

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

The Exploration of Co-Governance from a Māori Perspective

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Business Studies (Management)

Master of Business Studies (Management)

At Massey University - Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa, Manawatū,
Aotearoa - New Zealand

Kylie Tuffery née Solomon

Ngāti Toa Rangatira

2024

Abstract

Co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand represents a critical pathway for reconciliation and collaborative decision-making, yet its implementation remains complex and contested. This research explores Māori leadership perspectives on co-governance, drawing upon Kaupapa Māori methodological approaches to understand how traditional Māori wisdom can inform contemporary governance practices. Through in-depth engagement with Māori Rangatira (leaders), this study examines the intersection of Western and Māori governance frameworks, illuminating pathways for more meaningful and culturally responsive collaborative governance.

The research haerenga (journey) explores historical, methodological, and contemporary landscapes. By critically analysing Aotearoa New Zealand's governance structures, the study reveals how historical contexts have shaped current co-governance challenges and opportunities. Grounded in Kaupapa Māori principles, the research methodology prioritises Māori ways of knowing and being, centring the voices and experiences of Māori Rangatira. Through their narratives, the research uncovers nuanced understandings of leadership, collective decision-making, and the potential for transformative governance models that honour both Māori and Western approaches.

Key findings highlight the critical role of cultural understanding, relational accountability, and respect for mātauranga (Māori knowledge) in developing effective co-governance strategies. The research offers practical recommendations for enhancing co-governance frameworks, while simultaneously acknowledging the ongoing complexities and learning inherent in this transformative process. Ultimately, this study contributes to broader conversations about Māori sovereignty, collaborative leadership, and the potential for more inclusive, Te Tiriti-led, equitable governance frameworks in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Karakia Tīmatanga, He Mihi

Tēnā koutou katoa

Ko Ranginui kei runga

Ko Papatūānuku kei raro

Ko ngā tāngata kei waenganui

Tihei Mauri Ora!

Ko te mihi tuatahi ki te wāhi ngaro, ki te orokohanga o ngā mea katoa.

Tēnei au, tēnei au

Te hāpai nei

Te tiri nei

Te poupou nei

I tōku reo

Mō tōku mana

Mō tōku ihi

Te māpihi maurea

Kia mau, kia ita

Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e!

Ko te mihi Tuarua, ki ngā mate, haere, haere, haere atu rā.

Tēnā koutou i ō koutou tini mate

Nō reira, haere e ngā mate

Haere ki te wā kāinga

Haere ki te kāinga tūturu

O tō tātou Matua i te rangi

Kia tau mai

Te aroha

Nga manaakitanga

O te Atua

Ngā mihi ki a koutou

Tēnā koutou katoa

E ngā korokoro tui, e ngā kākā tarahae

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Ko wai au?

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Ko wai au?

Ko Tainui te waka

Ko Whitireia te maunga

Ko Parirua te awa

Ko Raukawa te Moana

Ko Ngāti Toa Rangatira te iwi

He uri ahau nō Nohoroa rāua ko Te Rauparaha

Ko Takapūwāhia te marae

Ko Toa Rangatira te whare tupuna

Kei Taputeranga ahau, e noho ana

Ki te taha o tōku ūkaipō, Nō Itaria ōku Tīpuna

Ko Rangi Solomon/Horomona rāua ko Karen Saffioti ōku Mātua

Tokowhā ōku tungane, ko Paul, ko Peter, ko Cary, ko Tane ō ratou ingoa.

Ko Jojo tōku teina

Ko Craig tōku hoa rangatira

Tokorua māua tamariki ātaahua, ko Bronte te mātāmua, ko Lucca te pōtiki

Ko Kylie Tuffery tōku ingoa.

Nō reira

E kore au e ngaro he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea

tēnā koutou katoa

Ki a koutou katoa e hāpai ana i tēnei Kaupapa, tēnei te mihi maioha ki a koutou.

Nō reira tēnā koutou katoa.

Orokohanga

I te tīmatanga ko Te Kore

Nā Te Kore ko Te Pō

Putā atu ki te whai ao, ki Te Ao Mārama

Tihei mauri ora!

In the vast expanse of time, before all things, there was Te Kore - the void, the nothingness. From this great emptiness emerged Te Pō, the night. Many were these nights, long and countless, where darkness held all potential within its depths. Then, from the deepest dark of Te Pō, came the first glimmer of Te Ao Mārama, the world of light. Like the dawn's first rays, this light began as merely a shimmer, but steadily grew stronger.

In these early times came Te Whakawehenga o ngā mātua - the tale of Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatūānuku (Earth Mother). They lay together in an eternal embrace, their love so complete that no light could pass between them. From their union, many children were born into the darkness between them. These divine children lived in the cramped space between their parents, never knowing the fullness of light, yearning for room to stand tall and grow.

The children came together in council, seeking a way to create space for all to flourish. After much debate and failed attempts by his brothers, it was Tāne-mahuta who succeeded. Placing his shoulders against his mother Papatūānuku and his mighty feet against his father Ranginui, he pushed with all his strength until, at last, they separated. As they parted, Te Ao Mārama flooded the space between them, bathing the world in light and color for the first time.

Seeing his parents' nakedness, Tāne-mahuta and his siblings adorned their father Ranginui with Te Rā (the sun), Te Mārama (the moon), Ngā whetu (The Stars) and Te Ikaroa (the Milky Way), creating the beauty of the night sky. For his mother Papatūānuku, Tāne-mahuta wove a magnificent kākahu (cloak) of forests to cover and protect her, spreading life across her surface. Thus began Te Ao, the world as we know it.

After the world was clothed in beauty, Tāne-mahuta was called upon once more. His brothers asked him to create the first woman. Following the guidance of his mother Papatūānuku, Tāne-mahuta went to the sacred red clay at Kurawaka. There, with great care and reverence, he shaped the form of a woman. When her form was complete, he bent to share his breath of life through their hongis, pressing his nose to hers. In that sacred moment, Hineahuone drew her first breath, awakening to life and marking the beginning of humanity.

Tihei Mauri Ora! - The breath of life!

Acknowledgements

Ehara taku toa, he taki tahi, he tōā taki tini

My success is not mine alone, but the success of many.

My haerenga has been transformative, weaving new knowledge into the fabric of who I am. I am deeply humbled by those who have guided, supported, and at times carried me. My wairua (spirit) is full to overflowing.

To the Māori Rangatira who generously shared their wisdom, your kōrero breathed life into this research. Your trust, openness, and unwavering commitment to our collective future have been the foundational pillars of this mahi. Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou.

My supervisors, Dr Angelique Reweti and Professor Jarrod Haar, your guidance and critical insights have been nothing short of invaluable. You challenged me to dig deeper, think more critically, and remain true to the Kaupapa, even when it was incredibly challenging for me. Your belief in my potential moved me to tears, and I am forever grateful. Because of your unwavering support, I have broken through the glass ceiling of what I believed I was capable of.

To Te Rau Angitū, Tiana Wereta, and Prof. Dame Farah Rangikoepa Palmer: thank you for creating a nurturing academic environment that truly values and celebrates Kaupapa Māori research. The access this programme provided to Aotearoa New Zealand's most brilliant Māori scholars has been extraordinary. Your support was instrumental in making this haerenga possible.

To the Massey librarians, your input throughout my academic journey has been transformative. You have helped me evolve not just how I write and research, but fundamentally how I think. The service you provide has elevated my writing to something I can genuinely be proud of.

To my Tīpuna, whose spirits have guided me through every challenge and moment of doubt, and trust me, there have been many, your resilience, wisdom, and unbreakable connection to this land have been my constant guiding force. I carry your stories, your struggles, and your dreams in every word of this thesis.

Nō Ngāti Toa Rangatira ahau. I am very grateful for being selected as a recipient of the Ngāti Toa Rangatira Scholarship for 2024. This support has been instrumental in enabling me to complete this research, with the hope that it will contribute to advancing a better future together.

E hoa mā, my incredible friends who have been my pillars of support, thank you for the words of encouragement, your unwavering friendship, even when I have been missing in action, and most importantly your belief in me even when I have struggled to believe in myself.

Ki tōku whānau, first to my mum and dad: your sacrifices and love made this haerenga possible. Mum, though you are no longer here, your strength lives within me and will forever guide me. Dad, our conversations and the mātauranga you've shared never cease to amaze me, the depth of knowledge and history you carry is remarkable. To my siblings, in-laws, nieces, and nephews: how lucky I am. Your love has been my foundation.

And to my amazing husband, Craig Tuffery, and our children, Brontë and Lucca: you are my everything. Your patience during long writing hours, your understanding through moments of stress, and your unconditional love have been my greatest motivation. You are the reason I get to do this. I could not love you more, I am who I am because of how you love me. I hit the jackpot!

Dedication

To my Tīpuna, the guardians of our stories, the bearers of resilience, and the dreamers who fought tirelessly to create a future of hope and possibility. This work is a testament to your unwavering spirit, your strength, and your vision of an Aotearoa New Zealand where our cultural identity is not just preserved but celebrated.

To my parents, who taught me the profound beauty of living between two worlds, where Māori and Italian cultures and traditions are woven together to create a rich, complex tapestry. You showed me that whakapapa is not about boundaries, but about connections.

To my children and future mokopuna (no pressure), may you always know the strength of your whakapapa, the power of your voice, and the infinite potential you have inside of you. This haerenga is for you, so that you may continue to dream, to challenge, and to create the Aotearoa New Zealand that our Tīpuna envisioned.

This is not just a dedication, but a promise, a commitment to continuing the work of those who came before us, and to creating a future where our culture, our stories, and our potential can flourish without limitation.

Glossary

In this thesis, I have made a deliberate choice to prominently feature te reo (Māori language) as an integral part of my writing. As te reo is an official language of Aotearoa New Zealand, I aim to normalise its use throughout my academic work. When introducing kupu Māori (Māori words), I provide English translations in brackets on first use within each chapter, and thereafter the kupu stand alone. A glossary is included for reference, though it's important to note that these translations are contextual rather than definitive, as meanings can vary between iwi, hapū and their contexts.

While I acknowledge that te reo is not my first language, and I continue to develop my reo, I believe it is crucial to prioritise both te reo and mātauranga in this work. This choice reflects my commitment to staying authentic to the thesis's origins and to reclaiming knowledge in ways that resonate meaningfully with Māori. This research is fundamentally grounded in a Māori perspective, drawing on knowledge systems including whakapapa, pūrākau, whakataukī, tikanga, and te reo.

A key principle in this thesis is that when privileging mātauranga, concepts originating from a Māori worldview don't need to be explicitly labelled as 'Māori'. Thus, I refer simply to mātauranga rather than mātauranga Māori, and te reo rather than te reo Māori. This positions Māori knowledge and experience as primary rather than as a qualified subset.

In the accompanying glossary, I've provided translations while acknowledging that te reo often cannot be directly translated into English. Some kupu carry multiple meanings depending on their context and usage. Therefore, the translations provided are specific to how these terms are used within this thesis, rather than attempting to capture their full depth and breadth of meaning.

- Aotearoa - The Māori name for New Zealand, meaning "the land of the long white cloud"
- Aroha - Love, compassion, affection, sympathy, kindness
- Hapū - Kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe – section of a large kinship group
- Harakeke - Flax plant (*Phormium tenax*)
- Haerenga - Journey, expedition, trip
- Hau – Present in return for one received, reciprocating

- Hītori - History
- Hoha - Annoyed, irritated
- Ingoa – to name, name
- Iwi - Tribe, nation, people, Māori people
- Kai - Food, meal
- Kaihautū - Leader, director, commander, person who gives time to the paddlers
- Kaitiaki - Guardian, caretaker
- Kaitiakitanga - Guardianship, stewardship of the environment
- Karakia - Chant, song, incantation, ritual chant
- Kaupapa - Topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme
- Kawa - Māori protocol, ceremonial procedure
- Kāwanatanga – government, dominion, rule, authority
- Kōrero - Speech, language, conversation, discussion, information
- Koha - Gift, present, offering, donation, contribution
- Kohanga reo - Māori language nest (immersion preschool)
- Kotahitanga - Unity, collective action
- Kupe - Legendary Polynesian navigator credited with discovering New Zealand
- Mahi - Work, job, task, deed
- Mamae - Pain, grief, sorrow
- Mana - Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status
- Manaakitanga - Hospitality, kindness, generosity, support, care
- Maramatanga - Understanding, comprehension, insight
- Marae - Māori meeting ground, courtyard, complex
- Māori – Aboriginal inhabitant, Indigenous person of Aotearoa New Zealand, native
- Māoritanga – Māori culture, Māori practices and beliefs, Māoriness, Māori way of life
- Mātauranga - Knowledge, wisdom, understanding
- Mātauranga Māori - Traditional Māori knowledge
- Mōhiotanga - Knowledge, awareness, understanding
- Mōhio - To know, understand
- Maunga - Mountain
- Ngahere – Bush, forest
- Noa - Ordinary, void of spiritual restriction

- Ōritetanga - Equality
- Pā - Fortified village, settlement
- Papatūānuku - Earth Mother, ground, base
- Papakāinga - Home base, village, communal Māori land
- Pākehā - Non-Indigenous of Aotearoa New Zealand, New Zealander of European descent
- Pono - Truth, right, authentic
- Puku - Stomach, belly
- Pūrākau (traditional stories)
- Raukawa (Trustees) - A specific Māori iwi/tribal trust
- Rangatira - Chief, leader, noble
- Ranginui - Sky Father
- Rangahau - Research, investigation
- Rohe - Boundary, district, region, territory
- Rāngatiratanga (Tino rangatiratanga) - Chieftainship, sovereignty, self-determination, leadership.
- Raranga - Weaving
- Tāngata - People, person
- Tāngata whenua - Indigenous people, local people
- Tāngata Te Tiriti - Treaty partners
- Tāngata whaikaha - People with disabilities
- Taonga - Treasure, valuable item, property
- Tapu - Sacred, prohibited, restricted
- Te Ao Māori - The Māori world, Māori perspective
- Te Ao Pākehā - The European world, European perspective
- Te Pou Tupua - Legal personality representing Whanganui River
- Te Reo - The Māori language
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi - The Treaty of Waitangi
- Te Urewera (Act 2014) - Legislation giving legal personhood to a specific area
- Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi - The House of the Treaty of Waitangi
- Te Whare Tikanga Pākehā - European house/perspective
- Te Whare Tikanga Māori - Māori human house/perspective
- Teina - Younger sibling or junior member

- Tika - Correct, right, proper
- Tikanga - Customs, traditions, protocol, social practices
- Tīpuna/ Tūpuna - Ancestors
- Tira - Group, party, delegation
- Tuakana - Elder sibling or senior member
- Tuarua – Second
- Tuawhā - Fourth
- Tuatoru - Third
- Ture – Law, rule, statute
- Waitangi - Place of weeping (historic site of Treaty signing)
- Waitākere (Ranges) - Mountain range near Auckland
- Wairua - Spirit, soul
- Wānanga - Learning institution, seminar, conference
- Whakapapa - Genealogy, lineage, descent
- Whakawhanaungatanga - Process of establishing relationships
- Whaka-papatūānuku - Connecting with Earth Mother
- Whakataukī - Proverb, saying
- Whānau - Extended family, family group
- Whare – house, building, residence, dwelling
- Whāriki - Mat, floor covering
- Whenua - Land

Rāranga Upoko: Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Karakia Tīmatanga, He Mihi	iv
Ko wai au?.....	vi
Orokohanga.....	vii
Acknowledgements	ix
Dedication	xi
Glossary	xii
Ngā Tūtohi: List of Figures & Tables.....	xx
Kupu Whakataki: Introduction.....	1
Overview of Chapter	1
Positionality.....	2
Cultural Identity and Family Heritage	3
Educational Journey.....	4
Leadership and Research	5
Context and Rationale for the Research	6
Research Aims and Objectives	7
Research Process and Strategy	8
Outline of thesis	9
Chapter Summary	10
Upoko Tuatahi: Understanding Co-Governance: Historical, Cultural, and Governance Perspectives.....	11
Overview of chapter	11
Historical Foundations of Co-Governance in Aotearoa New Zealand	11
Colonial Foundations	12
Key Events in the Evolution of Co-Governance in Aotearoa New Zealand	12
Te Tiriti o Waitangi: A Blueprint for Bicultural Governance.....	14
Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Reo Version)	15
The Impact of Colonisation on Māori society	17
Decolonisation.....	18
Indigenisation	19
International Context: UNDRIP and Māori Rights in Aotearoa New Zealand	19
Governance Perspectives: Western and Indigenous Approaches.....	21
Governance from a Western Perspective.....	21

Governance from an Indigenous Perspective	22
Governance from a Māori perspective	23
Epistemological and Ontological Pluralism in Governance	26
Co-Governance in Practice: Case studies and models	26
Chapter Summary	29
Upoko Tuarua: Methodology	31
Overview of chapter	31
Kaupapa Māori Research Framework.....	31
Ontology and Epistemology in Research	33
Māori Rangatira Mātauranga	34
Data collection: Semi-structured interviews	34
Guiding Interview Questions	34
Participant Selection	35
Participant Anonymisation in this Research	35
The Interview process	35
Ethical considerations	36
Data Analysis: Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA).....	37
The six-phase analytical process	37
Chapter Summary	40
Upoko Tuatoru: Findings	42
Overview of chapter	42
Participant Anonymisation in this Research	43
Theme Tuatahi – Te Tiriti o Waitangi and co-governance.....	43
Te Tiriti as a partnership, not a solely Māori issue.....	43
Challenges Interpreting differences between Te Tiriti and The Treaty	44
Co-governance as a Response to Te Tiriti Obligations.....	44
Navigating Crown and Māori Relationships.....	45
Co-Governance as Authentic Collaboration	46
Summary: Understanding Co-Governance and Te Tiriti o Waitangi	47
Theme Tuarua: Hītori (History).....	47
Economic Impact of Colonisation	47
Addressing Colonial Trauma and Reclaiming Decision-Making Power	48
Identity and Whakapapa in Leadership	49
Economic Marginalisation and Leadership Challenges	49

The importance of Mātauranga in Governance	49
Historical Divides and Distrust in Crown-Māori Relations.....	50
Healing Trauma and Building Trust Through Co-Governance.....	50
Connection to Land and Sustainable Governance	51
Moving Away from Western Frameworks	51
Summary: The Path Forward	52
Theme Tuatoru – Te Ao Māori: Integrating a Māori Worldview into Co-Governance	52
Barriers to Integrating Te Ao Māori in Co-Governance.....	53
The Centrality of Whakapapa in Māori Leadership	53
The Importance of Relationships and Wānanga in Co-Governance	54
The importance of Mātauranga in Co-Governance	55
Summary: The Value of Te Ao Māori in Co-Governance	56
Theme Tuawhā – Building Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi	58
Stage Tuatahi: Securing Te Whare Tikanga Māori	58
Stage Tuarua: Building the foundations of Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi	59
Stage Tuatoru: Building Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi.....	61
Summary: Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi.....	62
Upoko Tuawhā: The Co-Governance Haerenga: A Three-Stage Framework.....	64
Overview of Chapter	64
Stage One – Hineahuone (Foundations).....	65
Relationship Building: Weaving Trust into Partnership.....	65
Reframing Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Unlearning to Learn	67
Colonial Mechanisms and Misinterpretation.....	67
Confronting Power Imbalances: From Presence to Influence	68
Securing Te Whare Tikanga Māori: Cultural Revitalisation and Resistance	68
Implementing the Hineahuone Stage of Co-Governance.....	69
Stage Two – Hinetītama: A Stage of Transformation and Redefinition	71
Integration of Te Ao Māori in Co-Governance Frameworks.....	72
Whakapapa as a Transformative Relational Framework	72
Challenging Tokenistic Engagement	73
Implications for Organisational Transformation	73
Implementing the Hinetītama Stage of Co-Governance.....	74
Stage Three – Hinenuitepō: Wisdom, Reflection, and Guardianship	75

Transforming Organisations Towards Co-Governance.....	75
Decolonising Spaces and Embedding Māori Worldviews.....	76
Hinenuitepō as a Visionary Pathway	77
Implementing the Hinenuitepō Stage of Co-Governance	77
Chapter Summary	78
Stage One: Hineahuone (Foundations).....	78
Stage Two: Hinetītama (Transformation).....	79
Stage Three: Hinenuitepō (Stewardship and Sustainability)	79
He Whakamutunga: Conclusion	81
Key Contributions to the Research Literature	81
Limitations.....	82
Opportunities for Future Research	82
Looking Ahead	83
References	84
Appendices.....	96
Appendix A: Harakeke.....	96
Appendix B: Full Timeline.....	97
Appendix C: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Signed by Joseph Thoms and Nohorua.....	100
Appendix D: Participant Consent Form	101
Appendix E: Participant Information sheet	102
Appendix F: Participant Interview Run Sheet.....	104

Ngā Tūtohi: List of Figures & Tables

Figure 1. Partnership-two Cultures Development Model (Webster & Cheyne, 2017).....	29
Table 1. The Co-Governance Haerenga: A Three-Stage Framework.....	79

Kupu Whakataki: Introduction

Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua

I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past

This whakataukī (Māori proverb) guides my thesis, providing a lens through which I explore co-governance from a Māori perspective, the Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand. This Māori perspective urges us to look back through our history, particularly to the commitments made by our Rangatira (Chief, leader) in signing Te Tiriti o Waitangi with the Crown, and the aspirations they envisioned for this partnership built on mutual respect and shared purpose. Only through acknowledging and understanding these formative moments in our history can we move forward as a country with integrity.

