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Abstract

Wellbeing is fundamental to an individual's ability to function and live well. Māori have some of the worst wellbeing statistics in New Zealand (Chalmers & Williams, 2018). From a Māori worldview, mana (power, authority) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) encapsulate the critical relationships necessary to Māori understandings of wellbeing. These relationships reflect the interconnectedness and interdependence of humans with the people, places and things in their worlds, as well as the responsibilities associated with these relationships.

This article discusses findings from phase two of a Teaching and Learning Research Initiative funded project Te Whakapūmautia te mana: Enhancing Mana Through Kaitiakitanga (2020–2021), and outlines implications for early childhood education (ECE) from the findings. The project aimed to explore the ways that ECE accords mokopuna (children) opportunities to recognise mana and understand ways to accrue and attain mana through being kaitiaki (guardians) of themselves, others and their environment, thereby contributing to a collective sense of wellbeing. Phase two of the research focused on kaiako (teachers') understandings of mana and kaitiakitanga and how they are currently reflected in Māori medium ECE services.

Introduction

Wellbeing, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is "the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy" and is fundamental to one's ability to function and live well (Cram, 2014; Durie, 1998). Wellbeing statistics for Māori reveal some of the lowest levels of educational attainment, high levels of unemployment and incarceration, decreasing levels of home ownership, lower than average incomes, higher than average mortality rates, the highest levels of suicide since records began, and inequitable access to healthcare (Chalmers & Williams, 2018). Māori inequity within the health system is also highlighted by a recent Whānau Ora on Māori Health Inequities (2019) report that found Māori die on average seven years earlier than non-Māori; are two times as likely to die from preventable diseases; are 2.8 times more likely to die from chronic lower respiratory diseases; are almost two times more likely to suffer from diabetes; are two times more likely to die of breast cancer; are four times more likely to die of cervical cancer and five times more likely to die of lung cancer, than non-Māori. Wilson et al.

(2021, p. 2) add that "Māori are more likely than other groups in Aotearoa NZ to encounter structural, cultural, and interpersonal forms of discrimination, marginalisation, and racism when accessing healthcare services".

Inequity is also prevalent in the education system, according to a UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 15 (UNECEF, 2018). with New Zealand ranked 33rd of 38 OECD countries for educational inequality across preschool, primary school and secondary school levels. The report card states that New Zealand is in "the bottom third for each of the three indicators of equality in education" (p. 10). It adds that "New Zealand have the largest performance gaps and some of the largest shares of students not reaching [the] modest international benchmark" (p. 19). Māori are disproportionately represented in the group of mokopuna (children) who are under-achieving (Ministry of Education, 2019). Successive education policies have impacted on Māori mokopuna and whānau (families), with many disengaging from education and consistently receiving disproportionately lower outcomes, opportunities and benefits (Rameka, 2012).

From a traditional Māori perspective, mana and kaitiakitanga are fundamental to Māori understandings of wellbeing (Dobbs & Eruera, 2014). Mana at a basic level can be translated as "authority, control, influence, prestige, power, psychic force, effectual, binding, authoritative … and take effect" (Hemara, 2000, p. 68). A deeper meaning for mana is spiritual power and authority (Love, 2004). Mana is fundamental to Māori notions of the self and of the world. All mokopuna are born with mana from their parents and ancestors (Marsden, 2003; Rameka, 2016). Understandings of mana are therefore central to conceptions of the Māori person or mokopuna, and te ao Māori (the Māori world). Furthermore, to speak of a person's mana is a Māori way of describing a person's worth (Shirres, 1997).

The recognition of mana, in all its forms, is important for mokopuna, as is the actioning of mana through kaitiakitanga (Marsden, 2003; Paul-Burke & Rameka, 2016). Tiaki can be translated as to look after, nurse, care or protect, and kaitiaki are the performers of the task. Kaitiakitanga, refers to active guardianship (Paul-Burke & Rameka, 2016). Kaitiakitanga acknowledges the role of humans, including mokopuna, to undertake active guardianship and responsibilities. Kaitiakitanga refers to the practical doing. Through kaitiakitanga, mana can be enhanced (Reedy & Reedy, 2013).

