counterparts. The concept of cultural taxation therefore suggests that situations are often imposed upon Indigenous and other ethnic minority teachers by school management teams who assume that 'ethnic' and 'Indigenous' teachers are best suited to perform specific cultural tasks because of their assumed cultural knowledge. As Padilla (1994) observed:

Often I, like many ethnic scholars, have responded to these and similar situations out of a deep sense of 'cultural obligation'. However I have experienced annoyance about having to take on these responsibilities, which tend to be very time consuming and often emotionally draining, when my non-ethnic colleagues are seldom affected by similar obligations (p. 26).

Similarly, Smith (1990) criticised traditional Pākehā notions of biculturalism. He did so in a way that resonated with Padilla's (1994) definition of 'cultural taxation' particularly when he proposed that:

Biculturalism can be regarded as a 'two edged sword' for Māori aspirations. At one level the indigenising of Pākehā people needs to be supported, but at another level, it appropriates already limited resources away from the priority concern of Māori needs. . . . Once the protections and assurance of cultural survival has been addressed issues such as educating the dominant Pākehā group will be better able to proceed and will more likely be successful (p. 189).

Not surprisingly, cultural misunderstandings between Māori and non-Māori teachers were a recurring theme emerging from the data collected for this research, much to the concern of the participants.

## Cultural Misunderstandings

All the Māori teachers who participated in this research felt compelled to challenge the attitudes shared by some of their non-Māori students and teaching colleagues, especially after completing the Hōaka Pounamu course; which they claimed had enhanced their levels of political awareness. This sometimes led to conflicts with those Pākehā teacher colleagues comfortable with the *status quo* of Pākehā cultural dominance. Various writers, including Archie (1993), Manning (1998), Smith (1990) and Whitinui (2010) described similar conflicts in which Māori teachers met resistance from non-Māori colleagues following the application of tikanga Māori (traditional roles) during pōwhiri and other cultural rituals.

For example, one of the participants in this research remarked that she experienced negative comments and antagonism after a female member of the school's senior management team was required to sit in the second row at a school pōwhiri to welcome official guests. Some of her colleagues felt that this senior colleague's status at the school deserved a front row position. There is much literature addressing Pākehā notions of feminism, particularly with regard to the view that women are denigrated by not being able to speak during the initial rituals of encounter typical of pōwhiri (Awatere, 1984; Tauroa and Tauroa, 1993; Salmond, 2004). According to Tauroa and Tauroa (1993), this misunderstanding arises from a difference in cultural values:

In the Pākehā context, one defers to the 'office' of a person – such as principal, a board chairperson, or a mayor. In the Māori context, the 'person' is placed before the office they hold. Tapu [sacred] and mana [prestige, authority] are related to the person not to any prestigious position that they may hold (p. 59).

The Māori teacher concerned added that she believed some Pākehā teachers felt 'left out' as they did not understand what was happening and suggested that, 'it's just a fear of not really understanding what going on, it [is] not so much that they don't support it but they can't understand why it is done that way'. Similarly, Reid and Santoro (2006) drew upon Jude (1998, p. 16) to describe Australian school staffroom settings in which the Indigenous teacher is responsible for educating their non-Indigenous colleagues and all-too-often, 'dominant attitudes insist that Aborigines rather than non-Aboriginal educators and structures need to change'. Not surprisingly, feelings of professional isolation were also a major finding in this (New Zealand) research project.

## Professional Isolation

In Torepe's research (2011), the participants' feelings of isolation typically stemmed from (i) the lack of opportunities they had to team teach with other Māori teachers; (ii) the lack of opportunities to use and further develop their own language (te reo Māori) proficiency and (iii)

the difficulty of maintaining positive social interactions with many non-Māori colleagues. Irrespective of the participant's gender, size of the school or their school's decile (socioeconomic status) rating, the notion of isolation was consistently shared by all participants. One factor that appears to have compounded these teachers' feelings of isolation was returning to their schools after the year they spent on the Hōaka Pounamu course among like-minded Māori teachers. The Hōaka Pounamu course had provided a mutually supportive kaupapa Māori environment which they all felt was in stark contrast to the mechanical nature of their school workplace environments.