This research also holds personal significance for me, as my own journey and sense of identity are entwined with these concepts of co-governance and connection to my heritage. By positioning myself within this work, I share why this kaupapa (topic) matters to me and why exploring co-governance from a Māori perspective is both timely and essential for navigating the future. Guided by the principle that understanding our past is essential for navigating the future, I hope this study will contribute to a broader understanding of co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Overview of Chapter

In this chapter, I outline my haerenga (journey) into the research, beginning with my whakapapa (Genealogy, descent) as shared in the prologue, along with my positionality and the sense of belonging that forms the foundation of my work. I reflect on my cultural identity and family heritage and how they have shaped my view of co-governance. I then share my educational and professional journey, which has driven my commitment to exploring Māori leadership as a model for co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand. The chapter then transitions into the context and rationale for the research, examining the pressing challenges of our time and the political landscape that makes studying co-governance through a Māori lens not just valuable, but essential. I outline the research aims and objectives, highlighting the specific goals and contributions of this study toward a better understanding of co-governance. This includes a brief outline of the methodology, key research questions and the approach I will take to engage with Māori Rangatira

(Māori Leaders and the name given to Māori participants in this study). Grounded in Kaupapa Māori principles, this approach creates space to engage meaningfully with Māori Rangatira, highlighting the profound value their knowledge brings to governance structures.

Positionality

E kore au e ngaro he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiatea

I will never be lost for I am the seed that has been scattered from Rangiatea

Acknowledging the influence of my positionality is critical, as it shapes not only my knowledge and perspectives but also my assumptions, biases, and worldview, all of which inform this research. To begin, I must understand my personal and cultural background, identifying the influences that have shaped my worldview. As someone with both Māori and Pākehā (non-Indigenous of Aotearoa New Zealand) whakapapa, it is vital for me to ground myself in these identities and recognise how they intersect to shape my perspective. This awareness serves as the lens through which I view and engage with the world, influencing my attitudes, values, and behaviours. As a researcher, it's imperative to be mindful of these underlying assumptions, as they inform the development of research questions, the interpretation of findings, and ultimately, the outcomes of our research endeavours (Bell et al., 2022; Bell & Thorpe, 2013).

Understanding one's whakapapa is central to finding a meaningful place for oneself in Māori culture (Grennell-Hawke & Tudor, 2018). Whakapapa encompasses the connections one has with their ancestors, sacred guardians, mountains, sea and rivers, all of which form an integral part of Māori cultural identity (Spiller et al., 2020). This sense of belonging is essential for developing a personal identity and fostering connections to both the land and community, providing a firm foundation that links individuals to their past, present, and future (Spiller et al., 2020). It also fosters an emotional attachment to Papatūānuku (earth, ground, earth mother), the earth itself. Grennell-Hawke and Tudor (2018) suggest that this grounding fosters an approach centred on serving one's hapū (subtribe) and iwi (Tribe, Māori people), the land, and one's family through the understanding of their whakapapa, their ancestral lineage, and their connection to the

earth. As highlighted by Jackson and Parry (2018), this quest for belonging is a fundamental aspect of human nature.

Cultural Identity and Family Heritage

As outlined in my whakapapa at the beginning of this thesis, I am Māori, I am a descendent of Nohorua and Te Rauparaha. I am guided by their voices and the voices of my many Tipuna (Ancestors) who have led me here today. Although embracing my Māori identity has been a journey, I have reached a point where I am proud of my heritage and no longer feel the need to leave being Māori at the door in Aotearoa New Zealand. Embracing the concept of "cultural hybridity," wherein individuals navigate multiple cultural identities (Grennell-Hawke & Tudor, 2018; Meredith, 1999), has profoundly shaped my outlook. It is essential for me to recognise the profound impact these factors have on my worldview and, consequently, on this research. It is from these differing world views that I start this research haerenga.

Although I whakapapa Māori, I also whakapapa Italian, and my Italian heritage played a significant role in my upbringing. My mother, of Italian descent, was an only child, so we grew up very close to her parents in Island Bay. My father is Māori and the oldest of 13. While we cherished moments spent at the Pā (the area of and houses around Takapūwahia Marae) during our childhood, our visits became less frequent after the passing of our grandmother at only 52 years of age.

I am one of six siblings, including two older brothers who were adopted at birth due to my parents being unmarried and partly due to my dad being Māori. My parents challenged societal norms at the time and went on to marry and have four more children, including me. In 1983, following a change in the law allowing adopted children to reunite with their birth families, our two older brothers joined us for dinner, marking the beginning of our united whānau (family, extended family). Since then, we have embraced each other wholeheartedly, forging a strong whānau bond that transcends societal expectations.

My cultural hybridity, the integration of different perspectives from my upbringing, has led me to this research. Growing up between two worlds has profoundly shaped my identity and provided me with unique benefits. This dual background places me in a

distinctive position to connect with my research topic and to comprehend the intricacies of living at the intersection of different cultures.

My personal experience has shown me the advantages of this intersectionality, giving me insight into how these overlapping worlds can enrich your life and perspective. It is from this vantage point, understanding and valuing both perspectives, that I embark on this research. This dual understanding serves as the foundation for my work, allowing me to explore the nuances and complexities of cultural intersections with both personal insight and academic exploration.

This awareness allows me the unique insights of co-governance, how two worlds can come together. With this privilege I endeavour to explore what co-governance means to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Educational Journey

My educational journey has been far from smooth. In 1990, I embarked on my first experience with university and teachers' college, breaking new ground as the first in my family to pursue higher education. However, navigating this unfamiliar terrain proved daunting, and I ultimately left without completing my studies. Over the next 15 years, I frequently travelled overseas, primarily to the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland, where we raised our two children.

Upon our return to Aotearoa New Zealand in 2010, I sensed a shift in the cultural landscape, particularly regarding the place of Māori in society. This observation spurred me to reengage with education. Five years ago, I decided to return to university while balancing a full-time job, pursuing a Bachelor of Sport Management. Concurrently, I embarked on a journey to learn te reo alongside my brother and brother-in-law.

Over the past four years, my immersion in Te Reo has been transformative. It has not only altered my outlook on life but also redirected my path. This journey of language acquisition, as expressed in the whakataukī “Ko tōku reo tōku ohooho, ko tōku reo tōku māpihi maurea” (My language is my awakening it is the window to my soul), has awakened a part of me that was just waiting for the right time to be heard. Rediscovering my language and heritage has given me a renewed passion for learning, connecting, and

leading. This self-discovery journey has empowered me to explore Māori leadership and the potential it holds for co-governance partnerships, an exploration I aim to further in this thesis.

Leadership and Research

In my final year of my undergraduate degree at Massey University, leadership and governance courses inspired me to research Māori leadership. This experience ignited my passion for understanding the unique strengths that Māori leadership can offer to Aotearoa New Zealand. This passion was further developed through a recent leadership project in which I crafted a reflective piece exploring the process of creating a wearable garment from harakeke (flax) see Appendix A. I chose harakeke for its profound ties to the land and to my Tīpuna, allowing me to connect more closely to my heritage. This process of crafting the garment revealed insights about resilience – gained by honouring and reflecting on the hands that have shaped this material through generations. The lessons embedded in these ancestral practices serve as guidance, reminding me that the wisdom of the past lights our way forward – as reflected in the ka mua, ka muri whakataukī that opened this chapter. The Māori perspective of time, looking to the past to navigate the future differs significantly from Western concepts of linear progress and forward-thinking (Mcneill, 2024). This awareness shapes my sense of belonging and understanding of leadership, informing my approach to this research.

The concept of Rangatira, a leader, encapsulates the essence of weaving unity among people. The term derives from raranga (to weave) and tira (a group), symbolising the weaving together of people into a collective whole (Spiller et al., 2020). Rangatira exemplifies the art of uniting people, inspiring collective journeys, and balancing heritage with modernity to forge a prosperous future (Roche, et al., 2018; Katene, 2010; Spiller et al., 2020).

Through this research, I aim to challenge misconceptions about co-governance, shifting the narrative from one of control to one of partnership, guided by Māori values. I conduct this research for Māori, by Māori and with Māori, acknowledging the knowledge and wisdom te ao Māori (Māori worldview) brings. My goal is to create a thesis that not only contributes to academic discourse but also serves as a testament to the strength and

wisdom of Māori culture, reinforcing a heritage I hope my children and future generations will feel proud to carry forward.

Context and Rationale for the Research

In Aotearoa New Zealand, co-governance has become a divisive issue, often inciting public debate and creating social rifts. In 2024, the political climate intensified these tensions as government actions began reversing Māori rights in domestic law, sidelining Indigenous rights, and diminishing Māori culture. This shift occurred with little consideration of Aotearoa New Zealand's historical commitments and the persistent inequalities faced by Māori (Mcneill, 2024). Headlines such as "Winston Peters compares co-governance to Nazi Germany" (Pearse, 2024), and the ACT Party's proposal to limit Te Tiriti o Waitangi through the Treaty Principles Bill (Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill, 2024), reflects an alarming resurgence of political challenges to Māori rights as outlined in Te Tiriti.

These events have fuelled my motivation for this research, which seeks to explore co-governance not simply as a power-sharing mechanism but as a framework of partnership grounded in mutual respect for Māori values and knowledge systems. Understanding co-governance through a Māori lens goes beyond conventional governance models; it honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundation for equitable partnership, equal rights, and tino rangatiratanga (Māori sovereignty) (*The Waitangi Tribunal*, 2024). This study seeks to bridge the original intentions of Te Tiriti o Waitangi with contemporary interpretations, highlighting its enduring significance as a model of shared governance across diverse worldviews (Huygens, 2007; Orange, 2015).

Defining co-governance also requires a broader understanding of governance itself. The term originates from the Latin "gubernare" or "guberator," referring to the steering of a ship, or its helmsman (Farrar, 2008). In Māori terms, this concept is captured by the kaihautū (captain) who navigates the waka (canoe). Governance, then, is inherently about setting direction and establishing goals (Joseph, 2014). Co-governance builds on this foundation, emphasising collaboration in decision-making processes that include all affected stakeholders (Gibson et al., 2023). This collaboration is not merely symbolic; it entails devolving power and creating shared representation across groups (Dodson, 2014; Somerville & Haines, 2008). In Aotearoa New Zealand, co-governance usually involves a partnership between Māori and the Crown, as structured by Te Tiriti o

Waitangi. The critical question becomes: Who steers the waka, and who decides the kaihautū?

Historically, Aotearoa New Zealand's governance and leadership models have adhered to Western paradigms, prioritising efficiency, authority, and profitability, often at the expense of community engagement and ethical accountability (Wilson & Newstead, 2022). This Western emphasis has marginalised Māori values, such as kaitiakitanga (guardianship), consensus-building, and conservation (Ciulla & Forsyth, 2011; Hippolite & Bruce, 2010). As contemporary global challenges heighten the need for people-centred and environmentally conscious leadership, Māori models of governance offer a powerful alternative. These models demonstrate a more effective and people centred approach to leadership, emphasising service to whānau, hapū (subtribe), iwi, and wider social and environmental communities (Roche, et al., 2018; Katene, 2010; Spiller et al., 2020).

By examining co-governance through a Māori lens, this research aims to shift the narrative from concerns over control to a recognition of the shared gains that can arise from such partnerships. Highlighting the contributions of Māori leadership and knowledge to governance, this study ultimately seeks to contribute to a more inclusive and culturally responsive model of governance in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Research Aims and Objectives

This research will endeavour to explore, how do Māori Rangatira in co-governance roles experience and navigate their responsibilities, and in what ways can their insights inform and enhance the practical implementation of co-governance to benefit Māori communities and strengthen governance structures in Aotearoa New Zealand. By examining the experiences, values, and insights of Māori Rangatira, this research deepens understanding of co-governance from within te ao Māori positioning these leaders' perspectives as essential to effective governance.

Using a Kaupapa Māori research methodology, which centres Māori protocols and practices, this study is grounded in Māoritanga (Māori practices and beliefs), thereby resisting the dominance of Western research paradigms (Mcneill, 2024). Through semi-structured interviews and qualitative reflexive thematic analysis, it will identify key themes and insights that demonstrate how te ao Māori can positively shape organisational governance. Ultimately, this research aims to advance co-governance

practices that are responsive to the aspirations of Māori communities, fostering change that enhances both governance structures and the wellbeing of Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Research Process and Strategy

To achieve the objectives, the study will engage Māori Rangatira currently or previously involved in co-governance roles across a range of organisations. Recognising the hesitancy of many Māori to self-nominate for such studies (Roche, et al., 2018), I will draw on personal networks within iwi, business, government, and community spheres to identify potential participants, ensuring engagement through whakawhanaungatanga (relationship-building). Each participant will have opportunities to ask questions and clarify any concerns prior to participating in the research kōrero (discussion).

The structured interviews will focus on six core questions:

1. How do Māori Rangatira define co-governance? -This question lays the foundation for understanding the perspectives and frameworks of co-governance from the viewpoint of Māori Rangatira. Insights gained here can inform discussions and decision-making processes surrounding co-governance frameworks, helping to ensure they are in line with Māori values and aspirations.
2. What insights does history provide about Māori leadership, Māori knowledge, and co-governance? -Exploring historical perspectives offers valuable context and lessons learned from past experiences of Māori leadership and co-governance. Insights from history can inform contemporary approaches, highlighting successful strategies and identifying challenges that need to be addressed for effective co-governance models.
3. How does a Māori worldview and Māori leadership contribute to organisational dynamics? -This question delves into the unique contributions of Māori leadership and worldview to organisational dynamics. Insights gathered here can inform practices that promote inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and effective collaboration within diverse organisations, leading to more equitable and culturally responsive governance structures.
4. What are the perceived benefits of co-governance? -By exploring the perceived benefits of co-governance, this question identifies potential positive impacts on organisational performance, community engagement, and stakeholder relationships. Insights generated

can advocate for the adoption of co-governance models, demonstrating their potential to enhance decision-making processes and achieve shared goals.

5. How does participants work connect to and benefit all of creation, Papatūānuku and Ranginui (Sky father)? – This question centres on Māori connections to Papatūānuku and Ranginui. It explores the inherent connection Māori have which informs and guides their decisions as a Kaitiakitanga of all things.

6. Do participants notice a difference between prioritising profit and prioritising wellbeing in your contributions? – By exploring the differing priorities of a Western worldview and a Māori world view, this question examines how these views intersect and the challenges reconciling these create.

Through these targeted questions, the study aims to capture the distinctive perspectives and approaches Māori Rangatira bring to co-governance, highlighting how these can shape governance in ways that benefit both Māori communities and the wider Aotearoa New Zealand context. By illuminating the potential of te ao Māori to enrich organisational governance, this research aspires to broaden the understanding of co-governance as a partnership built on shared values and mutual respect. Ultimately, the insights gathered will contribute to a framework for co-governance that not only honours Māori knowledge and values but also fosters more inclusive, resilient, and culturally responsive governance structures across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Outline of thesis

My thesis guides the reader through the research journey, beginning with foundational context and progressing through analysis, findings, and implications. In this first chapter, I have shared my story and what drives this research, laying out why this kaupapa matters and what I hope to achieve.

Upoko Tuatahi (Chapter two) reflects on our nation's past, a haerenga through time that shows how our history has shaped today's co-governance landscape. Here, I explore different ways of thinking about governance, weaving together Western approaches with Indigenous wisdom, particularly focusing on Māori perspectives and how these distinct worldviews can work together.

In Upoko Tuarua (Chapter Three), I explain how I approached this research, grounding my work in Kaupapa Māori principles. I share how I connected with participants and made sense of the mātauranga (knowledge, data) they shared with me.

Upoko Tuatoru (Chapter Four) brings forward the heart of this research – the voices and wisdom of our Rangatira. Their kōrero takes centre stage as they share their experiences and insights about leadership and governance.

Upoko Tuawhā (Chapter Five) discusses these powerful conversations, exploring what they tell us about co-governance and what this means for our collective future.

Finally, in He Whakamutunga (Chapter Six), I reflect on what we've learned, offering practical recommendations while acknowledging the boundaries of this research and my own learning journey throughout this process.

Together, these chapters tell a story of how we might enhance co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand, drawing on the wisdom of those who've walked before us.

Chapter Summary

Kupu Whakataki (Chapter One) has established the foundational elements of this research by presenting my positionality as the researcher and the motivations driving this study. I have introduced the aims and objectives that frame the exploration of co-governance from a Māori perspective, emphasising the importance of grounding this work in te ao Māori. This chapter has also provided an overview of how the research will proceed, using a Kaupapa Māori approach to investigate the insights and experiences of Māori Rangatira in co-governance roles. Together, these elements set the stage for the contextual review in Upoko Tuatahi (Chapter Two), where historical and contemporary perspectives on governance will be explored to deepen the understanding of co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Upoko Tuatahi: Understanding Co-Governance: Historical, Cultural, and Governance Perspectives

Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi

With your basket and my basket, the people will live

Overview of chapter

This chapter examines literature, beginning with a focus on the history of Aotearoa New Zealand and its foundational role in the development of co-governance structures. By contextualising co-governance within this history, we can better understand the pathways Māori and the Crown have taken towards partnership. Next, we explore Western, Indigenous, and then specifically Māori perspectives on governance, analysing how each worldview contributes unique elements to co-governance frameworks. This comparison reveals not only the strengths of each approach but also the potential challenges and missed realisations in the current landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand.

As the whakataukī highlights, “Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi,” effective co-governance is built on the premise that together we are stronger. By understanding the ways these worldviews intersect and diverge on co-governance, this chapter seeks to establish why this ideal of shared governance is not always fully realised today, and how these insights might inform a more balanced and equitable co-governance framework for the future.

Historical Foundations of Co-Governance in Aotearoa New Zealand

The ka muri ka mua (walking backwards into the future) whakataukī introduced at the start of this thesis underscores the importance of understanding our history as we navigate the present and future. This section explores Aotearoa New Zealand’s history, particularly Māori and the Crown’s relations, to understand the groundwork laid for co-governance today.

The bicultural framework envisioned under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti) aimed to establish a shared governance model between Māori and the Crown. However, this vision remains only partially realised, as the intended partnership has been repeatedly undermined by both historical and ongoing actions and policies driven by the Crown.

Colonial Foundations

Before early settlers arrived, the Doctrine of Discovery, established by the Catholic Church in the 15th century, laid the groundwork for colonisation (Mark, 2023; Miller, 2019). This doctrine empowered Christian nations to claim lands inhabited by non-Christians, ostensibly to "save" Indigenous peoples (Miller, 2019; Strong, 2013). This belief system shaped the mindset of settlers arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand and informed their interactions with Māori, often with dismissive attitudes towards Māori autonomy (Cunningham & Stanley, 2003).

In 1835, in response to the growing settler presence, Māori chiefs signed *He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī* (the Declaration of Independence of the United Tribes of New Zealand), asserting Māori sovereignty and independence over their ancestral lands (*He Whakaputanga - Declaration of Independence, 1835, 2024*). This declaration, recognised internationally by King William IV of England, affirmed the authority of Māori Rangatira over their rohe (area) and established their tino rangatiratanga as a core principle. It symbolised a proactive effort by Māori leaders to maintain their sovereignty and self-determination amidst the increasing encroachment of settlers in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Key Events in the Evolution of Co-Governance in Aotearoa New Zealand

The following timeline highlights pivotal historical moments that have influenced co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand. (For a comprehensive list of events, refer to the Appendix B.

- **950-1350 AD:** Polynesian navigators, including Kupe, arrive in Aotearoa New Zealand, marking the foundation of Māori culture and society (Huygens, 2007).
- **1769:** Captain Cook's arrival marks the beginning of significant European contact (Orange, 2015).
- **1835:** *He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī* (Declaration of Independence) establishes Māori authority (Winiata & Luke, 2021).
- **1840:** Te Tiriti o Waitangi is signed, intending to lay the foundation for a bicultural society. This agreement is considered the foundation of co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand, as it was signed by Crown representatives and over 500 chiefs, primarily in Te Reo (*The Waitangi Tribunal, 2024*).

- Personal connection: My Pākehā ancestor Joseph Thoms, three times great-grandfather and son-in-law of Ngāti Toa chief Nohorua, signed Te Tiriti alongside Nohorua (tangata whenua), symbolising the commitment to shared governance (*He Tohu Te Tiriti o Waitangi 1840, 2017*), see Appendix C.
- **1854:** The English Law Act introduces English law, which quickly becomes dominant, marking a turning point that diminished Māori customs and governance systems (Durie, 2011).
- **1858:** The establishment of the Kingitanga movement unifies Māori under shared leadership, highlighting Māori efforts to maintain governance structures (*Origins of the Kingitanga, 2024*).
- **1877:** The *Wi Parata v. Bishop of Wellington* case declares Te Tiriti “worthless, a simple nullity,” severely impacting Māori rights and disrupting the intended partnership established under Te Tiriti (Winiata & Luke, 2021).
- **1975:** The Treaty of Waitangi Act establishes the Waitangi Tribunal, marking the beginning of legal recourse for breaches of Te Tiriti and setting a pathway for co-governance. (Winiata & Luke, 2021).
- **1980:** The Waitangi Tribunal is formally tasked with investigating grievances, enabling Māori to reclaim decision-making power in areas impacting their lives (*The Waitangi Tribunal, 2024*).
- **1987:** Lands Case judgement. This case marked a significant shift in Treaty interpretation. For the first time, the Treaty was framed as an agreement between Māori and Pākehā, rather than its original context as an agreement between the Crown and Māori Rangatira. This fundamental reinterpretation created racial divisions that continue to influence political discourse today (Salmond, 2022).
- **1988:** The Royal Commission identifies the principles of partnership, participation, and protection under Te Tiriti, underscoring Crown obligations to support Māori self-determination and rights.
- **2010:** The adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) acknowledges Indigenous self-determination and aligns with the

principles of co-governance (Charters, 2019; Jones, 2021). The Puapua Report commissioned by the Labour Government in 2019 is seen as a road map to co-governance with intended full implementation by 2040 (Charters, 2019; Charters et al., 2019).