The early childhood education curriculum document Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 2017), recognises the obligations arising from Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the status of Māori, as tangata whenua (people of the land). It highlights a shared obligation for protecting Māori language and culture, stressing the importance of Māori being able to enjoy educational success as Māori. It makes a number of statements that provide tikanga (culture/custom) and practice expectations for kaiako (teachers) in relation to cultural notions, including wellbeing, mana and kaitiakitanga expectations, including (Ministry of Education, 2017):

> Kaiako should have an understanding, of Māori approaches to health and wellbeing and how these are applied in practice. (p. 26)

> Viewed from a Māori perspective, all children are born with mana inherited from their tīpuna. Mana is the power of being and must be upheld and enhanced. (p. 18)

> Kaiako recognise the relationship mokopuna have with the environment. They support them to fulfil their responsibilities as kaitiaki of the environment. (p. 42)

This article outlines the findings from the second phase of a Teaching and Learning Research Initiative funded project Te Whakapūmautia te mana: Enhancing Mana Through Kaitiakitanga, and discusses some of the implications for early childhood education (ECE). The project aimed to explore the ways that ECE accords mokopuna opportunities to recognise mana and understand ways to accrue and attain mana through being kaitiaki (guardians) of themselves, others and their environment, thereby contributing to a collective sense of wellbeing. The second phase of the research focused on kaiako understandings of mana and kaitiakitanga and they were reflected in Māori medium ECE services.

The research

The two-year project involved four phases of work. The first phase (2020), Kohikohinga Pūrākau, entailed collecting pūrākau (narratives/stories) from kaumātua (elders), Māori ECE experts, leaders and kaiako on mana and how it can be enhanced through kaitiakitanga. In the second phase (2020–2021), Taunaki Puna Reo, the pūrākau were analysed and theoretical understandings shared with kaiako in the three Māori Medium, Puna Reo and Kohanga Reo. Kaiako theorising and practices developed through this research were shared with the three English medium ECE services in the Taunaki Auraki phase, the third phase (2021), providing a foundation for pedagogical understandings and practice. The fourth phase (2021), Whanaketanga Ariā, involved the analysis of data from all phases of the research. Each phase of the research built upon the last, and in Whanaketanga Ariā all aspects of the research were brought together as a cohesive entity.

Kaupapa Māori methodological principles and understandings provided the cultural and ethical foundation for the project, positioning Māori ways of knowing, being and doing as integral to the research design, analysis and intended outcomes (Berryman, 2008; Lee et al., 2012; Rameka, 2015). This positioning was reflected in the makeup of the kairangahau (researcher) team. All kairangahau were speakers of te reo Māori. This allowed kaiako to choose which language they wished to communicate in and meant assessments and research documentation did not need to be translated into English for the research. All kairangahau also had backgrounds teaching in kōhanga reo, therefore understood the contexts in which the services operated. This meant kaiako did not need to explain Māori concepts, perspectives and behaviours, or clarify why and how certain practices were valued and implemented.

Kaupapa Māori has been described as perceiving the world from a Māori epistemological perspective. It involves assuming the normalcy of, and adhering to, Māori values, understandings and behaviours (Smith 1992), such as whakawhanaungatanga, or the building of relationships or strengthening existing relationships. Kaupapa Māori is both theory and transformative praxis (G. Smith (1997). Barnes (2000, p. 4) makes the point that "Kaupapa Māori begins as a challenge to accepted norms and assumptions about knowledge and the way it is constructed and continues as a search for understanding within a Māori worldview". It critiques and resists existing structures and seeks transformative strategies in order to centralise Māori cultural perspectives and move Māori knowledge from its marginal position of 'abnormal' or 'unofficial knowledge', to equal in status to Western knowledge. Critiquing and resisting western norms, and providing space for Māori knowledge, was fundamental to the research aims and outcomes. Kaiako were encouraged to articulate differences in goals of development, valued behaviours and learnings, and their role in enhancing these aspects of culture, as a counter to the dominant western framing of normal ECE pedagogy, practices and valued learning. This supported not only Māori perspectives to be articulated but also iwi, hapū and whānau knowledge and traditions.