Their feelings of isolation were not limited to the performance of professional duties. The inability to be able to speak te reo Māori outside of the classroom posed cultural challenges for each of the participants. For example, being the only te reo Māori speaking teacher in the school meant that the participants felt their reo (language) was limited to classroom conversations with students who were normally responding with a beginner's level of proficiency. Consequently, the ability to further develop their personal levels of language proficiency was limited. Another issue fuelling their feelings of isolation was the lack of ongoing positive social interactions with non-Māori colleagues.

One participant epitomised this shared experience when she said that due to her workload and the negative talk that often took place in her school's staffroom (about Māori students and community issues), she often avoided the staffroom. This avoidance strategy only served to further isolate her from her colleagues. The loneliness experienced by Māori teachers participating in Torepe's research was not unique to New Zealand. In Australia, Santoro (2007) concluded that:

Despite ongoing calls since the 1970s for a growth in the number of Indigenous teachers (Hughes & Wilmot, 1982; Commonwealth of Australia, 1993; Collins, 2000; Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated, 2001) and several decades of support for universities and teacher education program initiatives at increasing Indigenous teacher numbers, "Indigenous teachers remain almost invisible in within our educational institutions" (Herbert, 2002, p. 2) ... The different cultural understandings and expectations of learning and teaching that they bring to their work are not always valued by students, colleagues and parents. If their potential to productively engage with students ... and their contributions to cross-cultural teaching are not valued, many are at risk of resigning prematurely from the teaching profession (p. 92).

Closer to home, Mitchell and Mitchell (1993) also found that Māori teachers often experienced feelings of loneliness in their ground-breaking New Zealand research. However, they concluded that this was not specifically because of the unfriendliness of their participants' non-Māori colleagues. Rather, they identified cultural differences (particularly a sense of not belonging), as being the major contributing factor in creating a widespread feel-

ing of professional isolation among the Māori teachers they encountered. Similar sentiments were shared by participants in Torepe's (2011) research. For example, one participant said:

I felt really lonely. I had no other teachers who are Māori, [teachers] to kōrero te reo Māori [with]. I had no one who I could talk to ... there was no one there who I could really look up to or talk to for advice within the school setting (p. 63).

Support from principals, schools senior management and colleagues and the wider school community varied considerably. As a consequence, the research participants in Torepe's study often sought support elsewhere.

## Support

It was significant that all of the participants reported an overwhelming sense of relief emanating from the support of their (same-cohort) peers, who had completed the Hōaka Pounamu course. According to one participant, the support provided by her peers had 'been the biggest benefit of the Hōaka Pounamu course'. This statement, like many others collated from the data, identified the overwhelming importance of the relationships that had developed and been maintained during that course. A study by the Ministry of Education (1999) also suggests that Māori teachers receive more support from other Māori colleagues (both within their school and through professional and personal networks) than elsewhere.

For the participants, an informal local Māori teachers' network, developed 'by' and 'for' them, fulfilled their needs for emotional and professional support. The participants suggested that this network helped them to alleviate the feelings of isolation they were experiencing within their respective schools. This informal network provided the opportunity to collaborate with peers, to seek guidance and share resources.

Most importantly, it enabled this particular cohort of Māori teachers to continue to speak te reo Māori outside of the classroom, long after they had completed the Hōaka Pounamu course. Participants worked to maintain these relationships by regularly meeting (informally), organising a te reo Māori language group (which also met periodically throughout the year), and by acting as moderators for each other's National Certificate of Education Achievement (NCEA) internal assessment procedures.

The support that this group gave to each other, both professionally and emotionally, cannot be underestimated in terms of maintaining local Māori teacher retention rates in the Waitaha (Canterbury) province. This sort of ongoing support for Indigenous teachers was, similarly, identified by Santoro (2007) as being critical to addressing Indigenous teacher retention issues in Australian schools. Like Torepe (2011) and Santoro (2007) advised that:

It is imperative that these teachers receive ongoing school support, effective and sensitive professional development and

are able to establish and participate in teacher networks [our emphasis] in order to bridge some of the cultural differences they encounter. However, it is also vital that school communities are genuinely committed to supporting them and understand it as the responsibility of the entire school community and not only the concern of a few individuals and the teachers themselves (p. 92).

Workload issues certainly contributed to retention issues identified by the Māori teachers who participated in this research.