- **2023:** "Winston Peters compares co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand to Nazi Germany". This headline created contentious debate over co-governance's place in our society (Pearse, 2024).
- **2024:** ACT's Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill. This bill aims to redefine the articles of The Treaty, changing the partnership envisioned by Te Tiriti by removing Māori and elevating Western governance in Aotearoa New Zealand (Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill, 2024, s.6).
 - Article 1: The government of Aotearoa New Zealand will have ultimate power. Māori rights and interests are diminished as they are removed from this article also removes Māori from decision-making processes. Co-governance structures would not exist if this was confirmed in law.
 - Article 2: Māori Rights are greatly diminished, there is no acknowledgment to resources, lands or Taonga (treasures, valuable items, property). All Māori rights will be dependent on Crown approval through legislation.
 - Article 3: Equality, everyone has the same rights. Māori rights and status as a Treaty partner do not exist in the rewriting of this article. They have been removed as playing in part of our founding document.

This timeline illustrates how the relationship between Māori and the Crown has evolved and the challenges that Māori have faced in achieving equitable representation within governance structures.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi: A Blueprint for Bicultural Governance

Te Tiriti o Waitangi was designed as a foundational document to establish a truly bicultural Aotearoa New Zealand. It envisioned governance processes and outcomes that would equally reflect Māori and the Crown's values, perspectives, and knowledge (Dionisio & Macfarlane, 2021).

Te Tiriti o Waitangi also aimed to hold the Crown accountable for managing lawlessness among early settlers (Belgrave, 2017; O'Malley, 2019). However, historical and current

events show that the aspirations of Te Tiriti have been only partially realised. Māori have often been excluded from decision-making bodies, including local governments, institutions, and organisations, impacting their ability to contribute, maintain tino rangatiratanga, and contribute meaningfully to the future of Aotearoa New Zealand (Bargh, 2016; Came & McCreanor, 2015).

The question arises: why has Te Tiriti failed to achieve its intended aim, as envisioned by over 500 Rangatira and Crown officials? A significant issue lies in the translation discrepancies between the English version of the Treaty of Waitangi and Te Tiriti o Waitangi in te reo, a topic that remains under active debate. The two texts differ markedly in meaning, particularly regarding the authority and rights guaranteed to Māori. The Waitangi Tribunal has grappled with these discrepancies, acknowledging the importance of interpreting both versions together to honour the Treaty's spirit.

While the *contra proferentem* rule, which favours the interpretation most beneficial to the non-drafting party, has been discussed, the Waitangi Tribunal's approach has focused on developing Treaty principles that reconcile the differences and guide its application. The Māori version, signed by most Rangatira and Crown representatives, asserts tino rangatiratanga (self-determination), contrasting sharply with the "undisturbed possession" phrasing found in the English text (Mutu, 2018; Suter, 2014).

This divergence lies at the heart of ongoing challenges in fully realising the aspirations of Te Tiriti.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Reo Version)

According to Salmond (2022) the preamble of Te Tiriti reflects Queen Victoria's intention to protect Rangatira and Māori people, delegating governance to William Hobson on her behalf. The context in the preamble is crucial for understanding the subsequent articles, as it frames the spirit in which the agreement was meant to be entered into, one of protection and partnership rather than submission. The preamble's emphasis on protection and peaceful co-existence provides important context for interpreting the subsequent articles about kāwanatanga (governance), tino rangatiratanga, and ōritetanga (Equality) (Mutu, 2018; O'Malley, 2019).

Ture 1 (Article 1): Kāwanatanga– Chiefs agree to grant governance over their lands to the Queen.

Ture 2 (Article 2): Tino Rangatiratanga – The Queen acknowledges the chiefs’ authority over their lands and taonga, leaving any sale decisions in their control.

Ture 3 (Article 3): Ōritetanga– The Queen promises protection, granting Māori the same rights and privileges as British subjects (Hudson et al., 2010; Salmond, 2022).

The Treaty of Waitangi (English Version)

The English version presents a different intent:

Article 1: Chiefs cede full sovereignty to the Crown.

Article 2: Māori are guaranteed undisturbed possession of their lands and taonga but lack the same self-governing authority, as the Crown reserves exclusive purchase rights.

Article 3: The Crown extends protection, offering Māori the same rights and privileges as British subjects (Winiata & Luke, 2021).

As outlined, these translation discrepancies have contributed to misunderstandings and a persistent misinterpretation of Te Tiriti, leading to systemic inequities affecting Māori (Mutu, 2018; Salmond, 2022). While the 1975 Treaty of Waitangi Act empowered Māori to address breaches of Te Tiriti through claims and grievances, there is no legislative requirement for the government to act on the Tribunal’s findings or recommendations, leaving many issues unresolved and allowing social and institutional biases against Māori to persist (Mutu, 2018; Salmond, 2022).

Aotearoa New Zealand now stands at a significant juncture in recognising the dual commitments of Te Tiriti, which provides a unique model for effective co-governance (Huygens, 2007; Orange, 2015). This understanding is essential for creating governance frameworks that genuinely reflect our bicultural identity. Webster and Cheyne (2017) highlight the urgent need to acknowledge Aotearoa New Zealand’s history to better understand the current relationship between Māori and the Crown, establishing a foundation for co-governance to flourish within a genuinely bicultural society. As Salmond (2022) argues, embracing the *wairua* (spirit) of Te Tiriti and its original promise of partnership requires moving beyond colonial ideologies to genuinely honour this enduring commitment.

The Impact of Colonisation on Māori society

Colonisation profoundly impacted Māori society, resulting in the loss of land, language, and cultural practices (DeSouza & Cormack, 2009). Government policies, such as the Native Lands Act (1862, 1865) and the New Zealand Settlements Act (1863), facilitated large-scale land confiscations, severely undermining Māori economic independence and autonomy (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2024). Colonisation has relegated Māori to a minority status and systematically imposed Pākehā knowledge and norms, reinforcing a Western-dominant governance model (Hippolite & Bruce, 2010; Mcneill, 2024).

This legacy of colonisation has not only shaped Aotearoa New Zealand institutional structures but also created barriers to Māori participation in governance (Mcneill, 2024). The policies and decisions enacted by the Crown have often failed to deliver on the promises of Te Tiriti, highlighting the need for decolonisation and indigenisation. These processes offer an opportunity to reimagine governance structures that respect and integrate a Māori worldview, thus enabling co-governance that truly reflects the aspirations of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Understanding Aotearoa New Zealand's history is essential for contextualising co-governance and the experiences of Māori Rangatira within this framework. Despite the intentions of Te Tiriti, the envisioned bicultural partnership remains incomplete, with significant resistance still present in political and social spheres (Mutu, 2018; Salmond, 2022). Acknowledging this history provides a pathway to understanding and improving co-governance practices, highlighting the importance of genuine partnership, respect for Māori sovereignty, and a shared commitment to an equitable future.

History takes many twist and turns and there is no way of knowing what might have transpired had there been a reciprocal exchange of ideas and the equal partnership Māori anticipated with the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Petrie, 2006). However, after over eighteen decades in this unequal dynamic, it is evident to Māori – and increasingly to others - that the policies formulated, implemented and overseen by the Crown have failed to uphold the promises of Te Tiriti (Winiata & Luke, 2021). This recognition reinforces the need for decolonisation and indigenisation, supporting the argument for reimagining the transformative potential of a Māori worldview.

Decolonisation

The enduring effects of colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand have prompted conversations around decolonisation, aiming to address power imbalances and restore Indigenous self-determination. Indigenous worldviews are distinct from Western ones and must be recognised with equal respect to dismantle the idea of cultural superiority, which perpetuates colonial hierarchies (Mcneill, 2024; Nakata, 2002; Smith, 2021). Decolonisation, often defined as the withdrawal of colonial powers and granting of political independence, takes on a more complex and unique form in Aotearoa New Zealand, where both Māori and Pākehā identities are woven into the cultural landscape (Elkington et al., 2020).

Decolonising Aotearoa New Zealand, then, does not mean the removal of colonial presence but rather a shift in values, ideas, and systems to realign with Indigenous knowledge and perspectives (Came & McCreanor, 2015; Elkington et al., 2020; Smith, 2021). As decolonisation scholars argue Hoskins and Jones (2017); Huygens (2007); Mikaere (2011); Smith (2021), this process requires actively challenging colonial systems that have historically undermined Māori self-determination and autonomy, creating lasting impacts on identity, community, and environmental relationships. It involves revitalising language, tikanga (social practices), and mātauranga (Māori knowledge), to restore and sustain Māori ways of being.

Decolonisation must address not only the physical effects of colonisation, such as land loss, but also the mental, spiritual, and psychological impacts (Durie, 2011; Reid & Robson, 2000). Elkington et al. (2020) describes it as a process of healing, clearing, releasing, transforming, remembering, reviving, and reasserting the pathways of our Tīpuna. Similarly, Smith (2021) emphasises that decolonisation is not about rejecting Western methods but rather about centring Indigenous approaches, where Indigenous worldviews shape cultural values, realities, and governance structures.

True decolonisation requires recognising Indigenous sovereignty and integrating Indigenous legal traditions into mainstream legal systems, ensuring Māori participation in constitutional reform and land management (Dodson, 2014; Elkington et al., 2020; Ruru, 2012). This approach involves revising constitutions, dismantling colonial ideologies that have historically silenced Indigenous voices, and restoring land rights, which are fundamental to identity and self-determination (Winiata & Luke, 2021).

Indigenisation

In reclaiming Māori identity and values, some academics argue that “indigenisation” may be a more fitting term than “decolonisation,” as it recentres Māori and all Indigenous people as the starting point, rather than framing everything in response to colonisation (Hindmarch & Hillier, 2023; Lowman & Barker, 2010; Smith et al., 2019). According to Rangi Mātāmua (as cited by Yates, 2024), indigenisation focuses on centralising Māori values, placing Māori at the heart of reclaiming their identity. This approach aligns with the emphasis on Māori-led frameworks and cultural revival.

Indigenisation entails creating systems and structures grounded in Māori values and perspectives. This includes integrating te reo within education to preserve and pass on language to future generations, accurately teaching history including a Māori perspective, and developing culturally aligned business and governance practices that prioritise collective consensus (Manganda et al., 2023; Rāwiri, 2016). Recognising the importance of Papakāinga (ancestral land) and the natural environment is crucial, as these connections provide sustenance and identity, underscoring the significance of autonomy in health and well-being decisions (Tawhai, 2023).

Ultimately, decolonisation and indigenisation offer pathways to reestablish Māori identity, values, and autonomy within Aotearoa New Zealand’s governance frameworks. These processes empower Māori communities to shape systems that reflect their worldview, fostering collective well-being and securing the foundations of co-governance (Tawhai, 2023). By moving toward a decolonised and Indigenous-centred approach, we can restore balance and equity, aligning with the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi to create a genuine co-governance structure envisioned with Te Tiriti.

International Context: UNDRIP and Māori Rights in Aotearoa New Zealand

While Te Tiriti o Waitangi establishes a foundational framework for biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand, the broader international movement for Indigenous rights reinforces these aspirations. Adopted in 2007, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) sets out global standards for Indigenous self-determination, affirming the rights of Indigenous peoples worldwide to govern themselves, preserve their cultures, and participate in decisions affecting their communities (Bargh & Tapsell, 2021; Ruru, 2018; Te Aho, 2020; United Nations, 1948). This declaration aligns with the principles found in the United Nations (1948), which

asserts that all people are born equal in dignity and rights, without discrimination (Gilbert, 2007; Tawhai, 2023).

For Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, recognition under Te Tiriti o Waitangi has not fully matched these international standards. Despite the Crown's commitments, systemic challenges persist, leaving gaps between aspirations for self-determination and actual governance practices (Tawhai, 2023). Although Aotearoa New Zealand formally endorsed UNDRIP in 2010, with then Prime Minister John Key affirming the special status of Māori in policy and legislative matters, he stipulated that these commitments would operate within existing legal frameworks, limiting their transformative impact (Charters, 2019).

In recent years, initiatives like *He Puapua Report* (Charters et al., 2019), a report created to guide UNDRIP's application in Aotearoa New Zealand, have proposed pathways for enhancing Māori rights and representation. Yet, political resistance continues, underscoring the tension between supporting Indigenous rights on paper and implementing them in practice (Tawhai, 2023). Realising UNDRIP principles, particularly around governance and shared decision-making, requires acknowledging the authority and values of Māori within Aotearoa New Zealand's governance framework (Charters, 2019; Ruru, 2018; Tawhai, 2023; Te Aho, 2020). This would support a more inclusive partnership, resonating with the principles of Te Tiriti.

To advance these commitments, co-governance models must integrate Māori worldviews, such as tikanga and mātauranga, within governance structures, moving beyond tokenistic recognition to genuine empowerment (Joseph, 2014). As Aotearoa New Zealand navigates the implementation of both UNDRIP and Te Tiriti, the focus must shift toward creating governance that enables Māori to actively lead and shape decisions, fulfilling the original intent of both documents (Joseph, 2014; Tawhai, 2023).

In doing so, Aotearoa New Zealand has an opportunity to redefine its governance landscape through a bicultural model that reflects and respects both Māori and the Crown's perspectives. Grounding this approach in the aspirations of UNDRIP can strengthen the framework for equitable co-governance and set a precedent for Indigenous rights that lasts indefinitely into the future, *mō tātou a mō ka uri a muri ake nui* (for us and the generations after us).

Governance Perspectives: Western and Indigenous Approaches

Governance from a Western Perspective

Western governance systems trace their roots to hierarchical structures and values from ancient Greece and Rome, where leadership was often linked to virtues like wisdom, bravery, and moral integrity (Grint, 2011). Over time, these ideals evolved into a model emphasising individual achievement, material accumulation, and economic growth, fostering a "winner takes all" mentality (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013). In practice, these governance systems prioritise outcome-driven, linear processes focused on the end result, often overlooking the value of journeying and mutual learning along the way (Fleenor, 2006; Pinto, 2020). Governance structures in Aotearoa New Zealand, shaped by these Western ideals, have historically served Pākehā interests, perpetuating systemic inequalities that continue to disadvantage Māori communities (Hippolite & Bruce, 2010).

However, a notable shift in Western leadership paradigms have emerged, moving away from individual traits and virtues towards embracing more collective, collaborative governance models. Grint (2011) identifies this transition, emphasising how contemporary Western leadership now considers more complex understandings of context, interaction, and collaboration. In response to modern challenges, many organisations have adopted the Triple Bottom Line framework, integrating economic, environmental, and social interests (Pinto, 2020). Similarly, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has gained traction, defined as context-specific organisational practices that consider stakeholder expectations while balancing economic, social, and environmental factors (Zeimers et al., 2021).

This evolution in governance extends beyond traditional models focused primarily on efficiency, compliance, and profit maximisation (Wilson & Newstead, 2022), embracing collaborative leadership, emotional intelligence, and adaptability (Grint, 2011). These changes resonate with Indigenous values, such as kaitiakitanga (stewardship), which acknowledges the importance of sustainability and ethical leadership. By shifting from a singular focus on economic success to broader considerations of community and environmental well-being, contemporary Western governance creates opportunities for co-governance approaches that honour and integrate both Western and Indigenous

perspectives. This approach offers promising pathways for more inclusive and effective governance systems for Aotearoa New Zealand's future.

Governance from an Indigenous Perspective

Indigenous governance frameworks are grounded in an understanding of interconnectedness, where communities have developed distinctive cultural practices and relationships with people and environment over generations (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013). At its core, Indigenous governance is characterised by a sacred kinship with all of creation, emphasising holistic principles of reciprocity and relational harmony that extend beyond human communities to encompass environmental stewardship (Hudson et al., 2010). This relational worldview stands in marked contrast to traditional Western governance models, offering an approach that seeks a better balance between work, economics, and organisation (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013).

Indigenous governance prioritises equitable and sustainable practices, recognising the intricate connections between personal and collective well-being with the health of both land and community (Tiakiwai et al., 2017). The emphasis on reciprocity ensures mutual benefits are achieved and distributed equitably within Indigenous communities, fostering a governance approach that serves both current and future generations (Hudson et al., 2010). Unlike the hierarchical structures typical of Western governance, Indigenous approaches are relational and inclusive, ensuring that every voice is heard and valued in the decision-making process (Katene, 2013). This type of approach is not about rigid rules but rather about nurturing relationships (Alfred, 1999).

A critical aspect of Indigenous governance involves the process of re-indigenising spaces and dismantling colonial power structures that perpetuate inequality and marginalisation (Taiepa, 2013). This decolonising approach seeks to embed Indigenous values and knowledge systems within mainstream governance structures, promoting decision-making practices that support environmental and social well-being while challenging dominant paradigms to ensure Indigenous voices are integral to decision-making processes (Elkington et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2019; Smith, 2021; Taiepa, 2013).

Examples of the successful application of Indigenous governance principles within modern systems include the Nisga'a Nation and the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Nisga'a

Nation, located in Northwestern British Columbia, Canada. The Nisga'a Nation's 2000 Final Agreement established a governance framework that blends traditional Nisga'a laws (Ayuukhl Nisga'a) with contemporary administrative systems (Blackburn, 2021). Similarly, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, whose tribal lands are located in central Oklahoma, integrates Indigenous values and knowledge into modern business practices, creating one of the most successful tribal economies in the United States (Cornell & Kalt, 2010). Both attribute their success to cultural resilience, strong leadership and investment in education and capacity building (Blackburn, 2021; Cornell & Kalt, 2010).

These examples showcase how Indigenous governance systems can successfully maintain their cultural foundations while adapting to contemporary contexts. Their achievements in environmental stewardship, consensus-based decision-making, and long-term planning for generational sustainability demonstrate the enduring relevance and effectiveness of Indigenous governance principles in modern settings. Embracing Indigenous governance perspectives could foster a more interconnected and sustainable world (Webster & Cheyne, 2017). Such perspectives are increasingly valuable in our globally connected and interdependent society.

Governance from a Māori perspective

Building on the principles of Indigenous governance, Māori governance embodies a distinct worldview that upholds collective well-being and intergenerational responsibility (Katene, 2013). Much of what is known about Māori governance is reflected in the wisdom of whakataukī, which encapsulate ancestral knowledge and provide enduring guidance for leadership and decision-making. Grounded in the overarching whakataukī that opened this thesis, this approach draws on ancestral wisdom to navigate the future, as reflected in the phrase ka mua, ka muri (walking backwards into the future) (Rangiwai, 2018). This interconnected understanding positions humans as inseparable from their ecological and spiritual environment, with a reciprocal duty to care for the land, communities, and future generations (Haar et al., 2019; Joseph, & Benton, 2021; Ruru, 2018; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013).

The whakataukī, Whatungarongaro te tangata toitū te whenua—as man disappears from sight, the land remains—captures this enduring perspective, underscoring the profound respect for Papatūānuku and the inherent, lasting relationship between people and the natural world (Spiller et al., 2020). Central to this worldview are values like whakapapa,

kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, and mana (authority), each playing a pivotal role in shaping governance practices that prioritise collective well-being and environmental respect (Mead, 2016).

Māori governance emphasises collective responsibility, community well-being, and environmental guardianship, with decision-making rooted in dialogue, care, and unity (Joseph & Benton, 2021; Winiata & Luke, 2021). The whakataukī Te kai a te rangatira, he kōrero. Te tohu o te rangatira, he manaaki. Te mahi a te rangatira, he whakatira te iwi—"the food of the leader is talk, the sign of a leader is to care for others, and the work of the leader is to unite the people"—encapsulates Māori leadership values. Leaders are seen as stewards of the community, upholding thoughtful communication, respect, and unity to sustain collective well-being (Haar et al., 2019; Katene, 2013; Maxwell et al., 2020; Spiller et al., 2020; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013).

In contrast to hierarchical Western models, Māori governance is inherently collaborative, with decisions guided by consensus and a focus on collective interests. This approach is symbolised by the whāriki (woven mat), a metaphor for an interconnected, inclusive decision-making process that incorporates Māori values, principles, and practices (Joseph & Benton, 2021). The whāriki reflects a commitment to ensuring that governance is culturally grounded, honouring all relationships involved (Bathurst & Edwards, 2011).

Māori leadership is also centred on mana, or authority conferred by the community, requiring leaders to act with integrity and remain accountable to their people (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013). This reflects the values expressed in the earlier whakataukī, emphasising dialogue, care, and unity as essential elements of leadership. Leaders are expected to balance their power with the collective's well-being, reflecting a holistic governance approach that aligns with the whakataukī, the focus on unity, care, and responsible leadership (Spiller et al., 2020). This model reinforces that true governance is grounded in service to the people and care for the land (Bargh & Tapsell, 2021; Smith, 2013).