The research design involved wānanga (educational seminars/meetings) with individuals and groups. Traditionally, wānanga were places of learning, where oral traditions, lore and valued understandings were preserved and passed on. Today wānanga has been reinterpreted to represent understandings and practices that derive from tikanga Māori, including the interpretation and practising of Māori knowledge within the contemporary contexts (Whaanga-Schollum et al., 2015). Within the research, wānanga were framed as meetings with individuals or groups to gather knowledge, understandings and perspectives relevant to the research. Wānanga, depending on participants' wishes, were either video recorded, audio recorded and transcribed, notes taken or participants were able to write their contributions.

A kaupapa Māori approach to analysing the data was also utilised in the research. This approach emphasised interpreting and understanding information that has been intertwined with tikanga Māori

and Māori knowledge and understandings (Cunningham, 2000). This was another critical aspect of the research, with kairangahau in conjunction with kaiako and whānau utilising their combined knowledge of tikanga Māori knowledge and understandings to articulate the findings and the implications of the research findings for ECE. The thematic analysis was an iterative process that involved returning to the data and literature to fine-tune the analysis, theorise and develop strategies.

The Research Questions

1. In what ways do/can mokopuna in ECE services enact mana and kaitiakitanga?
2. What does the enactment of mana and kaitiakitanga look like for mokopuna, and for kaiako in ECE?
3. What are the people, tools/artefacts, processes and practices that contribute to enhancing mana and kaitiakitanga for mokopuna?

This article focuses on the findings from the second phase of a Taunaki Puna Reo. This phase involved three Māori medium, puna reo and kohanga reo and approximately 18 kaiako.

A number of types of data were gathered, including kaiako reflections and evaluations, notes from kaiako focus group interviews, whānau feedback/comments, mokopuna feedback, photos and mokopuna assessments.

Taunaki Puna Reo—Initial data analysis of documents, examples of practice

The research questions provide the framing for the presentation of kaiako data. The analysis of phase two data, with Māori medium ECE services, recognises Māori cultural imperatives associated with working from a kaupapa Māori ideology, including the practices and expectations associated with Māori knowledge, ways of knowing and related practices.

Initial analysis of the kaiako data highlights a number of themes and possible implications for kaiako around pedagogical understandings content knowledge and contextual requirements.

1. In what ways do/can mokopuna in ECE services enact mana and kaitiakitanga?

Aroha me manaakitanga (Concern and caring)

Mokopuna caring, taking on responsibility and showing concern for others and the environment are key aspects of the enactment of kaitiakitanga and the expression of mana. For kaiako, modelling and expressing caring, kindness, compassion and empathy are key aspects of teaching mokopuna about aroha and manaakitanga. It is also important that kaiako view mokopuna as competent and capable, and trust that they are able to enact these valued, aroha and manaaki qualities. Kaiako comments illustrate how these qualities are reflected in practice:

> He … went around the papatākaro/playground and did his own little safety check and he brought some big logs which are in the papatākaro/playground for play … "Whaea, whaea, we gotta take this away, kei whara pepi"/the babies will get hurt … He's trying to make his environment safer for these pepi/babies.

> Tikanga practices of aroha and manaakitanga are instilled in our tamariki right from the start to care and respect each other. We believe that mana is a right of virtue for them and we try to sustain this through our teachings and modelling towards each other.

Rangatiratanga (Leadership)

Mokopuna displaying strong leadership qualities through taking on kaitiaki roles and responsibilities including standing up for and advocating for others and the environment reflects the enactment of mana and kaitiakitanga. Mokopuna feel able to question kaiako if required, to put their concerns across. Furthermore, what is apparent when mokopuna take on these roles and responsibility is that they assume these roles and responsibilities themselves, viewing them as their role, rather than being told by kaiako that they should be responsible. These self-directed roles and responsibilities are reflected in the following comments:

> It's about them (mokopuna) taking the lead. It's about them having the mana to take the lead … The fire alarm went off and we had to get to the field and she was helping tēina across the field as well. Following our pou that is rangatiratanga she took that upon herself.

