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Ora ai te Mana o te Whānau, inā kōrero Māori?:

**What is the Link Between Te Reo Māori and Mana Whānau or
Whānau Empowerment?**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Māori

at Massey University,

[Manawatu],

New Zealand.

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2012

PREFACE

Me he Pāharakeke

The Metaphoric Relationship of Pā Harakeke and Whānau

In the course of this thesis, the synergies of the Māori Language¹ and whānau concepts elucidate a robust duality, where te reo Māori is not easily separated from whānau and vice versa. Furthermore, both notions are implicitly linked throughout the research.

As a result, I make the most of te pā harakeke as a metaphoric ideal. This is partially due to its symbolic connection to whānau, but more importantly because it is a favoured symbol used for whānau by Māori and non-Māori alike (Metge, 1995).

Much like the weaving of a whāriki, throughout this project, te pā harakeke also binds the core focuses of this research, te reo Māori and whānau together. Consequently, I have utilised te pā harakeke as a metaphor of whānau as well as a metaphoric term for this project.

Te pāharakeke is employed at the heading of each chapter, but further crafted to represent a particular phase or section of the investigative journey.

¹ Many Māori words are not translated into English within this thesis, nor is a glossary provided. This is based on the fact that Māori is an official language of Aotearoa, New Zealand; and tools which can assist with translation are freely and readily available on the World Wide Web. This includes, *The Māori Dictionary Website* (2013), available on <http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz>; or *A Dictionary of the Māori Language*, Victoria University of Wellington (2013), downloadable from <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WillDict-t1-body-d1-d1.html>. I would also recommend the Williams (2001) Māori English Dictionary book as another reliable source.

Abstract

This research project aims to ascertain whether the utilisation of te reo Māori within whānau is an empowering instrument regarding mana whānau inclusive of whānau wellbeing. It explores how immersion within the Māori language influences these whānau participants, and how this lifestyle choice contributes toward wellbeing of whānau and their sense of empowerment.

Underpinned by a Kaupapa Māori approach (Smith, 1997), that utilises varying tikanga Māori concepts (Mead, 1996) as guidelines. The overall intention of this project is to provide further information which may potentially assist with attempts to examine the resilience of whānau from an individual and collective perspective.

The main outcome from this study is the potential for whānau to identify that te reo Māori is a positive communication technique which enhances whānau and their whānau wellbeing; achieved by a new awareness of the positive influences facilitated by engagement in te reo Māori. This may in turn increase whānau capacity for self development.

A further justification of this research is that it will further develop the total immersion Māori lifestyle evidence base, and explore linkages between the use of the Māori language and whānau wellbeing in more detail.

Acknowledgements

Utaina!

Toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te whenua!

Mauri mahi, mauri ora!

Nei rā te tai o mihi ka rere ki a koutou e ngā nui o te pō, moe mai rā.

Kia rere anō rā te tai o mihi ki a tātou i te mata o Papatūānuku, tēnā tātou.

Tēnei rā te mihi o ngākau e pupū ake ana te aroha ki te hunga i tautoko ā-tinana mai, ā-hinengaro mai, ā-wairua mai. Mei kore ake tēnei hāpai nui, kua kore i tau ki te tauranga, nā reira ka rere a mihi.

Ko aku mihi tuatahi ka rere ki ngā whānau i whakaae mai kia noho rātou hei tauira rangahau māku, tēnei au e mihi ana i te ngākau iti ki a koutou katoa. Me mihi hoki ki a koe e te tuakana ko 'Margaret Forster', he manawa pōpore, he pou anō hoki nōku, i ārahi mai, i tohutohu mai, i hāpai mai. Ka tuohu tēnei ki tō koutou katoa manaaki mai.

Hei mihi whakamutunga ki taku pū harakeke. Ki tōku āhuru mōwai, arā ki tōku māmā, nāna au i taumarumarū i te roanga o te hīkoi nei, e kore te tai o mihi e mimiti. Ki aku tāonga puiaki ko Kohukohurangi rātou ko Te Mauri, ko Putorino, e rere nei te aroha nui, te aroha roa, te aroha mutunga kore. Ki te tau o tōku ate e Hohepa, ko koe rā tōku pou tokomanawa, tōku pou whirinaki, tōku pou ora e.

Nā reira hei kupu whakatepe. Ka tere tēnei kōrero i runga i ngā tai o te wā ki ōna tauranga e, kia tū, kia rere, kia ora tātou ki te reo Māori e.

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