Principles such as whakapapa, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, and mana provide a framework for inclusive and sustainable decision-making, ensuring governance reflects the interconnected relationships between people, ancestors, and the environment (Joseph & Benton, 2021; Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013; Spiller

et al., 2020). These values guide leaders in fostering equity, resilience, and balance, shaping a model of governance deeply rooted in Māori worldviews.

Whakapapa

Whakapapa is the foundation of relationships, connecting individuals to each other, their ancestors, and the natural world (Spiller et al., 2020). As a guiding principle in governance, it encourages leaders to approach decisions holistically, considering the well-being of both current and future generations. This relational approach fosters inclusive decision-making, promoting health and balance across community and environmental spheres (Jospeh & Benton, 2021; Salmond, 2022).

Kaitiakitanga

Kaitiakitanga represents stewardship over the environment, rooted in a commitment to care for Papatūānuku and all living things (Jospeh & Benton, 2021). This principle promotes sustainable management of resources, aligning with leaders' responsibilities to protect natural resources for future generations. It shapes governance by encouraging policies that prioritise environmental well-being over exploitation (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013).

Manaakitanga

Manaakitanga embodies compassion, respect, and support for others, fostering an inclusive culture within governance. It guides Māori Rangatira in co-governance roles to build respectful relationships with all stakeholders, ensuring policies are fair, culturally sensitive, and beneficial to the wider community (Jospeh & Benton, 2021; Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013).

Mana

Mana represents authority and influence, granted by the community to leaders who act with integrity and prioritise the collective good. In governance, mana requires leaders to use their influence responsibly, ensuring Māori voices are recognised and valued in decision-making processes (Katene, 2013; Spiller et al., 2020).

These principles reinforce a governance approach that fosters equity and resilience, embedding both social and environmental considerations into decision-making. By

centring whakapapa, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, and mana, co-governance structures can embody a model that genuinely serves all of Aotearoa New Zealand (Jospeh & Benton, 2021; Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2018; Petrie, 2006).

Epistemological and Ontological Pluralism in Governance

Epistemological and ontological pluralism are concepts that acknowledge the coexistence of diverse ways of understanding reality and knowledge. Ontological pluralism accepts that different cultures may have distinct interpretations of what constitutes “reality” or “truth,” requiring governance structures to be flexible enough to embrace multiple worldviews (Mercier, 2023; Spiller et al., 2011). In the context of co-governance, this means recognising that Māori and Western perspectives may conceptualise fundamental aspects of existence in unique ways, fostering mutual respect and creating space for both to thrive.

Epistemological pluralism values the coexistence of diverse knowledge systems, ensuring that various ways of knowing—such as mātauranga and Western scientific frameworks—are equally represented within governance. By integrating these perspectives, governance can benefit from a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of issues, allowing for culturally responsive decision-making (Bell et al., 2022; Mercier, 2023).

Together, these pluralistic approaches are essential for effective co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand, as they honour the historical foundations and contemporary realities of both Māori and Western systems. Respecting ontological and epistemological diversity provides the foundation for more inclusive, equitable, and effective governance frameworks.

Co-Governance in Practice: Case studies and models

Co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand represents a unique model informed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, aiming to foster a partnership between Māori and the Crown. This governance framework combines Māori and Western knowledge systems, promoting shared decision-making that respects the principles of kāwanatanga, tino rangatiratanga, and ōritetanga outlined in Te Tiriti (*The Waitangi Tribunal*, 2024).

Successful co-governance examples illustrate how these principles are applied. For instance, the Waikato River Authority exemplifies collaborative governance, where Māori

and Crown representatives work together to protect the river's health, integrating Māori knowledge with Western conservation practices (Jones, 2021). Similarly, the partnership between Auckland City Council and local iwi to manage Kauri Dieback in the Waitākere Ranges demonstrates how co-governance can lead to effective environmental stewardship through shared responsibility and respect for Māori values (Gibson et al., 2023).

Another prominent example is the Te Urewera Act 2014, which established a co-governance framework between the Tūhoe iwi and the Crown for managing Te Urewera. This agreement represents a significant shift in environmental governance, integrating Māori perspectives with Western knowledge in the management of the region, ensuring Tūhoe has a central role as kaitiaki (guardians) of their ancestral land (Sanders, 2017). This co-governance model reflects how Indigenous-led stewardship can be implemented while respecting the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Another such authority exhibiting co-governance frameworks is Te Pou Tupua, established after the Whanganui River Claim Settlement Act of 2017, giving the Whanganui River legal personhood (Hutchison, 2014; Salmond, 2014). Te Pou Tupua is made up of one representative each from iwi and The Crown, defined as the “human face and voice” for the river (Salmond, 2014). This blending of differing worldviews, Māori and Western, to protect and respect the river as a living being rather than parts of a resource to be controlled and divided (Hutchison, 2014).

Despite these case studies showcasing the potential of co-governance, highlighting the transformative potential for environmental and social outcomes, several critical challenges require careful consideration and active management. Power dynamics and resource imbalances are significant obstacles, particularly as Pākehā participants, who often hold the majority position and greater institutional resources, may disproportionately influence decisions to serve their own interests (Bryson et al., 2015; Emerson et al., 2012; Torfing, 2019).

This issue is compounded by capacity constraints, with a limited pool of experienced and capable individuals facing immense pressure to fulfil numerous responsibilities (New Zealand, 2016). For hapū and iwi partners, this burden is particularly pronounced, as they often juggle multiple governance commitments. Moreover, many of these roles are

undertaken on a voluntary basis, with individuals frequently contributing their time and expertise without financial compensation. This lack of equitable resourcing further exacerbates the challenges of co-governance, highlighting the need for greater structural support and investment to ensure its sustainability and effectiveness

Long-term sustainability poses additional challenges in co-governance arrangements, particularly in terms of financial resources and succession planning. Emerson et al., (2012) notes that sustaining collaborative initiatives becomes increasingly difficult as stakeholder interests, funding, and policy contexts evolve, often leading to disinvestment or withdrawal by participants. This is particularly crucial given that environmental outcomes can take a long time to achieve, requiring careful succession planning to maintain consistent leadership and expertise. Despite these challenges, Torfing (2019) highlights that collaborative strategies enable valuable knowledge exchange and mutual learning between stakeholders. This underscores the importance of addressing obstacles through clear accountability structures, transparent communication, and active management of power imbalances to unlock the full potential of co-governance frameworks.

Co-governance frameworks hold significant promise for honouring the spirit of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, achieving mutually beneficial outcomes while amplifying the unique perspectives Māori bring to governance. The Tikanga Māori house and Tikanga Pākehā house model, conceptualised by Webster and Cheyne (2009) based on the Raukawa Trustees' Partnership-Two Cultures Development model (Winiata, 2005) and also referred to as the three-house model (Community Sector Taskforce, 2006), provides a framework for exploring governance through both te ao Māori and Western values, (see figure 1). This model enables Māori Rangatira to exercise meaningful authority in decisions, impacting their communities, aligning governance with tino rangatiratanga. An illustration of this model is provided at the end of this paragraph.

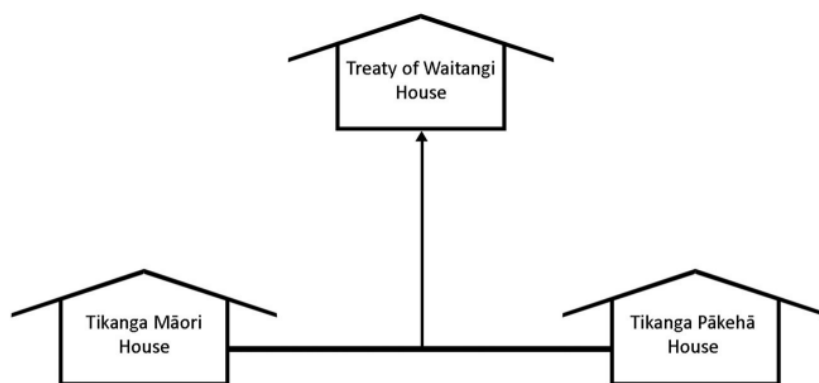


Figure 1: Partnership-two Cultures Development Model (Webster & Cheyne, 2017)

By integrating traditional Māori wisdom with Western systems, co-governance can create inclusive, equitable, and effective governance models. This approach not only embeds Māori knowledge and values into Aotearoa New Zealand’s governance structures but also ensures that these frameworks serve all New Zealanders, fostering better outcomes for communities and the environment alike (Webster & Cheyne, 2017).

Chapter Summary

This chapter underscores the significance of adopting a bicultural governance approach in Aotearoa New Zealand, informed by Māori values and grounded in the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The contrasting governance perspectives—Western, Indigenous, and specifically Māori—highlight the unique strengths and insights that Māori bring to leadership roles, particularly through values like whakapapa, kaitiakitanga, and manaakitanga. Recognising the pluralism of these worldviews is essential to building co-governance frameworks that respect and integrate both Māori and Western systems, ensuring decisions are informed by a holistic understanding of people, culture, and environment.

By examining these distinct approaches, this chapter provides a foundation for addressing the overarching research questions, which seek to understand how Māori Rangatira navigate co-governance roles and how their insights can enhance governance structures in Aotearoa New Zealand. The next chapter will outline the methodology used in this research, detailing the approach and methods that allow for an in-depth exploration of Māori Rangatira experiences and perspectives in co-governance. This methodological framework is designed to uphold culturally responsive practices that

align with Māori values, ensuring that the research process itself embodies the principles of partnership and respect integral to the study's focus.

Upoko Tuarua: Methodology

Ko te manu e kai ana i te miro, nōna te ngahere. Ko te manu e kai ana i te mātauranga, nōna te ao

The bird that feeds on the miro berry, theirs is the forest. The bird that feeds on the tree of knowledge, theirs is the world.

Overview of chapter

This whakataukī speaks to the importance of learning and how knowledge helps us to realise our potential. To ensure this research achieves a rich and nuanced understanding, it is crucial to adopt an appropriate methodological approach. With that in mind, I cannot start the research of co-governance without first asking Māori what it is and why it is important. Given the Māori word for research is rangahau, which implies raranga (weaving together) and hau (reciprocating), (Henry & Wolfgramm, 2015), this research is about hearing the collective voices to give a better understanding of co-governance.

This chapter outlines the methodology used to gather valuable insights into the experiences of Māori Rangatira in co-governance roles. It explores how they navigate their responsibilities and considers how their perspectives can strengthen governance structures in Aotearoa New Zealand. A Kaupapa Māori approach is central to this research, as it centres Māori voices, values, and mātauranga to authentically capture their experiences. By adhering to this approach, the research upholds Māori self-determination and ensures that Māori perspectives are prioritised in discussions on co-governance.

Kaupapa Māori Research Framework

Historical research, predominantly shaped and validated through Western scientific methods and colonial perspectives, has systematically marginalised and devalued Māori voices and mātauranga (Clément, 2017; Mika & Stewart, 2017). As Smith (2021) explains, such Western centred research rarely extended or valued Māori knowledge. Instead, it created a body of ideologically biased research that distorted understandings of what it means to be Māori. This misrepresentation trapped Māori within cultural definitions that neither align with oral tradition nor reflect lived realities. Today, there is growing recognition that Māori knowledge represents a valuable body of knowledge that can coexist and complement existing Western knowledge systems (Smith et al., 2019).

Kaupapa Māori research provides a framework for ensuring that research with Māori is conducted in a way that respects Māori ways of knowing, and self-determination (Henry & Pene, 2001; Macfarlane, A et al., 2019; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Smith et al., 2019; Smith, 2021). This is essential for this research on co-governance, as it deliberately centres Māori voices, leadership and mātauranga (knowledge). As Smith (2021) articulates, Kaupapa Māori methodology creates space for Māori researchers and communities to engage authentically in research processes and ensures their voices are genuinely heard. This approach is about decolonising methodologies, by establishing a Māori cultural framework that ensure research is conducted by/with/for Māori communities, prioritising Māori interests and worldviews (Henry & Pene, 2001).

This approach empowers Māori by enabling engagement in research that benefits their communities (Smith, 2021). Kaupapa Māori is fundamentally about working toward the greater good of Māori people, using a research methodology grounded in te ao Māori and a recognition of interconnectedness (Macfarlane et al., 2019). Centring te ao Māori in this research ensures alignment with tikanga (Haar et al., 2019). This alignment means that the research is not only about Māori but is conducted in a manner that honours and respects Māori culture and knowledge.

Kaupapa Māori methodologies focus on revitalising Māori identity and addressing past injustices to create a better future for Māori (Henry & Wolfgramm, 2015; Macfarlane et al., 2019). This research aspires to deliver useful and relevant outcomes for Māori, ensuring it is Māori centred, and contributes to addressing the inequalities Māori have endured as a result of colonisation and the erosion of Māori rights (Hudson et al., 2010).

Henry & Pene (2001) describe Kaupapa Māori as a set of beliefs and social practices, that is situated in combining the connection between mind, body and spirit, through whakapapa. This framework informs a traditional Māori ontology - what is real for Māori - and Māori epistemology, encompassing what is tikanga, what is tika and true (Macfarlane, et al., 2019). This research will be underpinned by the principles of Kaupapa Māori research, which:

- Are for, with and by Māori.
- Validate Māori language and culture.

- Empower Māori people.
- Deliver positive outcomes for Māori (Henry & Wolfgramm, 2015).

This research aims to gain valuable insights of the unique perspectives and approaches Māori Rangatira bring to the co-governance framework, highlighting how te ao Māori can positively influence organisational governance (Maxwell et al., 2020). Through this investigation, the study aims to shed light on the practical application of co-governance. It follows a knowledge journey from Mōhiotanga (the gathering and collecting of knowledge) through Maramatanga (enlightenment and understanding) to Mātauranga (the integration of knowledge within te ao Māori). This holistic approach examines both the process and outcomes of co-governance decision-making, considering impacts on Māori and broader society in Aotearoa New Zealand. It also acknowledges the responsibilities to Ranginui and Papatūānuku, ensuring that the research aligns with values of stewardship and sustainability.

Ontology and Epistemology in Research

In research, ontology and epistemology are foundational concepts that guides methodological choices and research design. Ontology refers to the nature of reality or what we consider to be true about the world. It addresses fundamental questions about the nature of existence and what we believe to be "real." In research, understanding one's ontology helps clarify the lens through which we interpret experiences and facts. For this study, an ontological perspective grounded in Kaupapa Māori acknowledges that collective well-being, cultural identity, and connection to the natural world are core elements of reality (Henry & Pene, 2001; Smith et al., 2019). Epistemology concerns the nature and scope of knowledge, how we know what we know. It explores the methods and sources of knowledge and how knowledge is validated and understood. In this research, a Kaupapa Māori epistemology means valuing collective knowledge, intergenerational wisdom, and lived experience, which are central to understanding Māori Rangatira insights in co-governance (Henry & Pene, 2001; Mika & Stewart, 2017; Smith et al., 2019).

Considering ontology and epistemology are essential in research, as these beliefs influence how we frame questions, interpret data, and validate findings. Aligning with Kaupapa Māori in both ontology and epistemology ensures that this research authentically represents Māori worldviews and knowledge, grounding the study in values

that are meaningful and relevant to Māori Rangatira lived experiences (Henry & Pene, 2001).

Māori Rangatira Mātauranga

Mātauranga represents intergenerational knowledge passed down by Tīpuna and requires handling with utmost respect for ownership, control, and access. All mātauranga shared by participants will be reviewed and validated by them, ensuring accuracy and consent throughout the research process (Hikuroa, 2017; Mead, 2016). Under no circumstances will their data (mātauranga) be shared without their explicit consent.

Data collection: Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews with Māori Rangatira are essential for this research, with a focus on kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) interactions to build trust and foster genuine connections (Haar et al., 2019). This approach, common in Māori research (Haar et al., 2019), allows for fluid kōrero, creating space for participants to share insights openly (Bell et al., 2022). The interviews will be guided by six key questions aimed at exploring perspectives on co-governance, but the structure will remain intentionally flexible, allowing participants to shape and lead the conversation.

Guiding Interview Questions

1. **How do Māori Rangatira define co-governance?** - Explores foundational perspectives on co-governance to inform inclusive governance frameworks.
2. **What insights does history provide about Māori leadership and co-governance?** - Contextualises Māori leadership practices and historical influences on co-governance models.
3. **How does a Māori worldview contribute to organisational dynamics?** - Examines the unique influence of Māori values within organisations.
4. **What are the perceived benefits of co-governance?** - Identifies potential positive impacts on organisational and community outcomes.
5. **How does your work connect to Papatūānuku and Ranginui?** - Explores Māori Rangatira sense of stewardship and environmental guardianship.

6. **Do you notice a difference between prioritising profit and well-being?** - Investigates challenges in aligning Māori values with Western organisational goals.

Participant Selection

Following a Kaupapa Māori research methodology it is important this research is conducted for Māori, by Māori with Māori. Recognising the reluctance of Māori Rangatira to self-nominate (Roche, et al., 2018), participants have been identified through my preexisting relationships and networks in iwi, hapū, business, government, and community leadership. This community-driven approach ensures that voices authentically representing Māori perspectives on co-governance are included.

Participant Anonymisation in this Research

To maintain participant confidentiality, all participants in this study were assigned unique identifiers. Participants are referred to as P1, P2, P3, etc., throughout this thesis, where "P" denotes "Participant" followed by their assigned number.

The Interview process

Prior to each interview, participants will receive an information sheet (Appendix D) detailing the interview process (Appendix E), including a schedule outlining the interview structure and a consent form (Appendix C). I will personally brief each participant on the topics to be discussed, address any questions, and inform them of their right to withdraw from the research at any stage.

Interviews will be semi-structured and recorded either via voice recorder or Zoom, depending on the participant's preference. To protect the anonymity of the mātauranga gathered, appropriate coding software will be used during the RTA process.

The interview process will be designed thoughtfully to ensure participant comfort and minimise fatigue. For in-person interviews, scheduled breaks will be included, providing opportunities for participants to have *kai* (food) and participate in *karakia* (prayer) (Maxwell et al., 2020). The inclusion of *karakia* serves to connect the physical and spiritual worlds, linking participants with their Tīpuna and creating a safe, respectful space for sharing thoughts. This practice brings purpose, protection, and proper protocol to the interview process.

Ethical considerations

If research is tika (correct) then all the participants, their whānau, the researchers, and the community will be left in a better place because of the research project (Macfarlane et al., 2019). This research will be conducted following the guidelines for Māori research ethics. A framework for researchers (Me whakatika te matatika ki roto i te tikanga kia tika ai) was followed (Hudson et al., 2010).

The Māori ethics framework references four tikanga principles, as tikanga reflects our values, our beliefs and the way we view the world (Hudson et al., 2010).

1. Whakapapa (Relationships): Understanding and developing meaningful relationships between researcher, participant and data collected is critical. Understanding the interconnectedness of all parties ensures that respect and compassion steer the research journey.
2. Tika (Research design, validity of the research): Ensuring the research design acknowledges the importance of partnerships and the responsibilities of Māori so that the project achieves its intended outcomes, which will benefit Māori communities. The research integrates principles of Māori data sovereignty, ensuring that all data gathered is handled with profound respect, acknowledging its origin, and affording participants the opportunity to review and consent to its usage.
3. Manaakitanga (Cultural and social responsibility, respect for privacy and confidentiality): The principle of manaakitanga guides the researcher to uphold cultural and social responsibilities, ensuring participants feel respected and valued, ensuring the mana of both parties is upheld.
4. Mana (Justice and equity): Ensures that justice and equity are of priority during the research process and outcomes, so as not to disadvantage Māori participants or communities. It advocates empowerment of Māori voices and perspectives at every stage of the research journey.

It is crucial to acknowledge that all data obtained from the participants will be handled with utmost respect for ownership, control, access, and possession (Maxwell et al., 2020). Participants' data will be shared with them for their review and agreement, from the initial transcripts through to the final report. Under no circumstances will their data be shared without their explicit consent (Maxwell et al., 2020).

Data Analysis: Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA)

This research employs RTA for its interpretative capacity, which is well-suited to qualitative and Kaupapa Māori methodologies. According to Smith et al (2019) RTA aligns with a Kaupapa Māori methodology, as it enables a powerful framework that honours Indigenous knowledge while maintaining analytical rigor. RTA allows for thematic patterns to emerge from the data, enabling the researcher to engage reflexively with participants' insights (Byrne, 2022). In a Kaupapa Māori context, this aligns with the methodology's emphasis on centring Māori worldviews, values, and lived experiences (Henry & Pene, 2001; Smith et al., 2019). Byrne (2022) argues that by employing RTA, the researcher can capture the complexities and richness of individual experiences, and the social processes involved in meaning-making. This is achieved by incorporating multiple perspectives to enhance the understanding of a phenomenon, considering the influences of language, beliefs, values, and social norms in interpreting understanding (Byrne, 2022).

Braun and Clarke (2019) illustrate the importance for the researcher to know where they sit on the continua of these theoretical assumptions and why. For this research, adopting an inductive approach enables the exploration of new ideas and discovery of previously unknown patterns or relationships (Byrne, 2022). This approach complements Kaupapa Māori emphasis on allowing Indigenous knowledge to emerge organically, free from preconceived Western framework (Henry & Pene, 2001). Embracing a critical perspective, allows for the analysis of how systems of meaning are formed, and how they influence interpretations (Byrne, 2022).