> He planted the marigold seeds and they grew and then the little shoots started showing up … He's taken responsibility and he always points out that we can't actually pick the plants, we can't pull them out. He goes into the garden, has a check around to make sure all the plants are ok so that's his area. Now that he's got that responsibility, he feels like he's the kaitiaki for the māra. But that gives him mana too. He's got that strong mana but he's also got responsibility to make sure the māra is all good and … looking after it. We don't have to push them to do it, they do it themselves. They take on the responsibility, that role as kaitiaki**.**

Tuākana/tēina (Elder/younger relationship)

Examples of tuākana/tēina relationships and responsibilities in practice were evident in many of the stories/data from of the ECE services that related to tiaki tangata and mana recognitions and enhancement. The roles and responsibilities associated with tuākana/tēina were valued, praised and further encouraged by kaiako as explained by kaiako in the following statements:

> Tuākana being a kaitiaki for their tēina.

> I suppose we have seen under kaitiakitanga her being a guardian of the tēina. Kaitiakitanga has led to reciprocal relationship, look after the tēina and tēina will respond through play and respect like how babies know what big kids they can play around and they kind of know that that big boy or girl is coming so they gotta move.

2.   What does the enactment of mana and kaitiakitanga look like for mokopuna, and for kaiako in ECE?

Mahia te mahi (Mana not the driver)

Although the enhancement of mana was the outcome for all the examples in ECE, it was not the driver of the action for mokopuna. Mokopuna were mostly unaware that their actions enhanced their mana; rather, their focus was on caring and doing what was required. The enactment of kaitiakitanga was not an egocentric activity, which focused on the mokopuna themselves, rather an externally focused action, aimed at making a difference for others, whānau, taiao (environment), whenua (land), and kaupapa

(philosophy). The enactment of mana is therefore related to the enactment of kaitiakitanga with the focus on the actions required for the situation. These outward focused behaviours and actions are evident in the following korero:

> … today we went for a small hīkoi … and … picked up these paru [dirty] as tokina [socks]. I said to leave them, but M said the leaves can't touch the noke [worms] underneath … We had talked previously about the leaves disintegrating and going into the earth and feeding Papatūānuku [Earth Mother].

> When the mandarins were ready, we had our karakia and those who wanted to be involved collected the mandarins and took them to the kitchen to prepare for afternoon tea. We hold the annual māra tapu rituals twice a year where tangata whenua lead the ritual of karakia acknowledging the stars, the weather, the land, Haumia and Rongo. Our tamariki attend and know they have a role and a responsibility in the rituals and processes. Once the main hauhake karakia has happened, we can then harvest food as the food becomes ripe or ready as the formal rituals have already been performed.

Whakapapa (Genealogy)

The enactment of mana and kaitiakitanga acts as the bridge for mokopuna to learn about whakapapa knowledge and to understand how to respond to such relationships. Belonging starts from the perspective of origin in te ao Māori. Belonging for mokopuna is about their connectedness to their worlds, their relationships with their worlds and those that inhabit them and how they fit within it. A strong sense of identity as Māori and as a kaitiaki were important to one's sense, one's own mana and worth. Kaiako comments highlight the importance of these connections:

> Mana and kaitiakitanga is reciprocal. It has to be shared in terms of our learning together, sharing together. It's all about whakapapa.

> In our puna, the kīngitanga is our kaupapa. We draw from the saying … Kotahi te kōhao o te ngira e kuhuna ai te miro ma, te miro pango, te miro whero. Pōtatau replied "there is but one eye of the needle, through which white, black and red cotton are threaded. Hereafter, hold fast to charity, uphold the laws and be firm in the faith". This whakatauākī has implication for the making of connections and collaboration that may ensure as we work towards supporting a common vision through each being a kaitiaki for each other.

> In our puna we have what we call Tōku Ao where pictures of each tamariki sharing their pūrākau about their world, their whānau and their interests. Tamariki discussing what is important to them in their lives. Other tamariki having the opportunity to learn about their hoa and their lives. Whakamana of each child and their whānau is expressed through each tamaiti ao.