## Workload

It is widely accepted that an increase in teacher workloads has occurred since the New Zealand education reforms of the 1980s (Bridges, 1992; Wylie, 1992; Bloor, 1996; Baker, 2002; Alison, 2005). However, the added workload expectations placed upon Māori teachers often appears to be overlooked or underestimated in educational literature. The issue of additional workloads for Māori teachers was first noted in a report published as early as 1993 (written by Mitchell and Mitchell). Nearly two decades later, Cooper et al. (2010a,b) also identified this cultural dilemma facing Māori teachers. They stated (2010, p. 23) that:

Teachers and leaders, who work for the benefit of Māori, have a hard job to do. When these [Māori] teachers and/or leaders have to please two different communities, their workload increases and they face challenges on both sides.

This finding mirrored earlier research conducted by Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd (2009) who also reported that:

Māori educational leaders are expected to establish positive relationships with a variety of institutions, communities, sectors, and iwi and to move easily between past, present, and future systems of knowledge. Durie sees effective Māori leadership as that which is expert in navigating within Te Ao Māori and exploring Te Ao Whānui (wider society). Māori educational leadership has a significant role to play both in ensuring that Māori students acquire universal knowledge and skills and in supporting them to realise the aspirations held by Māori. There is an opportunity cost in trying to meet such expectations and demands. Māori teachers find that the expectation that they participate in Māori cultural affairs in the school community as well as in the school inevitably increases their workload. The workloads of Māori educational leaders are likely to be affected in the same way (p. 110).

Increased workloads, coupled with the additional cultural demands (or cultural taxation) placed on Māori teachers led to these same teachers identifying high levels of professional stress. Not surprisingly, Bloor's (1996) research reported that it was an increase in workload demands that had an adverse effect on the health and wellbeing of Māori teachers. Similarly, the Ministry of Education (1999) reported that unique workload demands, contributing to high levels of stress and 'burn-out', were

the primary reason for Māori teachers leaving the teaching profession. The unique workload pressures facing Māori teachers in New Zealand schools is similar to that experienced by Indigenous teachers in Australian schools.

Reid and Santoro (2006) found that the Indigenous teachers who participated in their research faced similar stresses caused by extra workload issues that resonated with Padilla's (1994) notion of 'cultural taxation'. They, too, found that Indigenous teachers often become professionally isolated as they attempted to bridge chasms between the culture of local (Indigenous) communities and the institutional cultures of schools. This causes conflicts which cannot be easily resolved, 'particularly where there are not good relations between schools and local communities' (Reid & Santoro, 2006, p. 156).

As one of their participants (Cathy) suggested, such a position can trigger feelings of personal and professional 'dislocation' and 'conflict within the teacher's performance of 'self' — and the resulting tension does feel like being between a rock and a hard place'. Santoro (2007) too, found that the marginalisation of ethnic minority educators in mainstream institutions 'can result in these teachers resigning prematurely from the teaching profession' (p. 92).

All of the Māori teachers interviewed in conjunction with Torepe's (2011) research, similarly, identified feelings of exhaustion and 'burn-out'. Their feelings of extreme emotional and physical fatigue coincided with earlier research produced by Bloor (1996), Mitchell and Mitchell (1993) and the Ministry of Education (1999). It was, therefore, quite disturbing to discover that examples of 'burn-out', documented as early as 1993 (Mitchell and Mitchell), were still posing a major barrier to wider Māori educational aspirations some 18 years later (Manning et al., 2011; Torepe, 2011). This ongoing trend of 'burn-out' seems to contradict the stated intent of contemporary policy statements which emphasise that the Crown, via the New Zealand Ministry of Education, is committed to supporting 'Māori enjoying educational success as Māori' (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 18). How this objective can possibly be realised in the Waitaha region (or elsewhere), without happy and healthy Māori teachers playing a leading role, remains unclear.