The six-phase analytical process

The six-phase RTA process guides data analysis, providing flexible guidelines to ensure themes align with the research question and Kaupapa Māori principles (Braun & Clarke, 2019):

1. Familiarisation with the data

The first step in this process is to fully immerse oneself in the entire dataset, engaging in thorough reading and re-reading. This careful approach fosters a deep, nuanced understanding of the mātauranga. A key element of this phase is ensuring that the mātauranga is treated with equal attention and care, recognising the mana, the

authority, prestige, and spiritual power, imbued in the contributions of all involved (Maxwell et al., 2020; Mika & Stewart, 2017). This involves honouring their time and knowledge as integral to the research.

2. Generating initial Codes

Codes serve as the foundational building blocks for identifying future themes (Braun & Clarke, 2019). They are instrumental in pinpointing key pieces of information within the mātauranga. Through iterative cycles of coding, decisions can be made regarding codes that contribute to interpreting themes and those that can be set aside (Byrne, 2022). In this study both semantic and latent coding will be employed. Semantic coding focuses on the descriptive analysis of the data, while latent coding delves deeper, uncovering hidden meanings, underlying assumptions, and the ideologies that shape the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

3. Generating themes

At this stage, the focus shifts from interpreting individual data items to developing a deeper understanding of all mātauranga (Byrne, 2022). Certain codes may emerge as representative of a broader narrative and, as a result, be elevated to the status of sub-themes or main themes (Braun & Clarke, 2019). As Braun and Clarke (2022) note, themes do not simply exist within the data waiting to be discovered; instead, they require active analysis to uncover relationships and explore how these connections contribute to a cohesive narrative.

A key task here is to identify patterns among the codes that are central to addressing the research questions. This is also when a thematic map or table should be created, collating the codes and related data items (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Throughout the development of these themes, it is crucial to present the findings back to the participants, whether through hui or another platform that best suits them. This process ensures that participants remain connected to the research at every stage, confirming that it is tika (Haar et al., 2019), and guaranteeing that their voices are heard and interpreted accurately.

4. Reviewing potential themes

This phase involves a recursive review of the themes in relation to both the coded data and the broader dataset. Braun and Clarke (2019) propose several critical questions to guide this process:

- Is this a theme?
- If it is a theme, what is the quality of this theme?
- What are the boundaries of this theme?
- Are there enough themes?
- Are the data too diverse or wide-ranging?

To address these questions, Byrne (2022) recommends incorporating Patton's (1990) 'dual criteria for judging categories.' This approach involves evaluating two key aspects: first, internal homogeneity, which examines whether the data within a theme share common characteristics, ideas, or concepts; and second, external heterogeneity, which looks at how themes are distinct and different from one another (Byrne, 2022).

The purpose of this review is to ensure that the items and codes appropriately inform the themes, and that these themes are suitable for interpreting the dataset as a whole (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Throughout this process, it is essential to track any changes made and provide clear rationales for each decision (Byrne, 2022).

5. Defining and naming themes

This phase involves a thorough analysis of the thematic framework, where all themes and sub-themes converge to form a coherent narrative and participants voices are heard. This narrative not only aligns with the mātauranga but also offers insightful perspectives in relation to the research question and te ao Māori. Each extract is interpreted within the context of its corresponding theme, while also considering the broader research question. This process creates an analytical narrative that guides the reader in understanding the significance and relevance of each extract (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Naming themes holds great importance as it serves as the initial indication to the reader of the captured essence from the mātauranga (Byrne, 2022), it is here all themes will be guided by te reo. This is important to me as it aligns this research in te ao Māori

and within a Kaupapa Māori methodology, even if this may seem simple this connection to te reo is important.

6. Producing the report

The final report is intricately connected to the entire analysis process (Byrne, 2022). When employing RTA in an inductive manner, it is essential to identify and articulate the theoretical assumptions that underpin the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This process may require recursion, as codes and themes evolve throughout the analysis, influencing the way the findings are presented. Phase six acts as the final review of the report, a phase that begins even before the RTA is undertaken. When appropriate, themes should build upon one another, maintaining both internal consistency and the ability to stand alone as distinct narratives when examined individually (Braun & Clarke, 2019). At every stage of this process, it is crucial to uphold academic rigor and cultural integrity, by continuously engaging with participants, fostering their involvement in the rangahau, and ensuring mutual agreement on the interpretation and representation of their mātauranga.

According to Braun and Clarke (2021) the RTA research method is not a linear, step-by-step guide. They argue that it provides a compass and map to navigate through the research, requiring the researcher to be thoughtful and fully immersed in the process to extract the maximum mātauranga gifted by each participant.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the methodological framework for exploring Māori Rangatira experiences with co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand. Central to this study is Kaupapa Māori methodology, which prioritises Māori knowledge, values, and self-determination, ensuring that Māori voices and leadership are authentically represented. The research aims to uncover how Māori worldviews and practices can enhance co-governance frameworks and decision-making processes.

Mātauranga will be gathered through semi-structured interviews, fostering in-depth conversations that honour participants' insights. Reflective thematic analysis (RTA) will guide the analysis, ensuring themes emerge directly from participants' perspectives and align with Kaupapa Māori principles. Ethical considerations rooted in tikanga are

emphasised to uphold respect, reciprocity, and cultural integrity throughout the research process.

Upoko Tuatoru: Findings

He waka eke noa

A canoe which we are all in with no exception

Overview of chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to present and explore the findings from kōrero with six Māori Rangatira, each with extensive experience in co-governance roles across diverse sectors and organisations. Inspired by the whakatauki "He waka eke noa" - we are all in this together, these discussions are central to understanding how co-governance operates in Aotearoa New Zealand, highlighting the unique insights, challenges, and aspirations of Māori Rangatira. Guided by six key research questions, the chapter examines the experiences of these Māori Rangatira to uncover the ways in which their leadership and perspectives influence co-governance frameworks.

1. How do Māori Rangatira define co-governance?
2. What insights does history provide about Māori leadership, Māori knowledge, and co-governance?
3. How does a Māori worldview and Māori leadership contribute to organisational dynamics?
4. What are the perceived benefits of co-governance?
5. How does your work connect to and benefit all of creation?
6. Do you notice a difference between prioritising profit and prioritising wellbeing in your contributions?

The depth and diversity of the kōrero offer a nuanced understanding of co-governance, shaped by the personal and professional journeys of each participant. Their collective wisdom sheds light on how co-governance structures can be strengthened to better reflect the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, elevate Māori voices, and create meaningful partnerships between Māori and the Crown.

From these kōrero, four overarching themes emerged that address the key research questions:

- *Upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Co-Governance* – examining the foundational relationship between Te Tiriti and co-governance, including its interpretation, challenges, and potential.
- *Hītori (history): Impact of Colonisation on Leadership and Co-Governance* – understanding the historical context of colonisation and its lasting impact on Māori leadership and governance.
- *Te Ao Māori: Integrating a Māori Worldview into Co-Governance* – exploring how Māori worldviews and practices enrich governance structures and organisational dynamics.
- *Building Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi* – envisioning the transformative potential of a true partnership grounded in Te Tiriti principles.

These themes serve as a guide for presenting the mātauranga shared by the Rangatira, offering a foundation for exploring their experiences and considering the broader implications for co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Participant Anonymisation in this Research

As mentioned in Upoko Tuarua (Chapter three), to maintain participant confidentiality, all participants in this study were assigned unique identifiers. Participants are referred to as P1, P2, P3, etc., throughout this thesis, where "P" denotes "Participant" followed by their assigned number.

Theme Tuatahi – Te Tiriti o Waitangi and co-governance

The relationship between co-governance and Te Tiriti o Waitangi is foundational, as it establishes the principles of partnership and shared responsibility that underpin these structures. Te Tiriti provides a framework for ensuring equitable collaboration between Māori and the Crown, yet it is often misunderstood or misinterpreted.

Te Tiriti as a partnership, not a solely Māori issue

A common misconception raised by participants was that many assume that Te Tiriti is exclusively a Māori issue. However, as one participant aptly noted,

“The irony is, that everyone who's in the majority thinks that Te Tiriti is a Māori kaupapa. You can't have one person in the Treaty. It's still really about education, isn't it? Jurisprudence? You can't have one party” (P1).

This quote highlights a critical point: Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a partnership, and understanding this shared responsibility is essential for any co-governance structure. Te Tiriti is not just a Māori concern but a joint obligation between the Crown and Māori, shaping our shared future.

Challenges Interpreting differences between Te Tiriti and The Treaty

Participants underscored that while Te Tiriti is integral to co-governance partnerships, its interpretation is often contested. The fundamental distinction between Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Māori text) and The Treaty of Waitangi (the English version) lies not only in language but in the underlying worldviews they represent. This divergence in meaning and intent creates significant challenges, as the te reo text reflects concepts of partnership, protection, and sovereignty central to Māori worldviews, while the English version often centres on ceding authority to the Crown. This misalignment affects legal interpretations and operational practices, leading to fragmented, inconsistent, and often inequitable implementation of co-governance structures. Aligning these interpretations with the original intent of Te Tiriti is essential to preserve the integrity of co-governance.

The misinterpretation of Te Tiriti has hindered the development of truly Te Tiriti-led organisations. As P1 noted,

“You have a legal duty to uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which is based on traditional principles. However, exploring what true co-governance or a genuine Te Tiriti relationship looks like has not been clearly defined or implemented. This makes it a challenging question to answer, as there aren't clear examples to follow” (P1).

The lack of clear examples to follow creates uncertainty in developing co-governance structures. Another participant stressed the consequences of these misinterpretations:

“Regarding the Treaty, we've been guaranteed tino rangatiratanga, but that promise has been exploited, and as a result, progress has not been made” (P2).

These reflections reveal a shared frustration with the lack of clear progress in realising genuine Te Tiriti partnerships.

Co-governance as a Response to Te Tiriti Obligations

Participants widely agreed that co-governance extends beyond administrative processes, it represents a tangible response to Te Tiriti obligations. As one participant explained,

“I consider co-governance to be a response to any Te Tiriti obligations. So, if I think about co-governance in terms of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, then we are abiding by the principles of Te Tiriti” (P3).

This view positions co-governance as an essential expression of honouring Te Tiriti, not merely an administrative framework. Co-governance is seen as a genuine partnership model where both parties, the Crown and Māori, engage in shared decision-making processes based on equality and respect.

Despite the challenges, participants shared a clear vision for what a Te Tiriti-led organisation could look like. Moving away from hierarchical structures, one participant explained,

“If we are gonna be Te Tiriti led organisation, most organisations follow a typical pyramid structure, with one person at the top. But if you are going to be a Te Tiriti led organisation well you can't have one person at the top. Te Tiriti is an agreement between two parties, our iwi and the current representatives of our government, the crown. So you can't have a Te Tiriti organisation with the single point at the top of your pyramid. You need to be equal, in their mana and the decision making, and all that sort of stuff” (P1).

In this vision, power and decision-making authority are distributed equally between the Crown and Māori, reflecting the principles of mutual respect and equity.

Navigating Crown and Māori Relationships

Participants frequently highlighted the challenge of navigating the dual responsibilities of upholding a Māori perspective within co-governance while operating within Crown institutions. Many described the difficulty of honouring obligations to Te Tiriti alongside working in systems where power dynamics often clash with Māori values. One participant elaborated:

“We need to reconcile all of this within -I'm still paid for by the Crown. So what we do is make the Crown side of this relationship better by understanding how these two things can work together. But if we're able to get this Crown side of the relationship in a place where we can understand better, where it can see better work and speak better, where it can wānanga better with te iwi Māori, then that's how we see we embody Te Tiriti o Waitangi” (P1).

This statement reflects the complexity of aligning Crown practices with Te Tiriti principles to create a more equitable partnership.

Co-Governance as Authentic Collaboration

Participants envisioned co-governance as more than a mechanism for fulfilling obligations; it is an opportunity to foster authentic collaboration. As one participant reflected,

“I really simply see co-governance is dual decision making between Tāngata whenua, and Tāngata Te Tiriti and us sharing our mātauranga together to make a richer, fuller, more successful experience for whenua and tāngata. And we come together to make consensus decisions around how to look after these things” (P4).

Integrating both Māori and non-Māori knowledge is seen as key to achieving successful outcomes for both land (whenua) and people (tāngata).

Participants emphasised that co-governance frameworks grounded in Te Tiriti principles are vital for promoting equity. One participant stressed that achieving true equity requires decision-makers with lived experiences:

“I say this pragmatically: when you look through an equity lens, it becomes evident that without the right decision-makers, those who share a common frame of reference or lived experiences, it’s difficult to achieve true equity” (P3).

Co-governance offers a mechanism to elevate voices traditionally excluded from decision-making processes, ensuring that equity is at the heart of governance structures.

Incorporating Māori voices into co-governance frameworks not only fulfils Te Tiriti obligations but also creates opportunities for other marginalised voices. As one participant explained,

“We’re going to privilege the Māori voice to open up the Pacific voice to open up the woman voice. Open up the tāngata whaikaha voice, and we’re not going to be apologetic about it” (P1).

This approach creates an inclusive framework where diverse perspectives are recognised and valued, ensuring that decision-making is representative of all communities involved.

Summary: Understanding Co-Governance and Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Co-governance, as rooted in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, represents a crucial partnership between the Crown and Māori. The discussions in this section emphasise that Te Tiriti is not exclusively a Māori issue but a shared responsibility that must be understood and implemented equally. Participants highlighted the complexities of interpreting Te Tiriti and navigating the challenges of establishing genuine, Te Tiriti-led organisations. Co-governance offers a way forward, balancing obligations and fostering collaboration between Māori and The Crown, while promoting equity by elevating marginalised voices. Through shared decision-making and mutual respect, co-governance can contribute to a more inclusive and equitable Aotearoa.

Theme Tuarua: Hītori (History)

The history of colonisation has had profound and lasting effects on Māori leadership, economic participation, and land rights, all of which continue to shape co-governance partnerships. The whakataukī *Ka mua, ka muri* (walking backwards into the future) threaded throughout this thesis encapsulates the idea that we must look to our past to gain insights for the future. Understanding this history is critical to advancing genuine co-governance, as it contextualises the resistance and *mamae* (hurt) that Māori experience in navigating contemporary governance structures.

This theme addresses key aspects of the historical impacts of colonisation, including economic exclusion, suppressed decision-making power, and ongoing efforts to reclaim leadership. Through participants' *kōrero*, it explores how these historical factors continue to shape the challenges and opportunities within co-governance today.

Economic Impact of Colonisation

Colonisation's traumatic effects remain deeply felt, particularly in the areas of economic exclusion and leadership. One participant highlighted the dramatic changes imposed on Māori communities:

"The drastic change in our economy left Māori behind and excluded us from the broader vision for New Zealand. Many people recognised that this was wrong. At the same time, we found ourselves almost landless, without any tribal wealth apart from our marae" (P2).

This exclusion led iwi leadership to take more proactive measures in advocating for Māori rights and inclusion in decision-making:

“This situation forced iwi leadership to step up and realise we needed to take action. Protesting alone wasn’t enough; we had to explore other solutions” (P2).

Addressing Colonial Trauma and Reclaiming Decision-Making Power

Efforts to address the harm caused by colonisation continue today. As one participant explained, their work focuses on healing the intergenerational trauma that colonisation inflicted:

“Our mahi, aims to break the intergenerational trauma and harm caused first and foremost by colonialism” (P5).

Colonisation created imbalances, particularly in how Māori were excluded from decision-making processes. One participant noted:

“There was a period there during colonisation where Māori voices and Māori decision making were diminished” (P6).

In this context, the importance of restoring decision-making power to Māori through co-governance becomes clear. Participants emphasised that the current movement towards co-governance is part of a broader effort to reclaim what was lost.

“And so I think that this day and age we’re trying to get back some of that ground that we’ve lost through, you know, hundreds of years of colonisation, of being marginalised. And there’s a bit of resistance to that at the moment. So I think we can learn a lot from the way that we used to make decisions. Pre colonisation. And look at some examples throughout our history that have shown how it can work” (P6).

Despite this resistance, Māori leadership remains committed to advancing co-governance. As one participant remarked:

“Yeah, to co-governance, right? And they might get away with it now and the next time. But it’s not going to go away. No, you know that would be my view. It’s/we are not going to go away” (P6).

Identity and Whakapapa in Leadership

Participants emphasised that understanding identity and whakapapa is fundamental to leadership in co-governance. Māori Rangatira in particular draw strength from their whakapapa, knowing where they come from, and this connection to ancestry is critical in navigating the complexities of partnership. As a participant emphasised, knowing where you come from is crucial to stepping into leadership roles,

“We had to walk thousands of miles back in '76 to protect our land. We’ve also had to march for issues like the foreshore and seabed, in order to be included in the conversations” (P2).

This connection to whakapapa strengthens leadership by reflecting the collective responsibilities Māori Rangatira carry from their ancestors, enabling them to navigate complex co-governance partnerships, that honour their identity and heritage.

Economic Marginalisation and Leadership Challenges

Economic marginalisation has further impacted leadership roles. As another participant noted:

“We faced a significant access problem in retraining people due to the changes in the labour market and the economy. Many industries that Māori were involved in, like forestry and freezing works, were being disestablished. As a result, we felt sidelined” (P2).

This excluded Māori from economic participation and created barriers to retraining and leadership development. This exclusion reinforced the need for co-governance frameworks to include equitable economic opportunities and representation.

The importance of Mātauranga in Governance

Mātauranga was another key aspect discussed by participants. Incorporating mātauranga into leadership and decision-making is essential for restoring the mana of both Māori and the co-governance structures they engage in. One participant expressed this need clearly,

“There was a period there during colonisation where Māori voices and Māori decision making were diminished” (P6).

This suppression of Māori knowledge and perspectives is a direct result of colonisation, which continues to create challenges in establishing trust within co-governance

structures today. Breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma caused by colonialism is central to restoring Māori leadership and knowledge systems. Reclaiming mātauranga in governance processes enhances the mana of both the partnership and those involved. The integration of mātauranga is not just about addressing past trauma but about empowering Māori leadership and ensuring that decision-making processes reflect both Māori and Western knowledge systems.

Historical Divides and Distrust in Crown-Māori Relations

Participants consistently raised the issue of how historical tensions have shaped a divisive "us vs. them" (P1) mentality, exacerbating distrust between Māori and the Crown. One participant commented,

"If you have created a narrative that dominates and you dismiss everyone that thinks differently to the main narrative, like "you gave it all away", "what are you complaining about?". Then it creates a divide between "us" and "them." Here, "us" refers to the majority with a specific perspective, which makes it easy to overlook other viewpoints" (P1).

This historical divide, reinforced by the Crown's failure to honour the commitments of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, remains a barrier to genuine partnership. This participant expressed frustration with the current government's actions:

"What's most frustrating about the current government's actions is that they aren't even trying to hide their intentions; It's blatantly doing. Their suggestions that they put out are just retrenching everything back into what it was, which is problematic" (P1).

This divide is exacerbated by governmental actions that appear to retrench colonial power structures, undermining trust and hindering the development of equitable co-governance.

Healing Trauma and Building Trust Through Co-Governance

To heal the *mamae* caused by colonisation and build trust, co-governance partnerships must address past trauma through open and honest dialogue. As one participant expressed:

“Despite being betrayed and deceived many times, both in the past and still in the present - often due to issues of dominance, power, and greed - we need to focus on what we truly require moving forward. What do we need? This includes our mindsets and skill sets. We must find a way to honour the strength needed for a positive partnership. It's essential to be strong, but sometimes we get caught up in anger. Instead, we should aim to replace that anger with compassion. When faced with abuse and the effects of colonisation, it's important to recognise that those in power often impose their will on others” (P4).

This process involves recognising the dominance and power imbalances that have characterised Crown-Māori relations and committing to compassionate and equitable solutions.

Connection to Land and Sustainable Governance

The connection between *Whaka-papatūānuku* (Māori and the land) is integral to Māori governance and worldviews. Participants reflected on the importance of maintaining this relationship in modern governance structures. One participant emphasised the importance of Māori rights in decision-making:

“Māori have specific rights that need to be protected. One way to ensure this is by being included in the objectives of Aotearoa, New Zealand. We have begun this process with court decisions, which have helped broaden our rights and recognition” (P2).

This connection to land is more than a cultural practice—it is about ensuring sustainable governance that protects the environment for future generations. Another participant expressed the broader vision for co-governance that aligns with this view:

“Co-governance ideally should have always been a part of our system, integrated into every policy and aspect of our country. Unfortunately, we need this movement because that integration hasn't happened. If we don't embrace this model, our way of life in Aotearoa will suffer—not just for Māori, but also in how we care for our land and waters” (P4).

Moving Away from Western Frameworks

A recurring challenge identified by participants was the difficulty of aligning Māori worldviews with Western governance frameworks. As one participant reflected:

“I think we’ve struggled with this in the past, mainly because we’ve tried to take on a Western framework. We’ve attempted to apply Western values and used Western types of mātauranga, which hasn’t always worked well for us” (P3).

Participants emphasised the need to move away from rigid Western models and instead embrace co-governance through a Māori lens to create equitable and effective governance structures.

Summary: The Path Forward

The historical context informing co-governance partnerships reveals both challenges and opportunities for building a more equitable future in Aotearoa New Zealand. Acknowledging the trauma caused by colonisation and addressing entrenched power imbalances is critical to fostering trust and collaboration. As participants noted, co-governance is not just about ensuring representation, it is about reclaiming Māori leadership, integrating Māori, and creating genuine partnerships based on trust and shared decision-making.