Te reo mataora (Keeping language alive)

The role of nurturing and fostering te reo Māori was viewed as an important aspect of kaitiakitanga. For kaiako, some of their practices included reclaiming traditional knowledge for teaching and learning in their settings through building opportunities and contexts; meeting mokopuna and whānau needs and interests through shaping and implementing Māori pedagogical practices; the regeneration of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture) through mana and kaitiakitanga; developing strong whānau hapū (subtribe), iwi (tribe) and community partnerships, to achieve shared goals; knowing and

valuing what mokopuna bring with them to produce better outcomes. The episode below demonstrates how mokopuna can facilitate language learning and at the same time enhance the mana of both the tēina (younger sibling/learner) and the tuākana (older sibling/learner):

> She used words like "tiaki" and when giving tēina a turn to play with it [because there weren't enough to go around], she used the word "tohatoha koa and tatari". She made time for each tēina to have turns. She responded to tēina questions. She then left and the tēina stayed there and mirrored what the tuākana did; e.g., one of the tēina used the word, tatari and tohatoha.

> Our curriculum speaks about whakamana te tamaiti and as kaiako we have a responsibility through our reo, tikanga and daily programme to bring it to life.

Tiaki te taiao (Caring for the environment)

A Māori perspective of the natural world encapsulates a holistic epistemological world view. Māori ways of knowing, being and doing are connected with Papatūānuku (earth mother), Ranginui (sky father) and their many mokopuna, including tangaroa (oceans). A large number of kaiako comments, explanations and stories focused on te taiao, caring for the natural environment. The role of kaitaiki is associated with a clear obligation to nurture and protect the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the taiao and the natural systems that surround and support us. Kaitiaki are agents that perform the task of active guardianship.

> Feeding the worms—tamariki now know what kai is good for worms. Recycling— tamariki are learning how and why recycling is important for the whenua and for the tamariki.

> A child of the wider world who marvels and values all life forms. A custodian of the balance of nature which gives each of those life forms their right of existence. True to the laws of conservation passed down by their Māori forebears.

> The uniqueness of our kaupapa encourages and nurtures our responsibility to the land and all its natural resources. As Māori we believe humans were created from the earth, Hineahuone. The way in which we interact with the land reflects this belief.

> In this puna, the water is operated by its own water tank. Tamariki are seen here watering the plants and whaea … pops in as one of the children is accidently watered from one of the other tamariki. One tamaiti was saying to the rest not to over wet the plants. Tēina were asking tuākana to help them with the water containers to feed the plants. One of the tuākana was facilitating and letting everyone have turns with the hose.

3.   What are the people, tools/artefacts, processes and practices that contribute to enhancing mana and kaitiakitanga for mokopuna

He rerekē anō (Enhancing mana vs independence)

Some discussions took place on goals of development in ECE. Kaiako questioned the ECE focus on the development of independence in mokopuna, stating that for them the enhancement of mana was more valued in the puna reo and kōhanga reo. Although the emphasis was on supporting confidence, self-esteem, skill development and deeper understandings of the world, it was more aligned to mana

enhancement, and interdependence than independence. Kaiako reiterate this difference in the following korero:

> So if you want to compare it with an English-speaking centre … (kaiako) help (mokopuna) with their routines … to help build up their independence so they can do it for themselves. We see it differently, it's about the child's mana, it's different world views … So the goal is not independence. The goal is recognition of mana and supporting one's own and other's mana. This whole kind of growing their mana is a huge thing for them in terms of their growth, their abilities, their ideas about themselves, you know, that they are competent and confident, that's what you are talking about. Learners and doers.

> Difference between Māori and western services has two different goals. The goal is recognition of supporting the child's mana.

Mana whakatipu (Enhancing mana)

For kaiako and mokopuna, one of the central goals was the development of understandings of how to enhance the mana of others through sharing their time, understandings, perspectives and knowledge to support others.

> We've all got our own mana. It's how we nurture it. Bringing in new learning from home into the puna (tōku ao, their pūrākau) to inform our programme and the way we teach also is how we action mana.