Māori teachers being expected to act as significant role models for Māori students is another finding from Torepe's (2011) research that is consistent with Santoro's (2007) Australian study. Santoro (2007) found that Indigenous Australian teachers are widely viewed as being well positioned to serve as role models for students, given they are often the most highly qualified people in their community. As indicated elsewhere, Reid and Santoro (2006) earlier found that, 'Aboriginal teachers' were expected to look after 'all things Aboriginal' (p. 152), as well as maintaining

the relationship with the wider Aboriginal communities. They added that:

It is highly unlikely that there are supports for teachers in this position, as they are most likely to be the only such intermediary person in the school community – and this issue becomes particularly problematic when Indigenous teachers are not working in their own community group (p. 157).

Research conducted by Manning (2008), in the Pōneke (Port Nicholson Block, Wellington) area of New Zealand, also highlighted the problem of some schools expecting all Māori teachers to be able to teach te reo Māori and/or to expect Māori teachers from other regions to ‘fix’ their schools’ strained relationships with a local iwi (tribe). For example, when describing the risks associated with incorporating local tribal content into the curricula of local schools, a Māori participant in Manning’s (2008) study referred to a friend who was under a lot of stress:

A good example of the ‘risks’ involved is what’s happening to a friend of mine who is [viewed by his colleagues as] a ‘Māori’. He’s from Taranaki, but he’s only got a limited understanding of te reo Māori. He joined one of the local high schools to be a PE teacher, but he was the only Māori teacher in the school. So, he instantly became the social studies teacher and then they made him responsible for taking the third form [year 9] te reo Māori classes, just because he’s a ‘Māori!’ Now that’s totally irresponsible. It’s, like, worse than giving a science teacher, who just happens to be English, an English literature class to teach (pp. 220–221).

Another factor contributing to workload pressure was the nature of the curriculum area itself. More often than not, the participants in Torepe’s research (2011) were the sole teachers of te reo Māori. Thus, they were required, within their schools’ wider languages departments; to manage tasks relating to all things Māori (such as planning and reporting, organising the school’s Māori language week programme and leading professional development activities for colleagues). This finding echoed Mitchell and Mitchell’s (1993) earlier research which also found that schools often placed their Māori language teachers under the authority of a foreign languages department or a Social Studies department. The departmental heads approached by Mitchell and Mitchell (1993) often had little knowledge of te reo Māori or those pedagogies most conducive to learning te reo. The teachers of te reo Māori, encountered in Torepe’s research (2011), also had limited collegial support and assistance.

They ordinarily fulfilled the responsibilities of a head of department, such as being held responsible for curriculum design, delivery, assessment and evaluation processes. All of this occurred without recognition or remuneration. The value of support from non-Māori colleagues cannot be underestimated. Three participants in Torepe’s research (2011) said they gained strength from forming alliances with some non-Māori colleagues who proactively articu-

lated social justice arguments in support of kaupapa Māori initiatives. This position was best encapsulated by one of these participants when he said, ‘I was really fortunate to get some support especially [from] my Deputy Principal, and having his support of implementing programmes and ideas was really helpful. That’s what kept me going throughout the year’ (Torepe, 2011, p. 69).

## Conclusion

The first question underpinning Torepe’s research (2011) required her to ask six Māori teachers to describe their goals upon their return to teaching following their completion of the Hōaka Pounamu professional development course (described elsewhere). The findings were disconcerting. Each of the participants indicated that they had initially returned to teaching feeling revitalised, and eager to apply a new range of pedagogical strategies to enhance their teaching of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga. However, they quickly found themselves in pursuit of another goal — simply trying to manage the distinct challenges they faced as Māori teachers on a daily basis. As a result, the data generated by each of the interviews was dominated by responses to the second research question — which addressed the challenges and opportunities these teachers faced. Furthermore, the participants preferred to discuss the challenges they faced. This was because they felt the opportunities available to them were few.

To conclude, the Māori teachers who participated in Torepe’s (2011) research experienced difficulties working in school environments dominated by a Eurocentric ethos. Moreover, these difficulties stemmed from an overarching problem that can best be defined as reflecting various forms of ‘cultural taxation’. However, a review of the New Zealand and international research literature revealed that this was not a new problem, or unique to New Zealand. In Australia, Reid and Santoro (2006) and Santoro (2007) also found that many Indigenous teachers felt marginalised in Eurocentric schools due to the relatively low status afforded to their Indigenous knowledge in school decision-making processes (such as timetabling).