By incorporating Māori rights into all aspects of governance, we can honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi’s vision of partnership and ensure the success and wellbeing of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Theme Tuatoru – Te Ao Māori: Integrating a Māori Worldview into Co-Governance

This theme examines the influence te ao Māori brings to co-governance, particularly through layers of Rangatiratanga and mātauranga. Research shows that Māori leadership introduces a distinct approach compared to the traditional Western models that have long dominated Aotearoa New Zealand’s organisations and institutions. This theme explores how integrating te ao Māori with Western perspectives can enhance organisational effectiveness.

Central to Māori leadership are values of collectiveness, relationships, whakapapa and *wānanga* (dialogue), as shared by the participants. Māori leadership offers a unique perspective that emphasises the interconnectedness of people and the land. As one participant explained,

“If we have Papatūānuku at the centre of our decision-making, then we are doing right by her. If it’s tika, pono (right, authentic), and aroha (love, compassion), the key principles of those decisions, then it will feel right, and it will be right, and everyone will benefit from that” (P4).

This interconnected perspective ensures decisions honour not only the people involved but also the land and future generations.

Barriers to Integrating Te Ao Māori in Co-Governance

A major barrier to effective co-governance is a limited understanding of how these two worldviews can work together. Fear of the unknown and perceived loss of control by those traditionally in power have often prevented the inclusion of Māori viewpoints. Consequently, Māori voices have historically been marginalised, leading to the dominance of Western knowledge within co-governance structures.

“The issue of co-governance is important, especially when we consider the differences between Māori and non-Māori. There’s a belief that higher status roles are often filled by people with a Western background and knowledge. This can create the idea that only those with Western expertise can be effective in governance. As a result, someone who doesn’t come from a Western background may not be seen as having the same level of expertise, which leads to inconsistencies in representation and decision-making” (P3).

Despite the historical dominance of Western perspectives, participants expressed optimism, however, about the increasing recognition of Te Ao Māori as a valuable perspective in governance.

“There’s a lot we can learn from a Te Ao Māori perspective when it comes to leadership and co-governance” (P6),

shared one participant, underscoring the potential for growth and mutual benefit when Māori and western knowledge systems converge.

The Centrality of Whakapapa in Māori Leadership

Māori leadership is deeply rooted in the concept of whakapapa, which establishes connections not only among people but also between people and the environment. As participants explained, whakapapa forms the foundation of leadership in te ao Māori,

emphasising the importance of relationships in decision-making. One participant noted the centrality of people in Māori leadership:

“I think, really, the way that we, Māori, approach things, we have the person at the centre. You know, a kaupapa Māori way has and the person at the centre. That's what drives us, you know. Versus, if I think about profit making organisations, the person is not at the centre” (P3).

Another participant commented on the importance of being guided by Tūpuna.

“I think our superpowers, that when we make the right decisions that we are really Tūpuna led. And we know when they are Tūpuna led because they actually make sense in our heart. You know as well as in our mind. So, we can see the numbers. We can see the rationale. We can see the trends. We can see, you know what's happening in the particular market, but then it's all has to sit right in our heart and in our puku (belly)” (P3).

This focus on relationships and interconnectedness shapes the way Māori Rangatira engage with their communities. Through whakapapa, Māori Rangatira weave together people, land, and cultural heritage, reinforcing the idea that leadership is not a solo endeavour but rather a collective journey. As one participant reflected,

“... I think that the Māori worldview is a great way of trying to demonstrate, a different way of leading. There's a collective component to it. And my experiences practically of Māori leadership, it's definitely collective” (P6).

The Importance of Relationships and Wānanga in Co-Governance

Participants stressed the importance of wānanga and whakawhanaungatanga in co-governance. Genuine relationships built on trust are essential for effective co-governance, as one participant shared,

“The real power lies in relationships and trust. At the end of the day, it's about the ability to trust the person beside you and having each other's backs” (P1).

Wānanga creates space for meaningful kōrero, where all voices can be heard, grievances can be aired, and healing can begin. For example, after working through past mamae, one organisation focused on healing through wānanga, revised agreements, and a focus on strengthening relationships.

“After working through the mamae, the organisation focused on allowing healing to begin. This was demonstrated through the planning of more wānanga, enhanced relationship-building, a revised memorandum of understanding, and many, many “cups of tea” to strengthen relationships between both parties. Authentic partnerships, characterised by transparency and trust were essential, in contrast to broken promises and poor communication. Only by prioritising these elements could true healing and relationship-building take place between the organisation and the hapū” (P5).

Participants noted that fostering trust and relationships is crucial to co-governance, emphasising that these connections form the foundation of successful partnerships:

“We tell the stories of the maunga (mountain), of the ngahere (forest), of the plants that are on there. And then we slowly start to build all sorts of bridges and waves and patterns to the many narratives in different ways” (P4).

The importance of Mātauranga in Co-Governance

Mātauranga, Indigenous Māori knowledge, represents a profound and transformative approach to governance that challenges traditional Western decision-making frameworks. For too long, Māori voices and knowledge systems have been marginalised, a direct consequence of colonisation that has diminished Indigenous perspectives and leadership.

One participant powerfully articulated the historical context:

“There was a period there during colonisation where Māori voices and Māori decision making were diminished” (P6).

This suppression of Māori knowledge has created significant challenges in establishing trust within co-governance structures.

The current shift towards integrating mātauranga into governance is about more than historical reconciliation, it's about creating a more holistic, balanced approach to decision-making. As one participant explained,

“We are making more space for te ao Māori and Mātauranga. Spaces have never done it quite so well before, we had te ao Pākehā who took up so much space. Now we make room for more te ao Māori, to balance out the whole environment” (P4).

This integration brings a nuanced perspective to organisational values and community well-being. A participant eloquently noted the importance of maintaining sacred boundaries:

"Profit can be positive, but not everything that generates profit benefits the organisation or the community in the long run. Leave some things as being, you know, in a tapu (sacred) and a noa (unrestricted) kind of like realm, not everything is for public consumption" (P6).

The practical implementation of this approach is deeply collaborative. As one participant described,

"We make every single decision together from the very beginning, sitting side by side and talking all day" (P1).

Another added that this approach keeps the team accountable, noting,

"Working in co-governance always kept my wider team and I honest in terms of whether what we were doing was adding koha (gift) or hoha (annoyance)" (P5).

Indigenous narratives play a crucial role in grounding this approach. One participant highlighted the significance of pūrākau (traditional stories) by invoking powerful feminine ancestral figures:

"Ko Hineahuone, Ko Hinetītama, Ko Hinenuitepo, you know that to me, this is a Māori worldview right there from a Mana Wāhine perspective" (P6).

These narratives are not mere historical artifacts but living frameworks that can inform contemporary governance.

The integration of mātauranga is not just about addressing past trauma but about empowering Māori leadership and ensuring that decision-making processes reflect both Māori and Western knowledge systems. By centring mātauranga and drawing on metaphors such as Hineahuone, governance frameworks can reflect the depth of Māori worldview, fostering mutual understanding and respect in co-governance partnerships.

Summary: The Value of Te Ao Māori in Co-Governance

Participants' insights emphasise the transformative potential of integrating te ao Māori into co-governance structures. By centring relationships, trust, and collective decision-

making, Māori leadership offers a valuable model for creating more inclusive and effective partnerships. The recognition of whakapapa, the importance of wānanga, and the inclusion of mātauranga provide a pathway for bridging Māori and Western perspectives. Ultimately, this integration enhances co-governance and reflects the vision of a shared future grounded in mutual respect and collaboration.

Theme Tuawhā – Building Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The fourth theme emerging from the kōrero with Māori Rangatira highlights the concept of the three whare (houses): Te Whare Tikanga Pākehā (The Crown), Te Whare Tikanga Māori (Māori), and Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Figure 1). This third whare represents the transformative potential of true partnership, where both parties share equal responsibility and authority in decision-making, grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

One participant articulated the vision of this third whare:

"It's not until you create an environment where there are many more Māori and Pacific voices that you realise how different and better things can be. This isn't about privileging any one group. It's about ensuring everyone contributes equally to what we're trying to achieve... The idea was that a third whare would emerge, but it hasn't happened yet. Instead, we've been stuck with just these two whare. Just think about what we could achieve together if that third whare was born." (P1)

Through their experiences in developing co-governance frameworks, participants shared insights into the haerenga toward realising Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its transformative potential to enhance Crown-Māori relationships.

Stage Tuatahi: Securing Te Whare Tikanga Māori

The journey to securing Te Whare Tikanga Māori began with acknowledging the profound impacts of colonisation and the essential work of reclaiming what was lost. As one participant observed,

"We had to do a lot of the mahi (work) ourselves as Māori. Initially, in terms of co-governance, first we had to take it on ourselves to find ways to really capture the loss of our language, tikanga, kawa (protocol), and knowledge. We've come a long way in the past 40 years in addressing these issues" (P2).

This foundation of reclaimed knowledge and strengthened identity enabled Māori to envision and advocate for a new approach to partnership - one that does not retrofit Māori perspectives into existing structures. A participant emphasised,

"We need to start by recognising that it can't just look like a Pākehā whare. That's the first step. We also need to actively seek out candidates who reflect our values and culture, not just the ones who fit a narrow mould" (P1).

This vision emerged from years of discussion, and reflection, as another participant noted,

"We had a lot of kōrero over the years, this is what it would look like, has to look like it, because otherwise it's always retrofit. The strategy gets done, and then you ask the Māori person to make comment on" (P1).

The securing of Te Whare Tikanga Māori has created a powerful legacy for future generations. As one Māori Rangatira observed,

"You know we've got the kohanga reo generation that have come through. That understand and are really steeped in the principles, you know. But I think my generation we've done the mahi" (P3).

This grounding in mātauranga has empowered a new generation to take active roles in decision-making and build towards the vision of Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi, a house built on genuine partnership and shared responsibility.

Stage Tuarua: Building the foundations of Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The journey into decision-making spaces marked a significant step toward influence and partnership:

"It's crucial for us to be present in these spaces... even though we had no power, we could influence decisions, and it seemed to work pretty good initially... we didn't get what we always wanted, but we're starting to make an impact" (P2).

The transition from mere presence to genuine influence required persistent advocacy. The journey wasn't without its challenges. As one participant observed,

"Often they'll take the parts of Māori culture that they think are going to benefit the whole, and leave the other stuff behind, or even leave some of the people behind. But happily take a lot of our culture and branding and taonga... You gotta be optimistic... keeping an eye on the horizon. We're not there yet, but what else can we do to get there?" (P6).

Participants emphasised the importance of being heard to influence change, as described by one:

"Unless you fight for your voice, and you go to every platform you can, and you do it with compassion and love... you try and share our story in a way they can hear it" (P4).

This advocacy began yielding results. One participant observed:

"The first Māori strategy which has now been turned into an organisational strategy demonstrates its willingness to change which is significant" (P5).

Effective co-governance required relationship building based on aroha (love) and mutual respect. As one participant shared:

"Don't fudge it. Don't pull the hierarchy card. Yeah, just be honest because in my experience, many Māori if not all, will drop anything to ensure that their people are well supported" (P5).

This partnership often relied on patience and dedication, with years of collaboration laying the groundwork for meaningful change:

" We had countless kōrero, we often imagined what it would look like if we were implementing our ideas here" (P1).

Transforming traditional power structures was essential, as one participant described:

"We had to rethink the structure, we tried to push it to more or less, being like 2 CEOs equal in mana and decision making and all that stuff. From that, the logic suggests that there is not just one person sitting at the top" (P1).

This reimagining extended beyond leadership to transform their entire organisational cultures. As one participant articulated,

"I don't want us to have a Māori strategy, I want it just to be the strategy... All our reporting, everything is all done kaupapa Māori, Māori ingoa or even Māori narrative. We've woven this throughout... because this isn't about superseding other voices, it's about bringing them up to the same volume" (P1).

The groundwork laid by current and past leaders has created opportunities for the next generation.

"It's kind of like that cycle of, we just got to get through a few generations to then build up enough momentum...(P3).

This new generation, as one participant noted, will be

"a little bit more demanding" (P6).

They enter these spaces armed with both traditional knowledge and contemporary skills, ready to push the boundaries of co-governance further and create truly decolonised spaces where a Māori worldview can flourish.

Stage Tuatoru: Building Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Participants highlight how achieving the vision of Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi requires a paradigm shift in governance

"You have to understand what that means. So, what that means is not writing a co-governance policy. Your whole framework needs to change, everything... you can't have a single leader at the top anymore, it's a partnership right from the top" (P1).

This fundamental shift represents what our Rangatira envisioned when signing Te Tiriti o Waitangi, a genuine partnership that transforms how organisations operate at every level. The vision extends beyond mere policy changes and emphasises kaitiakitanga and long-term sustainability. As one participant explained,

"... we're in this for the long game. I'm here to support you and to be a guardian" (P6).

This perspective embraces kaitiakitanga, considering not just immediate outcomes but the well-being of future generations.

The evolution of this partnership has already begun showing its potential.

"The world has completely changed... We've made significant strides. The way we present our findings has shifted, and people respond positively." (P1)

This transformation carries profound implications for future generations, as one participant reflected:

"If we have to change because of the current coalition government, what I'm really going to miss is that we haven't even scratched the surface of the impact we can have on our kids. We haven't been doing this long enough for the dominoes to start falling

elsewhere. That's our core reason for being here, we believe we can fundamentally change things for our kids" (P1).

Looking to the future, participants envisioned a new model of partnership:

"150% believe in co-governance as a world view. We've got Te Ao Māori coming together with Te Ao Pākehā and making another Te Ao something" (P4.)

This vision transcends current debates, aiming for a future where co-governance is a natural and unquestioned part of Aotearoa New Zealand's identity

"In the future, I believe co-governance may become irrelevant. When people truly understand our country's history, especially the history of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the obligations that come with it, it won't even be a debated topic"(P3).

Summary: Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The experiences shared by Māori Rangatira underscore the challenges and transformative potential of building Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This journey begins with securing Te Whare Tikanga Māori, progresses through advocacy and relationship building, and culminates in creating genuine partnerships grounded in mutual respect and shared authority

Participants emphasised how true co-governance transcends traditional organisational structures and policies. It requires fundamental changes that embrace te ao Māori perspectives, focusing on long-term sustainability, kaitiakitanga, and holistic wellbeing. Their stories show how this transformation enriches organisations through diversity of thought, creating spaces where different worldviews can coexist and strengthen each other.

The vision they share extends beyond current political debates about co-governance. It speaks to a future where partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi becomes so fundamental to Aotearoa New Zealand's identity that it's no longer questioned. As one participant noted, future generations may look back and wonder why this was ever debated.

Most significantly, participants emphasised that this journey isn't about privileging one group over another, but rather about creating an environment where all voices contribute equally to achieve better outcomes for everyone. Their experiences show that when organisations truly embrace partnership, incorporating both te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā

perspectives, they create something new and powerful, the third whare that our Rangatira envisioned when signing Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Looking to the future, participants see unprecedented opportunities for positive change, particularly for coming generations. The foundations laid by current leaders, combined with the strength and knowledge of the kohanga reo generation, create the potential for realising the full promise of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. As one participant powerfully stated,

"We can all win together"(P5).

Upoko Tuawhā: The Co-Governance Haerenga: A Three-Stage Framework

Me aro ki te hā o Hineahuone

Pay heed to the mana of Women

Overview of Chapter

This chapter explores the research findings through the lens of a conceptual framework inspired by the pūrākau of three wāhine atua: Hineahuone, Hinetītama, and Hinenuitepō. These atua, central figures in Māori creation stories, embody themes of creation, transformation, and enduring wisdom. Their narratives provide a metaphorical guide for understanding the dynamic journey of co-governance partnerships, offering insights into the relational depth and cultural grounding essential for their success.

The framework maps the haerenga of co-governance across three stages: foundational beginnings (Hineahuone), emergence and growth (Hinetītama), and transformation into enduring stewardship (Hinenuitepō). Each stage reflects the evolving nature of co-governance, emphasising the importance of shared values, reciprocity, and resilience.

Hineahuone represents the origins and grounding of partnerships, symbolising the creation of relationships and the foundational connection to mātauranga Māori. Hinetītama embodies growth and self-discovery, reflecting the challenges and transitions inherent in developing co-governance structures. Finally, Hinenuitepō symbolises transformation, and the enduring stewardship required to sustain and nurture partnerships over time.

This framework, which emerged from the kōrero of Māori Rangatira interviewed for this research, is not a prescriptive model but a living roadmap that reflects the lived realities of co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand. By weaving together these pūrākau with the experiences of Rangatira, the chapter highlights how mātauranga Māori and kaupapa Māori principles underpin the transformative potential of co-governance. This approach offers a pathway toward equitable, meaningful partnerships that honour both Māori and Western knowledge systems.

Through this lens, co-governance is presented as an ongoing process—a journey of mutual respect, shared stewardship, and relational accountability, guided by the enduring wisdom of Mana Wāhine.

Stage One – Hineahuone (Foundations)

The Hineahuone stage, a metaphorical moment of first breath and first experiences, represents the foundational phase of co-governance—a time of uncharted territory, vulnerability, and growth. Like Hineahuone, the first human in Māori creation stories, this stage is characterised by learning through doing, making mistakes, and setting the standard in the absence of precedent. As one participant noted,

“Hineahuone, the first human, so when you're in that kind of state, you're learning. You're making mistakes... you're just giving it a go, because that's the state that you're in. So I always think about co-governance in that space” (P6).

This foundational stage is not about achieving perfection but about embracing the courage to try, stumble, and rise again. Mistakes are reframed as valuable lessons, emphasising the need for resilience and persistence. Māori Rangatira in this stage are not merely participants but architects, laying down the first footprints in a landscape that lacks precedent.

Trust emerges as the cornerstone of this stage, underscoring the necessity of relationship building to create space for a shared vision. Even when Māori voices seem small, they are strategic, planting seeds in uncertain terrain with the understanding that growth requires patience and commitment to the haerenga. The Hineahuone stage reminds us that foundation-setting is neither linear nor straightforward but a dynamic and organic emergence of partnership.

Relationship Building: Weaving Trust into Partnership

Relationship building is not merely a step in the process of co-governance; it is the foundation upon which successful partnerships are built. Relationships in co-governance emerge as deliberate and profound journeys requiring time, patience, and genuine commitment. Sustainable partnerships cannot be rushed or reduced to transactional exchanges but must be nurtured through consistent and transparent engagement (Bryson et al., 2015).

One participant reflected on this reality, noting,

“We really need to consider the six years we spent working alongside each other and building this relationship” (P1).

This extended period of kōrero preceding substantive structural changes underscores the depth of engagement required for meaningful collaboration. Relationships of this kind are characterised by trust and transparency, as another participant observed:

“Authentic partnerships characterised by transparency and trust were essential” (P5).

These insights highlight the relational depth required to build effective co-governance.

Trust is not incidental but a carefully cultivated element of partnership. As one participant emphasised,

“The real power lies in relationships and trust. At the end of the day, it’s about the ability to trust the person beside you and having each other’s backs” (P1).

Such statements reinforce that trust is not just a value but an ongoing, active process, a cornerstone of partnership that requires effort and reciprocity (Bryson et al., 2015).

The tuakana/teina relational model provides a culturally grounded framework for understanding this complexity (Callaghan et al., 2018). Rooted in traditional Māori social structures, this model embodies reciprocal learning and mutual growth. It dissolves hierarchical boundaries, offering a vision of partnership not as "power over" but as "power with" (Katene, 2013). This approach challenges dominant governance paradigms by fostering interdependence and shared purpose, reframing partnership as a dynamic interplay of mutual respect and collective strength.

In the context of co-governance, relationship building is not just a preparatory step but an ongoing practice that sustains partnerships over time. Effective co-governance relies on more than structural frameworks; it requires the deliberate weaving of relational threads that create a fabric of trust and shared vision (Bryson et al., 2015). Policymakers and leaders must recognise the importance of investing in these relational processes to support transformational co-governance.

Reframing Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Unlearning to Learn

The Hineahuone stage also reflects the critical process of unlearning colonial narratives and relearning the intent of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This is not merely about initial steps but about challenging deeply entrenched misconceptions. For example, the perception of Te Tiriti as exclusively a Māori kaupapa continues to distort its intended role as a bicultural agreement between the Crown and Māori (Dionisio & Macfarlane, 2021; Huygens, 2007; Mcneill, 2024; Mutu, 2018; Salmond, 2022). One participant articulated this misconception, stating,

“Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a Māori kaupapa” (P1).

This mischaracterisation is more than a misunderstanding; it is a mechanism of continued colonial control that undermines the transformative potential of Te Tiriti (Hippolite & Bruce, 2010; Mcneill, 2024; Mutu, 2018; Salmond, 2022). As one participant observed,

“It creates a divide between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ Here, ‘us’ refers to the majority with a specific perspective, which makes it easy to overlook other viewpoints” (P1).

By framing Te Tiriti as a Māori issue, its principles are sidelined, and its intent as a framework for equitable partnership is lost (Bargh, 2016; Came & McCreanor, 2015).