> Matariki is used to whakamana our tamariki in their learning. We are becoming aware of our teaching strategies and thinking about how we support tamariki to understand the importance of mana (whenua, tangata, tinana, te ao, tamariki, taonga).

> Reciting pepeha for our tamariki is confirmation of the child's mana, tapu and identity, and their place within their wider whānau, hapū and iwi. Enhancing mana by respectfully listening to the kaiārahi as they carry out their role of leadership upholding the rituals and customs of our people.

> The entire whare is a place for enhancing mana and kaitiakitanga for mokopuna—it is what the interest or challenge is for that tamaiti and how they work through it and how kaiako can support, facilitate, nurture, observe them going through these stages.

Kawe mana (Mana of occasions and groups)

Recognising, respecting and upholding traditional ceremonies, rituals and tapu supports the mana of individuals and the collective, i.e., marae, kōhanga, hapū, and iwi. It is important therefore for mokopuna to learn about, participate in, and contribute to ceremonies, rituals and important cultural events.

> Her papa spoke for her, and her big sister was there and was very proud, and her mama. It was a big moment for the whole whānau. That's that kawe mana. Her papa came in for her huritau and he sung in Egypt, Samoan and Irish and all the other cultures. It was really nice that they stood and they kept their other cultures alive.

> We recognised also that it was our Māori rituals, customs, processes and practices that we uphold on a weekly and daily basis in the kōhanga, that have guided and taught us as practitioners how to role model and nurture our connectedness to the taiao.

Te ao Māori (Māori world-view)

The enactment of mana and kaitiakitanga "assumes the normalcy of Māori knowledge, language and culture" (Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 61). Māori world-view reflects a holistic approach to existence that is both spiritual and physical. Kaiako make the point that for mokopuna from the Māori medium services who speak te reo Māori, and see the world through Māori lenses, the connection to atua is concrete, experienced physically, spiritually, emotionally and cognitively. It is te ao Māori, experienced in a real and authentic way as outlined in the following statements:

> Children from an early age understand their role and responsibility in upholding and carrying out tikanga and tukanga. For example, Te Koha (four years old) recites a karakia as we are preparing to enter the ngahere [bush], although it is a karakia for food, he recites the karakia that speaks mainly of the wao [forest], the ngahere [bush] and the māra [garden]. Another example, Ākau (three years old) spontaneously sings an apakura to a bird that had died and then lead us through the process of poroporoaki [final farewell] of the bird.

> Present resources derived from a whakaaro Māori, not whakaaro pākehā translated.

> Mahinarangi recently you have taken an interest in tā moko, moko kauae, mataora. Not only does this strengthen your connection and awareness to our culture but it links you to your tupuna. In celebrating this your mana motuhake is strengthened. You are affirmed as a Māori tamaiti, with a rich heritage and strong creative skills both i te kainga with māmā and here i te Puna Reo.

Mana atuatanga (Mana from the spirit world)

This entails the recognition that all mokopuna are born with mana. Mana is inherited from the atua (gods) through ones' whakapapa, from ancestors and parents. It grows through one's ability to contribute. Manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga and the expression of aroha are central to this. It can, however, be diminished through actions of others and self. The recognition and enhancement of mana is therefore one of the most important contributions kaiako can make to mokopuna holistic wellbeing. This is explained in the following comments:

> Start everything from the perspective of origin in te ao Māori.

> We've all got our own mana. It's how we nurture it.

> The tamaiti they realise that they can do that for themselves and they can achieve and they are building their own mana. The other tamariki will recognise, it's not just us building their mana but it's trying to recognise each other's mana, build up each other's mana and all that, which they definitely are doing.

Kōrero a waha, a tinana, a kanohi (Communication)

Kaiako theorising on the interconnectedness of mana and kaitikitanga highlighted the range of ways understandings could be communicated. This is evident in the following kaiako comment:

> Where the relationship between mana and kaitiakitanga work together. You can feel it and see it in the tamariki and how they communicate (both verbal and non-verbal).