While te reo Māori is an official language of New Zealand, Torepe’s research (2011) found that all the participants believed te reo Māori was being covertly and overtly marginalised in their workplaces; irrespective of official policy guidelines. They concurred that te reo Māori is not given the status it deserves and that their schools were not giving adequate effect to the Crown’s principle of ‘active protection’, central to the New Zealand Government’s own ‘principles for Crown’s action on the Treaty of Waitangi’. These principles should guide the actions of Crown agents (i.e. teachers) and Crown entities — including state-funded schools (Hayward, 2009). The research participants in Torepe’s (2011) project often felt professionally isolated by their peers and repeatedly alleged that they were subjected to forms of cultural taxation in ways



that resonated with the findings of Australian researchers (Reid and Santoro, 2006; Santoro, 2007).

The Māori participants in Torepe's research (2011) were frequently expected, by their employers and colleagues, to organise and facilitate Māori cultural events in their schools and to attend to issues involving Māori cultural activities without remuneration or acknowledgement. Hence, they believed that they had been culturally 'taxed' in ways which absolved their non-Māori colleagues and professional leaders from exercising their own professional responsibilities to be 'bicultural' practitioners — as required by the New Zealand Teachers Council's (2010) Registered Teacher Criteria for registered teachers and school leaders.

This finding aligned with Reid and Santoro's (2006) research. They, too, found that Indigenous teachers experience cultural taxation when they are 'often expected to fill the gaps in the knowledge of White teachers about Indigenous education and issues' (p. 151). They added that 'this has the effect of absolving White teachers from the responsibility to be part of the solution to problems of Indigenous Education' (p. 151). Santoro's subsequent research (2007) also reported Australian ethnic minority and Indigenous teachers performing additional tasks similar to those identified by the participants in this research and the earlier research of Reid and Santoro (2006).

Like the Indigenous teachers in both of these Australian studies, Torepe's research (2011) found that additional cultural tasks placed considerable pressure on the Māori teachers who participated in this research. Cultural taxation increased their workloads in ways they considered harmful to their physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. Frequently, the participants in Torepe's study (2011) would describe themselves as the 'ambassador-at-large' or a 'one-stop-Māori-shop'. Yet, they still felt 'culturally obliged' to tautoko (support) the Māori students they taught and to support their schools' respective Māori communities (i.e. as 'fellow Māori'). This deep sense of duty, however, significantly increased their likelihood of feeling 'overwhelmed', 'stressed', 'tired' and 'burned-out'.

The professional isolation of the teachers in Torepe's research (2011) left them feeling that their Māori students were in danger of experiencing the harmful effects they felt can be caused by experiencing their language and culture being ignored or trivialised by teachers from the dominant (Pākehā) culture. All of this, they concurred, was contrary to the Crown's own principles for action on the Treaty of Waitangi, which serve as guidelines to Crown agents/public servants. These include the principles of 'partnership', 'participation' and 'active protection'. The cultural taxation and isolation of these teachers (interviewed by Torepe, 2011) also raised questions about how widespread the problem remains, on a national basis given the similar (earlier) research findings of Mitchell and Mitchell (1993) and the Ministry of Education (1999).

The research participants' responses to the third research question were, and remain, a source for concern. This question asked the participants to discuss the strategies they used to negotiate challenges and their responses, collectively, drew attention to the need for support mechanisms to protect the participants' wellbeing. In short, this group of teachers had formed their own informal support network of Hōaka Pounamu graduates. Each of them had expressed significant relief in response to the support provided by a small group of peers involved in this collegial network.

However, it should be noted that, since the completion of Torepe's (2011) research, 50% of her research participants have left the teaching profession. This indicates the intensity of the challenges identified by the participants. Therefore, as both Santoro (2007) and Torepe (2011) have suggested, it will be Australian and New Zealand political leaders, policy planners and school leaders who possess the greatest potential to alter the problematic institutional cultures, and non-Indigenous teacher dispositions, that shape the distinct challenges facing Indigenous teachers in New Zealand and Australian schools. Given that this article commenced with an appropriate whakataukī (proverb), another will close it. This whakataukī reminds all stakeholders that no problem is insurmountable.

*He manga-ā-wai, koia, kia kāore e whitikia?*

Is it a river that cannot be crossed?

(Implying every river can be crossed, one way or another)

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