Colonial Mechanisms and Misinterpretation

The prioritisation of the English text over the Māori version of Te Tiriti further compounds this distortion. One participant emphasised,

“Te Tiriti o Waitangi, not the Treaty of Waitangi, but Te Tiriti o Waitangi. So that’s a very big difference with the different interpretations of the language” (P1).

The privileging of the English text perpetuates misunderstanding, allowing the document to be continuously debated rather than recognised as the living framework it was intended to be (Winiata & Luke, 2021). This misinterpretation sustains a system of exclusion and inequity (Salmond, 2022). As one participant noted,

“We had to walk thousands of miles back in ‘76 to protect our land. We’ve also had to march for issues like the foreshore and seabed, in order to be included in the conversations” (P2).

Today, the struggle persists, exemplified by Hīkoi Toitū Te Tiriti opposing The Treaty Principles Bill (Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill, 2024). This deliberate debate

obstructs real transformation, keeping Māori perspectives marginalised and enabling Western frameworks to maintain dominance (Hippolite & Bruce, 2010; Mcneill, 2024; Mutu, 2018).

Confronting Power Imbalances: From Presence to Influence

The research also reveals the ongoing challenge of moving from mere presence to meaningful influence in governance spaces. One participant highlighted the importance of representation, noting,

“It’s crucial for us to be present in these spaces... even though we had no power” (P2).

This lack of influence reflects structural mechanisms that render Māori knowledge invisible (Hippolite & Bruce, 2010; Mcneill, 2024; Mutu, 2018; Salmond, 2022; Smith, 2021).

Another participant pointed out,

“There’s a belief that higher status roles are often filled by people with Western background and knowledge” (P3),

underscoring how Indigenous leadership continues to be marginalised. This structural marginalisation is compounded by the imposition of colonial power dynamics (Came & McCreanor, 2015; Hippolite & Bruce, 2010). As one participant stated,

“When faced with abuse and the effects of colonisation, it’s important to recognise that those in power often impose their will on others” (P4).

These findings highlight the enduring legacies of colonisation, where decision-making authority remains concentrated in Western frameworks, further entrenching inequities.

Securing Te Whare Tikanga Māori: Cultural Revitalisation and Resistance

Securing cultural foundations, particularly through the revitalisation of te reo, tikanga, and kawa, emerges as a critical strategy for co-governance (Winiata & Luke, 2021). As one participant reflected,

“First, we had to take it on ourselves to find ways to really capture the loss of our language, tikanga, kawa, and knowledge. We’ve come a long way in the past 40 years in addressing these issues” (P2).

This cultural revitalisation serves as a form of resistance against colonial paradigms (Durie, 2011). The kōhanga reo generation exemplifies this progress, with one participant noting,

“We’ve got the kōhanga reo generation that have come through, that understand and are really steeped in the principles” (P3).

Securing these foundations is not merely about preservation but about creating a platform for Māori leadership and participation in governance structures.

Participants strongly rejected the retrofitting of Māori perspectives into Western frameworks, emphasising the need for governance models that centre Māori ways of knowing. One participant noted,

“The strategy gets done, and then you ask the Māori person to make comment on it” (P3).

This approach, which positions Māori input as an afterthought, undermines the intent of equitable partnership and perpetuates the dominance of Western paradigms (Came & McCreanor, 2015).

Instead, participants advocated for frameworks that fundamentally recognise the coexistence and value of ontological and epistemological pluralism (Bell et al., 2022; Spiller et al., 2011). Governance models must validate Indigenous ways of knowing and being as central rather than peripheral, ensuring that Māori perspectives shape the structure and function of co-governance from the outset.

Rejecting retrofitting aligns with the Hineahuone stage's emphasis on foundational learning and growth. By committing to governance models that honour Indigenous epistemologies, this stage challenges colonial frameworks, enabling the development of genuine, equitable partnerships. Such models pave the way for transformative co-governance that prioritise the cultural and relational depth necessary to sustain meaningful collaboration.

Implementing the Hineahuone Stage of Co-Governance

Implementing the Hineahuone stage of co-governance requires a deliberate and multifaceted approach that prioritises foundational learning, relational depth, and epistemological transformation. This stage is not just a theoretical starting point but a

practical framework for building robust and equitable partnerships. The following recommendations, grounded in findings from this research and Māori epistemological approaches, outline critical actions to achieve this vision:

Relearning Te Tiriti o Waitangi

- Move beyond surface-level understandings to engage with the historical and contemporary context of Te Tiriti.
- Prioritise the Māori-language version of Te Tiriti to honour its intended principles.
- Facilitate critical workshops to deconstruct colonial narratives and develop collaborative learning environments that challenge misconceptions.

Confronting Colonisation's Impact

- Acknowledge the enduring impacts of colonisation and its influence on current governance structures.
- Identify and address systemic power imbalances through mapping and critical reflection.
- Create safe spaces for dialogue on historical and ongoing exclusions.
- Develop leadership programs that explicitly address decolonisation and foster critical consciousness of colonial mechanisms.

Securing Te Tikanga Whare Māori

- Invest in language revitalisation (te reo) and the restoration of cultural protocols (tikanga).
- Develop leadership programs rooted in Māori epistemologies and mentorship networks that centre Māori knowledge systems.
- Prioritise cultural education and intergenerational knowledge transfer to reinforce cultural resilience and identity.

Building Trusting Relationships

- Recognise that relationship building is a deliberate, time-intensive process essential to co-governance.
- Implement trust-building protocols emphasising transparency and consistency.
- Foster collaborative spaces that encourage vulnerability and genuine connections, recognising that trust underpins sustainable partnerships.

Epistemological Transformation

- Reject the retrofitting of Māori perspectives into Western frameworks, which perpetuates inequities.
- Develop governance models that prioritise and validate Māori ways of knowing.
- Create spaces that celebrate Indigenous epistemologies and facilitate coexistence of diverse worldviews.

Strategic Engagement

- Be intentional about the focus and allocation of energy, ensuring alignment with long-term goals.
- Develop principled approaches to participation, recognising the strategic value of early-stage involvement even if initially limited.
- Embrace mistakes as valuable learning opportunities and maintain unwavering commitment to a shared vision.

By implementing these strategies, the Hineahuone stage evolves from a conceptual metaphor into a tangible, actionable framework for co-governance. It demands an unwavering commitment to mutual learning, relational investment, and the dismantling of colonial paradigms. This approach not only lays the groundwork for effective partnerships but also ensures that co-governance frameworks are rooted in the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Māori ways of knowing. Ultimately, the Hineahuone stage reminds us that building strong foundations requires courage, persistence, and a willingness to embrace transformation. Leaders and policymakers must prioritise these actions to foster equitable, sustainable, and meaningful co-governance that benefits all communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Stage Two – Hinetītama: A Stage of Transformation and Redefinition

The Hinetītama stage marks a critical turning point in the evolution of co-governance, a phase of transformation where inherited narratives are challenged, and established boundaries are redefined. Just as Hinetītama questioned and reshaped her world, this stage embodies a generation of Māori Rangatira who refuse to accept the status quo.

One participant encapsulated this shift, stating,

“Hinetītama, the daughter of Hineahuone, and like many second generations, they want to challenge, they want to push back. They want to do things differently. Be a little bit more demanding” (P6).

This phase goes beyond resistance; it is a deliberate reimagining of partnership where bold strides replace tentative first steps.

In this stage, Māori Rangatira actively challenge inherited systems, demanding a co-governance model that authentically reflects the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. As one participant asserted,

“You know we're not doing it the way your generation did. You guys were pushovers. We're gonna do it differently” (P6).

These leaders are not merely seeking inclusion; they are reshaping governance structures to centre Māori perspectives.

Integration of Te Ao Māori in Co-Governance Frameworks

The Hinetītama stage pushes the boundaries of traditional governance, demanding a paradigm shift. As one participant reflected,

“To me, you'll be opening a world that you've had shut for ages. But is that being brave? Or is that just doing the right thing?” (P1).

This stage is characterised by a fierce commitment to embedding te ao Māori into governance contexts, translating foundational learnings into active, transformative practice.

The findings demonstrate that te ao Māori offers more than an alternative perspective; it represents a comprehensive shift in how governance can function. By moving from hierarchical and individualistic constructs to collective and relationally embedded practices, Māori epistemologies challenge Western paradigms, positioning connection and shared responsibility at the centre of decision-making (Haar et al., 2019; Joseph & Benton, 2021).

Whakapapa as a Transformative Relational Framework

Central to this transformation is whakapapa—the relational framework that reimagines organisational relationships. One participant observed,

“The way that we, Māori, approach things, we have the person at the centre... versus profit-making organisations, where the person is not at the centre” (P3).

This perspective reshapes leadership as a practice rooted in connection, trust, and mutual care rather than control (Joseph, & Benton, 2021; Katene, 2013; Mead, 2016; Spiller et al., 2020; Tiakiwai et al., 2017). This relational worldview extends beyond interpersonal dynamics, connecting human, ecological, and spiritual systems (Joseph, & Benton, 2021; Salmond, 2022). As one participant noted,

“If we have Papatūānuku at the centre of our decision-making, then we are doing right by her. If it’s tika, pono, and aroha—the key principles of those decisions—then it will feel right, and it will be right, and everyone will benefit from that” (P4).

This holistic approach challenges Western governance models that separate human and natural systems, offering a more balanced and sustainable framework (Hudson et al., 2010).

Challenging Tokenistic Engagement

A persistent challenge highlighted in this stage is the tokenistic engagement with Māori perspectives. As one participant described,

“Often, they’ll take the aspects of Māori culture they believe will benefit the whole, while leaving other elements, and sometimes even people, behind” (P6).

Such practices reinforce power imbalances, reducing Māori contributions to symbolic gestures rather than meaningful inclusion (Elkington et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2019; Smith, 2021; Taiepa, 2013). To move beyond tokenism, co-governance structures must intentionally create space for te ao Māori to reshape governance environments. One participant remarked,

“We are making more space for te ao Māori and Mātauranga Māori. Spaces have never done it quite so well before. We had te ao Pākehā taking up so much space. Now we make room for more te ao Māori to balance out the whole environment” (P4).

Implications for Organisational Transformation

The findings underscore the necessity of structural transformation to fully integrate Māori knowledge systems into governance. As one participant explained,

“You can’t have a single leader at the top anymore. It’s a partnership right from the top” (P1).

This reconfiguration requires a shift away from hierarchical frameworks toward equitable, shared decision-making structures (Haar et al., 2019; Katene, 2013; Maxwell et al., 2020; Spiller et al., 2020; Spiller & Stockdale, 2013).

This change challenges not only the organisational hierarchy but also the underlying principles of Western governance frameworks (Grint, 2011). Participants emphasised that co-governance must be guided by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, fostering genuine partnerships that balance decision-making authority and cultural perspectives (Bargh, 2016).

Implementing the Hinētītama Stage of Co-Governance

The Hinētītama stage requires significant shifts in organisational structures and mindsets to create governance frameworks that reflect Māori epistemologies and aspirations. Key steps for transformation include:

- Fundamental restructuring of governance models to ensure shared leadership and equitable decision-making.
- Commitment to epistemological pluralism, valuing both Western and Māori ways of knowing.
- Ongoing dialogue and mutual learning, fostering authentic relationships and understanding.
- Adoption of holistic governance perspectives that integrate ecological and cultural sustainability.
- Development of alternative decision-making frameworks that challenge linear, individualistic approaches.

The Hinētītama stage represents a transformative phase in co-governance, where inherited systems are reimaged and reshaped to centre Māori perspectives. It challenges tokenistic engagement, hierarchical structures, and colonial paradigms, replacing them with frameworks rooted in te ao Māori.

By embracing the principles of whakapapa and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, this stage redefines leadership as a collective, relational practice. It calls for bold and sustained action to create governance models that are inclusive, equitable, and reflective of the diverse perspectives that shape Aotearoa New Zealand's future.

Stage Three – Hinenuitepō: Wisdom, Reflection, and Guardianship

The Hinenuitepō stage represents the culmination of the co-governance journey, a phase characterised by wisdom, resilience, and transformative guardianship. Like Hinenuitepō, who embodies the depth and wisdom of the underworld, this stage is marked by accumulated insights, hard-won lessons, and strategic foresight.

One participant reflected on this stage, stating,

“Then you’ll have Hinenuitepō... where you gain a lot of wisdom. You’ve probably got a few bruises from trying things out, and you’ve got that wisdom. You’ve made mistakes. You’ve learned from those mistakes” (P6).

These leaders are no longer focused solely on navigating the challenges of earlier stages but instead occupy a vantage point from which they can strategically envision long-term transformation.

This stage is not an endpoint but a living, breathing model of partnership that honours the past, transforms the present, and sets a vision for the future. Leaders in this phase are not just participants; they are architects and guardians of enduring co-governance frameworks. As one participant noted,

“You’ve got a clearer idea of your purpose and why you’re there... you might be there as a reminder of the journey that you’ve taken” (P6).

Hinenuitepō represents a mature co-governance structure where decolonised spaces are actively cultivated. It is a stage defined by:

- Strategic long-term planning.
- Sustainable governance models that centre Māori worldviews.
- A commitment to ongoing transformation.
- Guardianship of principles and aspirations established in earlier stages.

These leaders carry the collective memory of their journey, ensuring that co-governance continues to evolve, thrive, and remain resilient for future generations.

Transforming Organisations Towards Co-Governance

The shift toward co-governance requires more than incremental adjustments; it demands the dismantling of traditional, pyramid-like leadership structures and the creation of

equitable, bicultural frameworks (Dionisio & Macfarlane, 2021; Webster & Cheyne, 2017; Winiata, 2005). As one participant succinctly stated,

“We can’t just look like a Pākehā whare” (P1).

Existing research highlights the potential of co-governance frameworks that embrace ontological and epistemological pluralism, allowing diverse perspectives to coexist and inform decision-making (Fisher & Parsons, 2020; Tiakiwai et al., 2017). This transition requires a profound cultural and structural reconfiguration. As one participant described,

“Co-governance is about dual decision-making between Tāngata Whenua and Tāngata Te Tiriti, sharing mātauranga to create a richer, fuller, more successful experience” (P4).

This approach moves beyond tokenistic inclusion, demanding genuine partnership and the centring of Indigenous epistemologies as co-equal knowledge systems (Tiakiwai et al., 2017). As another participant observed,

“You can’t have a single leader at the top anymore. It’s a partnership right from the top” (P1).

Decolonising Spaces and Embedding Māori Worldviews

Hinenuitēpō represents the culmination of efforts to decolonise organisational spaces and embed Māori worldviews into governance. This stage calls for the dismantling of colonial power structures and the integration of Indigenous perspectives into decision-making processes (Taiepa, 2013). As one participant explained,

“All our reporting, everything is done kaupapa Māori... woven throughout. This isn’t about superseding other voices—it’s about bringing them up to the same volume” (P1).

Such practices reflect a commitment to systemic transformation rather than symbolic representation.

Examples like the Te Pou Tupua model established after the Whanganui River Claim Settlement Act of 2017 (Whanganui River Claims Settlement, 2017), illustrate how co-governance can blend Māori and Western worldviews, treating natural entities like rivers as living beings rather than resources (Salmond, 2014; Hutchison, 2014). This approach fosters governance practices that support environmental and social well-being while

challenging dominant power structures (Elkington et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2019; Smith, 2021).

However, significant challenges remain. Resource imbalances and power dynamics often privilege Pākehā participants, making it critical to establish mechanisms that amplify Māori voices in decision-making processes (Bryson et al., 2015; Emerson et al., 2012; Torfing, 2019).

Hinenuitepō as a Visionary Pathway

Participants envisioned a future where co-governance is not debated but accepted as integral to Aotearoa New Zealand's identity. One participant noted,

“In the future, I believe co-governance may become irrelevant. When people truly understand our country's history... it won't even be a debated topic” (P3).

This stage highlights the potential for co-governance to achieve profound societal change, ensuring that diverse perspectives are valued, and that leadership reflects collective aspirations (Haar et al., 2019; Joseph, & Benton, 2021; Katene, 2013; Mead, 2016; Spiller et al., 2020; Tiakiwai et al., 2017; Winiata & Luke, 2021).

Implementing the Hinenuitepō Stage of Co-Governance

To create an enduring pathway and a sustainable model of partnership, organisations must take practical steps and adopt strategic actions:

Practical Steps for Co-Governance:

- Establish knowledge-sharing systems across teams and generations.
- Create mentorship programs to pass on Indigenous knowledge.
- Implement regular reflection and learning processes to adapt and improve.
- Develop systems for storing and preserving institutional knowledge.
- Foster continuous learning and adaptability to new challenges.

Strategic Actions:

- Conduct regular evaluations of progress and lessons learned.
- Provide leadership training that bridges Māori and Western ways of thinking.
- Facilitate intergenerational knowledge-sharing opportunities.
- Develop metrics to assess both structural and cultural changes.

The Hinenuitepō stage represents the full realisation of co-governance’s transformative potential. It challenges organisations to move beyond structural reform, embedding Māori worldviews and creating sustainable frameworks for partnership. By fostering strategic vision, wisdom, and resilience, this stage ensures that co-governance evolves as a living model of equity and sustainability.

Through strategic long-term planning, decolonisation, and the integration of diverse knowledge systems, Hinenuitepō offers a powerful vision for the future—one that honours the past, transforms the present, and ensures an enduring legacy for generations to come.

Chapter Summary

This chapter explores the evolving journey of co-governance through the conceptual framework of three stages: Hineahuone, Hinetitama, and Hinenuitepō (see Table 1. at the end of the chapter). Each stage represents a key phase in the development of genuine partnership and transformative co-governance structures, highlighting the complexities of integrating Māori worldviews, decolonising governance practices, and building sustainable, inclusive frameworks that bridge past injustices.

As the co-governance haerenga unfolds, these stages collectively offer a roadmap toward equitable and enduring relationships between Māori and the Crown. Each phase brings its own challenges and opportunities, yet together they embody a pathway grounded in mutual respect, shared knowledge, and collective stewardship. By transforming present practice, and envisioning a future where cultural integrity and sustainability are paramount, this evolving model of partnership guides the pursuit of meaningful co-governance.

Stage One: Hineahuone (Foundations)

The Hineahuone stage represents the formative phase of co-governance, symbolised by the first breath, touch, and experience of a newly created world. In this stage, Māori Rangatira lay the foundational groundwork for partnership, navigating uncharted territory with vulnerability and courage. This phase emphasises learning through trial and error, building trust, and fostering relationships as the cornerstones of partnership.

Stage Two: Hinetītama (Transformation)

Building on these foundations, the Hinetītama stage highlights the transformative potential of co-governance to reimagine and reconfigure power structures. This stage prioritises re-indigenising spaces, moving beyond tokenistic inclusion to fully integrate Māori perspectives into governance. It emphasises the creation of sustainable frameworks that amplify historically excluded voices and foster intergenerational knowledge sharing. The Hinetītama stage demands bold action to challenge inherited systems and envision governance as a collective, equitable endeavour.

Stage Three: Hinenuitepō (Stewardship and Sustainability)

The final stage, Hinenuitepō, symbolises maturity, wisdom, and the stewardship of co-governance principles. Leaders in this phase act as guardians, carrying forward the values and lessons of earlier stages while focusing on strategic, long-term planning. Governance models at this stage centre Māori worldviews, ensuring that transformation remains ongoing and sustainable. This stage underscores that co-governance is not a fixed destination but a dynamic and evolving partnership, grounded in resilience, equity, and collective foresight.

Table 1: The Co-Governance Haerenga: A Three-Stage Framework

Stage	Focus	Key Actions and Principles	Outcomes
Hineahuone (Foundations)	Foundational learning, relational depth, and epistemological transformation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relearn Te Tiriti o Waitangi. • Confront colonisation’s impact. • Strengthen Te Whare Māori. • Build trusting relationships. • Embrace epistemological transformation. 	Robust, equitable partnerships grounded in mutual respect and shared understanding.
Hinetītama (Transformation)	Restructuring governance models and integrating Te Ao Māori to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure governance models for shared leadership. 	Transformational governance frameworks that reflect Māori

Stage	Focus	Key Actions and Principles	Outcomes
	challenge inherited narratives and boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to epistemological pluralism. • Foster mutual learning and dialogue. • Integrate cultural and ecological sustainability. 	aspirations and redefine leadership.
Hinenuitepō (Stewardship)	Long-term planning, sustainable governance, and guardianship of principles established in earlier stages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish intergenerational knowledge-sharing systems. • Conduct regular reflections and evaluations. • Develop leadership training bridging Māori and Western frameworks. • Design metrics for cultural and structural change. 	Sustainable, adaptive co-governance that honours the past, transforms the present, and plans for the future.

He Whakamutunga: Conclusion

**Hūtia ti rito o te harakere, kei hea to kōmako e ko? Kī mai ki au, hei aha te mea
nui o tea o? Māku e kī atu, he tāgnata, he tāngata, he tāngata**

*If you pluck out the heart of the flax bush, where will the bellbird sing? If you ask me, what
is the greatest thing in the world, I will answer, it is the people, it is the people, it is the
people*

This research has journeyed through the landscape of co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand, engaging deeply with Māori perspectives and mātauranga. It has demonstrated that co-governance, while complex and contested, offers a transformative pathway toward more equitable and culturally responsive decision-making. Grounded in te ao Māori principles, informed by Kaupapa Māori methodology, and guided by the experiences of Māori Rangatira, this study highlights how Indigenous worldviews can challenge and enrich conventional governance models, ultimately creating spaces where all voices are valued and empowered. As the whakataukī (proverb) reminds us, "without the heart of the flax bush, all is lost" – a powerful metaphor for the interconnectedness of all things.