Another kaiako highlighted how reading the pūrākau of the kaumātua made them review their ideas and practices:

On hearing a common kōrero from the kaumātua interviewed "Kaitiakitanga commonly not a word heard as children but the tenets of kaitiakitanga were understood through activities like gardening, gathering kai, gathering resources for weaving etc" did leave some questioning in the way in which we acknowledge and praise the children for their contribution in the process of documenting and assessing children's learning through paki ako, [learning stories].

Some theoretical ideas from the analysis highlights whakapapa, values, and practices as an indigenous pedagogy guided by the past that can be adapted for the present. Accompanying this is the initial theorising from kaiako around learning and development is the co-construction of learning where tuākana/tēina; whanaungatanga; and ngā āhuatanga Māori are highlighted as methods of teaching. For example, kaiako shared several commonalities with whakapapa—a Māori concept and cultural construct for understanding the social world and the relationships at play.

Possible implications for kaiako—pedagogical understandings, content knowledge and contextual requirements

Māori philosophy and customs uphold the importance of mana and kaitiakitanga, and have implications for broader questions related to drawing from and protecting traditional knowledge within current pedagogical understandings. For kaiako, the enactment of mana and kaitiakitanga involved a bringing together of knowledge, understandings, whakapapa, context, people, processes and practices. This process often involved challenging western ideologies, philosophies and pedagogical understandings, and re-centering Māori knowledge, culture, perspectives and practices. Kaiako acknowledged that *te ao Māori* (the Māori world) was the origin of these knowledges and practices and that it was important to reclaim these knowledges in contemporary contexts, including perceptions of the mokopuna as a being who is born with mana, mana is inherited from atua (gods), and perspectives of the world, including the physical and spiritual world.

In order to implement these knowledges, kaiako needed the pedagogical and contextual understandings to firstly recognise mana and kaitikitanga, and support enactment with mokopuna. This involved modelling appropriate behaviours, sharing their time, understandings, perspectives and content knowledge with mokopuna; for example, acknowledging the expression of caring, kindness, compassion and empathy; and encouraging nurturing and protecting the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the taiao.

Another important aspect for kaiako related to content knowledge and contextual requirements was the critical importance of mokopuna developing a strong sense of identity as Māori, as a kaitiaki and as beings with mana and worth. Learning for mokopuna required them to be able to participate in, and contribute to, te ao Māori, including cultural events, rituals and ceremonies. It allowed opportunities for mokopuna to display strong leadership qualities through contributing and taking on kaitiaki roles and responsibilities. The recognition and enhancement of mana was therefore one of the most important contributions kaiako could make to the holistic wellbeing of mokopuna.

What was evident from kaiako comments was that the enactment of kaitiakitanga was not an egocentric pursuit. It was not focused on the self; instead, it focused externally, on others, the environment, the world. Kaiako mentioned that they did not need to ask mokopuna to perform these duties; rather, mokopuna took on these kaitiaki responsibilities themselves. These externally focused actions or behaviours not only linked to the communal expectations of te ao Māori but also aimed at making a difference for others, and for the environment.

The focus on mana and kaitiakitanga for mokopuna emphasised the importance learning about whakapapa (genealogy) and developing understandings of whanaungatanga (relationships). It also highlighted the importance of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture) and the need

to recognise, respect and uphold traditional ceremonies and rituals. In this way the mana of individuals, the collective, i.e., marae, kōhanga, hapū, and iwi, are upheld, through kaitiakitanga.

Highlighted in the analysis are care and compassion, and contribution, community and wellbeing for others, which are at the heart of the Māori values system. The analysis also centralises on the view that Māori culture is a 'lived' set of deep networks and connections between individuals, their whānau and places of symbolic cultural importance.

This initial analysis will further guide the next phases as a possible cultural template of ascertaining the enactment between mana and kaitiakitanga. It is possible that such a template might be useful in gauging Māori lived culture and could reveal the quality and depth of relational networks with regard to our third research sub-question: What are the people, tools/artefacts, processes and practices that contribute to enhancing mana and kaitiakitanga for mokopuna? From the initial data analysis and into the next two phases of the research, kaiako will further explore and theorise their pedagogy to articulate the rationale for their practices and be able to implement changes to their practice that will transcend children's affinity with, and a connectedness to, their worlds.

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