Key Contributions to the Research Literature

First, this research affirms that co-governance can be far more than a representational mechanism within existing Western frameworks. Rather, it has the potential to reshape governance from the ground up by weaving together diverse knowledge systems and centring the relational principles of te ao Māori—whakapapa, wānanga, and interconnectedness. In doing so, it demonstrates how co-governance can move beyond power-sharing agreements to embrace a genuinely holistic model of stewardship and collective well-being.

Second, the conceptual framework developed through the stages of Hineahuone, Hinetītama, and Hinenuitepō provides a valuable lens for understanding the evolutionary nature of co-governance. These stages illustrate a continuous haerenga of relationship-building, transformation, and sustainable governance. By making this journey visible, the framework contributes a dynamic model for scholars and practitioners seeking to

understand, implement, and refine co-governance structures rooted in mutual respect and shared purpose.

Third, the study's Kaupapa Māori methodology and emphasis on Māori Rangatira narratives offer a methodological contribution, underscoring that research can—and should—be conducted by Māori, for Māori, and with Māori. This approach challenges mainstream research paradigms, reinforcing that ethical, culturally grounded methods are not only possible but essential if we hope to realise the transformative promise of co-governance.

Limitations

While this research offers rich insights, some limitations must be acknowledged. Due to the constrained scope of a Master's thesis, the study involved a relatively small sample of participants. Consequently, the full diversity of Māori experiences and perspectives cannot be comprehensively captured. Moreover, co-governance itself is highly context-specific, varying across regions, institutions, and communities. As such, the complexity inherent in these processes cannot be fully distilled into a single framework. However, these limitations do not diminish the importance of the findings; rather, they underscore that this study represents one step in an evolving research journey.

Opportunities for Future Research

This inquiry opens several avenues for further exploration. Future research could include:

1. **Te Whare o Te Tiriti o Waitangi Case Studies:** Investigate organisations that have built and fully operationalised this “third whare,” examining tangible outcomes and best practices in co-governance.
2. **Comparative Indigenous Models:** Explore co-governance initiatives internationally, comparing Aotearoa New Zealand's experiences with Indigenous-led governance models elsewhere.
3. **Longitudinal Assessments:** Employ frameworks like “The Co-Governance Haerenga: A Three-Stage Framework” to conduct long-term studies, tracking the evolution, successes, and challenges of co-governance arrangements over time.

4. **Generational Perspectives:** Examine how younger and older Māori Rangatira and community members perceive co-governance, revealing shifts in understanding that shape future governance landscapes.
5. **Sector-Specific Inquiries:** Investigate how co-governance principles apply in various sectors—such as education, health, environmental management, and urban planning—to uncover nuanced strategies and adaptations.

Looking Ahead

This research suggests that the true promise of co-governance lies not only in addressing historical injustices but in fostering a future where Māori and the Crown work in genuine partnership. The foundations laid by current Māori Rangatira, combined with the vision and energy of younger generations, can transform Aotearoa New Zealand’s governance environment. As one participant noted, *“We can all win together”*—a sentiment that encapsulates the ultimate aspiration of co-governance as a collective venture founded in respect, equity, and mutual benefit.

The broader implications of this research can also extend beyond institutional settings. By demonstrating how to embrace multiple worldviews meaningfully, this study contributes to ongoing conversations about Indigenous sovereignty, leadership, and decolonisation. It proposes a model of governance where Te Tiriti o Waitangi is not just acknowledged but actively lived, shaping policies, practices, and relationships at every level.

This vision, represented by Te Mana o Wāhine and the three stages of co-governance, is not static. It is a living, evolving pathway that challenges conventional power dynamics, affirms cultural integrity, and inspires hope for a more inclusive and sustainable future. By centring people—he tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata—we can advance together into a brighter era of governance:

Upane, ka upane, whiti te rā!

Advancing together into a brighter future.

References

- Alfred, T. (1999). *Peace, power, righteousness: An indigenous manifesto* (2nd ed). Oxford University Press.
- Bargh, M. (2016). Opportunities and complexities for Māori and *mana whenua* representation in local government. *Political Science*, 68(2), 143–160.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0032318716671765>
- Bargh, M., & Tapsell, E. (2021). For a Tika Transition: Strengthen rangatiratanga. *Policy Quarterly*, 17(3). <https://doi.org/10.26686/pq.v17i3.7126>
- Bathurst, R., & Edwards, M. (2011). *Carving our Future in a World of Possibility: Exploring Contemporary Implications of the Māori-Pākehā Relationship in Aotearoa/New Zealand*.
- Belgrave, M. (2017). *Dancing with the King: The rise and fall of the King Country, 1864-1885*. Auckland University Press.
- Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2022). *Business Research Methods* (Sixth Edition). Oxford University Press.
- Bell, E., & Thorpe, R. (2013). *A very short, fairly interesting and reasonably cheap book about management research*. Sage, London.
- Blackburn, C. (2021). *Beyond Rights: The Nisga'a Final Agreement and the challenges of Modern Treaty Relationship*. UBC Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis? *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 18*(3), 328–352.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769238>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis. *Qualitative Psychology, 9*(1), 3–26. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000196>
- Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Stone, M. M. (2015). Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations: Needed *and* Challenging. *Public Administration Review, 75*(5), 647–663. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12432>
- Byrne, D. (2022). A worked example of Braun and Clarke’s approach to reflexive thematic analysis. *Quality & Quantity, 56*(3), 1391–1412.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y>
- Callaghan, P., Paraone, R., Murray, M., Tahau, N., Edgerton, S., Bates, E., Ataria, E., Heremaia, H., Rupene, N., Wilson, E., Hanham, L., Soal, D., & Ataria, J. (2018). Tuākana/Teina Water Warriors Project: A collaborative learning model integrating mātauranga Māori and science. *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research, 52*(4), 666–674.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00288330.2018.1509880>
- Came, H. A., & McCreanor, T. (2015). Pathways to Transform Institutional (and Everyday) Racism in New Zealand. *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies, 12*(2), 24–48. <https://doi.org/10.11157/sites-vol12iss2id290>
- Charters, C. (2019). *The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in New Zealand Courts: (Comparative Approaches, Indigenous Voices from CANZUS)*.
<http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep24304.7>

- Charters, C., Kingdon-Bebb, K., Olsen, T., Ormsby, W., Owen, E., Pryor, J., Ruru, J., Solomon, N., & Williams, G. (2019). *He Puapua Report* (No. NRC-104358-1-128-VI).
<https://www.nzcprr.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/He-Puapua.pdf>
- Ciulla, J. B., & Forsyth, D. R. (2011). Leadership Ethics. In *The Sage Handbook of Leadership* (pp. 230–240).
- Clément, V. (2017). Dancing bodies and Indigenous ontology: What does the haka reveal about the Māori relationship with the Earth? *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 42(2), 317–328. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12157>
- Cornell, S., & Kalt, J. P. (2010). American Indian self-determination, The Political Economy of a Successful Policy. *Joint Occasional Papers on Native Affairs. Working Paper, 1*.
- Community Sector Taskforce. (2006). *A new way of working for the tangata whenua, community and volenntary sector in Aotearoa New Zealand*.
- Cunningham, C., & Stanley, F. (2003). The health status of indigenous peoples and others. *BMJ*, 327(7412), 404–405. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.327.7412.404>
- DeSouza, R., & Cormack, D. (2009). Returning the indigenous to the centre: A view from Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Radcliffe Publishing, Diversity in Health and Care* 2009;6:219–21.
- Dionisio, R., & Macfarlane, A. H. (2021). Tikanga rua: Bicultural spatial governance in Aotearoa New Zealand. *New Zealand Geographer*, 77(2), 55–62.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/nzg.12303>
- Dodson, G. (2014). Co-Governance and Local Empowerment? Conservation Partnership Frameworks and Marine Protection at Mimiwhangata, New Zealand. *Society & Natural Resources*, 27(5), 521–539.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2013.861560>

- Durie, M. (2011). *Ngā tini whetū: Navigating Māori futures*. Huia Publishers.
- Elkington, B., Jackson, M., Kiddle, R., Ripeka Mercier, O., Ross, M., Smeaton, J., & Thomas, A. (2020). *Imagining Decolonisation*. Bridget Williams Books.
- Emerson, K., Nabatchi, T., & Balogh, S. (2012). An Integrative Framework for Collaborative Governance. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22(1), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mur011>
- Farrar, J. H. (2008). *Corporate governance: Theories, principles and practice: Discover*.
- Fleenor, J. W. (2006). *Trait approach to leadership*. Unpublished.
<https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.3091.2804>
- Gibson, J., Buelow, F., Black, A., Macdonald, L. T. A. o T., & Brower, A. L. (2023). Co-Management of Kauri Dieback in the Waitākere Ranges, Aotearoa. *Case Studies in the Environment*.
- Gilbert, J. (2007). Indigenous Rights in the Making: The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, 14(2–3), 207–230. <https://doi.org/10.1163/138548707X208818>
- Grennell-Hawke, N., & Tudor, K. (2018). Being Māori and Pākehā: Methodology and Method in Exploring Cultural Hybridity. *The Qualitative Report*.
<https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.2934>
- Grint, K. (2011). *A History of Leadership*. Handbook of leadership.
- Haar, J., Roche, M., & Brougham, D. (2019). Indigenous Insights into Ethical Leadership: A Study of Māori Leaders. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 160(3), 621–640.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3869-3>
- He Tohu Te Tiriti o Waitangi 1840*. (2017). Archives New Zealand Te Rua Mahara o Te Kāwanatanga; National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa Bidget Williams Books.

- Henry, E., & Pene, H. (2001). Kaupapa Māori: Locating indigenous ontology, epistemology and methodology in the academy. *Organization*, 8(2), 234–242.
- Henry, E., & Wolfram, R. (2015). Relational leadership – An indigenous Māori perspective. *Leadership*, 174271501561628.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715015616282>
- Hikuroa, D. (2017). Mātauranga Māori—The ūkaipō of knowledge in New Zealand. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 47(1), 5–10.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03036758.2016.1252407>
- Hindmarch, S., & Hillier, S. (2023). Reimagining global health: From decolonisation to indigenization. *Global Public Health*, 18(1), 2092183.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2022.2092183>
- Hippolite, H. R., & Bruce, T. (2010). Speaking the Unspoken: Racism, Sport and Maori. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 2(2), 23–45.
<https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v2i2.1524>
- Hoskins, T. K., & Jones, A. (Eds.). (2017). *Critical conversations in kaupapa Māori*. Huia Publishers.
- Hudson, M., Milne, Moe, Reynolds, Paul, Russell, Khyla, & Smith, Barry. (2010). *Te ara tika: Guidelines for Māori research ethics : a framework for researchers and ethics committee members*. Health Research Council of New Zealand on behalf of the Pūtaiora Writing Group.
- Hutchison, A. (2014). The Whanganui River as a Legal Person. *Alternative Law Journal*, 39(3), 179–182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1037969X1403900309>
- Huygens, I. L. M. (2007). *Processes of Pakeha change in response to the Treaty of Waitangi* [Doctoral dissertation]. The University of Waikato.

- Jackson, B., & Parry, K. (2018). *A very short, fairly interesting and reasonably cheap book about studying leadership* (Third Edition). Sage, London.
- Jones, C. (2021). *He Whakaaro Here Whakaumu Mō Aotearoa: The report of Matike Mai Aotearoa – The Independent Working Group on Constitutional Transformation*.
- Joseph, R. (2014). Indigenous Peoples' Good Governance, Human Rights and Self-Determination in the Second Decade of the New Millennium – A Māori Perspective. *Maori Law Review December*, 29–40.
- Joseph, R., & Benton, R. (Eds.). (2021). *Waking the Taniwha, Māori Governance in the 21st Century*. Thomson Reuters New Zealand Ltd.
- Katene, S. (2013). *The spirit of māori leadership*. Huia Publishers.
- Lowman, E. B., & Barker, A. (2010). Indigenizing Approaches to Research. *The Sociological Imagination*. sociologicalimagination.org/archives/2004
- Macfarlane, A, Macfarlane, S, & Curtis, T. (2019). Navigating Kaupapa Māori Fields of knowledge. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.328>
- Macfarlane, S., & Macfarlane, A. (2018). Toitū te Mātauranga: Valuing Culturally Inclusive Research in Contemporary Times. *University of Canterbury*.
- Manganda, A., Jurado, T., Mika, J., & Palmer, F. (2023). "I Flip the Switch": : Aboriginal Entrepreneurs' Navigation of Entrepreneurial Imperatives. *Indigenous Business & Public Administration*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.33972/ibapa.28>
- Mark, J. J. (2023). *Doctrine of Discovery*. World History Encyclopedia.
(https://www.worldhistory.org/Doctrine_of_Discovery)
- Maxwell, K., Awatere, S., Ratana, K., Davies, K., & Taiapa, C. (2020). He waka eke noa/we are all in the same boat: A framework for co-governance from aotearoa New

Zealand. *Marine Policy*, 121, 104213.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2020.104213>

Mcneill, I. A. (2024). Māori Self-Determination: A Case Study Analysis of Indigenising Self-Determination for Tapuika in Aotearoa. *Journal of Human Rights and Peace Studies*, 10(1), 151–178).

Mead, H. M. (2016). *Tikanga Maori (revised edition): Living by Maori values*. Huia Publishers.

Mercier, O. (2023). Mātauranga and science. *New Zealand Science Review*, 74(4), 83–90.

<https://doi.org/10.26686/nzsr.v74i4.8477>

Meredith, P. (1999). Hybridity in the third space: Rethinking bi-cultural politics in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 4(2).

Mika, C., & Stewart, G. (2017). Lost in translation: Western representations of Māori knowledge. *Open Review of Educational Research*, 4(1), 134–146.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/23265507.2017.1364143>

Mikaere, A. (2011). *Colonising myths-Maori realities: He rukuruku whakaaro*. Huia Publishers.

Mikahere-Hall, A. (2017). Constructing research from an indigenous Kaupapa Māori perspective: An example of decolonising research. *Psychotherapy and Politics International*, 15(3), e1428. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ppi.1428>

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ppi.1428>

Miller, R. J. (2019). The Doctrine of Discovery. *Indigenous Peoples' Journal of Law, Culture, & Resistance*, Vol. 5, 35–42.

Mutu, M. (2018). Behind the smoke and mirrors of the Treaty of Waitangi claims settlement process in New Zealand: No prospect for justice and reconciliation for Māori without constitutional transformation. *Journal of Global Ethics*, 14(2), 208–221. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449626.2018.1507003>

- Nakata, M. (2002). Indigenous Knowledge and the Cultural Interface: Underlying issues at the intersection of knowledge and information systems. *IFLA Journal*, 28(5–6), 281–291. <https://doi.org/10.1177/034003520202800513>
- New Zealand (Ed.). (2016). *Principles for effectively co-governing natural resources: Presented to the House of Representatives under section 20 of the Public audit Act 2001*. Office of the Auditor-General.
- O'Malley, V. (2019). *The New Zealand Wars/Ngā Pakanga*. Bridget Williams Books.
- Orange, C. (2015). *The treaty of Waitangi*. Bridget Williams Books.
- Origins of the Kīngitanga*. (2024). Te Ara. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/kingitanga-the-maori-king-movement/page-1>
- Pearse, A. (2024, March 17). Winston Peters compares co-governance to Nazi Germany. *NewstalkZB*. <https://www.newstalkzb.co.nz/news/politics/nz-first-leader-winston-peters-compares-co-governance-to-nazi-germany-says-promised-tax-cuts-not-impossible/>
- Petrie, H. (2006). *Chiefs of Industry, Māori Tribal Enterprise in Early Colonial New Zealand*. Auckland University Press.
- Pinto, J. K. (2020). *Project management: Achieving competitive advantage*. Pearson.
- Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill, § 6 (2024). [proposed amendments]
<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2024/0094/latest/whole.html>
1
- Rangiwai, B. (2018). Ka Mua, Ka Muri: A New Transformative Leadership Theory Based on a Prophecy by Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki. *Te Kaharoa*, 11(1).
<https://doi.org/10.24135/tekaharoa.v11i1.239>

- Rāwiri, Ā. (2016). E kore au e ngaro he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiatea: Literacy policy for the survival of Māori as a people. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 21.
<https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v21i1.253>
- Reid, P., & Robson, B. (2000). Understanding health inequities. In *Hauora: Māori Standards of Health IV*. (p. PP. 3-10).
- Roche, A. M., Haar, J. M., & Brougham, D. (2018). Māori leaders' well-being: A self-determination perspective. *Leadership*, 14(1), 25–39.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715015613426>
- Ruru, J. (2018). Listening to Papatūānuku: A call to reform water law. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 48(2–3), 215–224.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03036758.2018.1442358>
- Ruru, Jacinta. (2012). Legal indigenous recognition device. *Indigenous L. Bull.*, 8(26).
- Salmond, A. (2014). Tears of Rangi: Water, power, and people in New Zealand. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 4(3), 285–309.
<https://doi.org/10.14318/hau4.3.017>
- Salmond, A. (2022). Where Will the Bellbird Sing? Te Tiriti o Waitangi and 'Race.' *Policy Quarterly*, 18(4), 3–25. <https://doi.org/10.26686/pq.v18i4.8019>
- Sanders, K. (2017). 'Beyond Human Ownership'? Property, Power and Legal Personality for Nature in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Journal of Environmental Law*.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jel/eqx029>
- Selwyn Katene. (2010). Modelling Māori leadership: What makes for good leadership? *MAI Review*, 2.
- Smith, H. (2013). International Perspectives and the Protection of Maori Cultural Heritage in Aotearoa. *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 4(2).

- Smith, L., Cameron, N., Mataki, T., Morgan, H., & Te Nana, R. (2019). Thought Space Wānanga—A Kaupapa Māori Decolonizing Approach to Research Translation. *Genealogy*, 3(4), 74. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy3040074>
- Smith, L. T. (2021). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Somerville, P., & Haines, N. (2008). Prospects for Local Co-Governance. *Local Government Studies*, 34(1), 61–79. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930701770488>
- Spiller, C., Maunganui Wolfgramm, R., Henry, E., & Pouwhare, R. (2020). Paradigm warriors: Advancing a radical ecosystems view of collective leadership from an Indigenous Māori perspective. *Human Relations*, 73(4), 516–543. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726719893753>
- Spiller, C., Pio, E., Erakovic, L., & Henare, M. (2011). Wise Up: Creating Organizational Wisdom Through an Ethic of Kaitiakitanga. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 104(2), 223–235. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0905-y>
- Spiller, C., & Stockdale, M. (2013). Managing and Leading from a Maori Perspective: Bringing New Life and Energy to Organisations. *Handbook of Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace*, 149–173. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5233-1_11
- Strong, P. T. (2013). Savage Anxieties: The Invention of Western Civilization. By Robert A. Williams Jr. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.17953>
- Suter, B. (2014). *The contra proferentem rule in the reports of the waitangi tribunal* [LLM RESEARCH PAPER]. Victoria University Of Wellington.
- Taiepa, T. (2013). Collaborative management: Enhancing Maori participation in the management of natural resources. *He Pukenga Korero*, 4(2).

- Tawhai, V. (2023). *Recognition of Indigenous Citizenship and Nationhood*.
- Te Aho, F. (2020). Treaty Settlements, the UN Declaration and Rights Ritualism in Aotearoa New Zealand. *UNDRIP Implementation: Comparative Approaches, Indigenous Voices from CANZUS*, 33–40.
- Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement) Act 2017, Pub. L. No. 7 (2017).
- Te Puni Kōkiri*. (2024). About Māori Land in New Zealand, History of Māori Land. <https://www.tupu.nz/en/tuhono/about-maori-land-in-new-zealand/history-of-maori-land>
- The Waitangi Tribunal*. (2024). [Govt]. The Waitangi Tribunal. <https://www.waitangitribunal.govt.nz/en/about/the-treaty/about-the-treaty>
- Tiakiwai, S.-J., Kilgour, J. T., & Whetu, A. (2017). Indigenous perspectives of ecosystem-based management and co-governance in the Pacific Northwest: Lessons for Aotearoa. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 13(2), 69–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180117701692>
- Torring, J. (2019). Collaborative innovation in the public sector: The argument. *Public Management Review*, 21(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2018.1430248>
- United Nations. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
- Webster, K., & Cheyne, C. (2017). Creating Treaty-based local governance in New Zealand: Māori and Pākehā views. *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online*, 12(2), 146–164. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1177083X.2017.1345766>
- Wilson, S., & Newstead, T. (2022). The virtues of effective crisis leadership: What managers can learn from how women heads of state led in the first wave of

COVID-19. *Organizational Dynamics*, 51(2), 100910.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2022.100910>

Winiata, W. (2005). *The reconciliation of kāwangatanga and tino rangatiratanga*. The Rua Rautau Lecture, Rangiātea Church, Otaki.

Winiata, W., & Luke, D. (2021). *The Survival of Māori as a People*. Huia Publishers.

Zeimers, G., Lefebvre, A., Winand, M., Anagnostopoulos, C., Zintz, T., & Willem, A. (2021).

Organisational factors for corporate social responsibility implementation in sport federations: A qualitative comparative analysis. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 21(2), 173–193.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2020.1731838>

Appendices

Appendix A: Harakeke



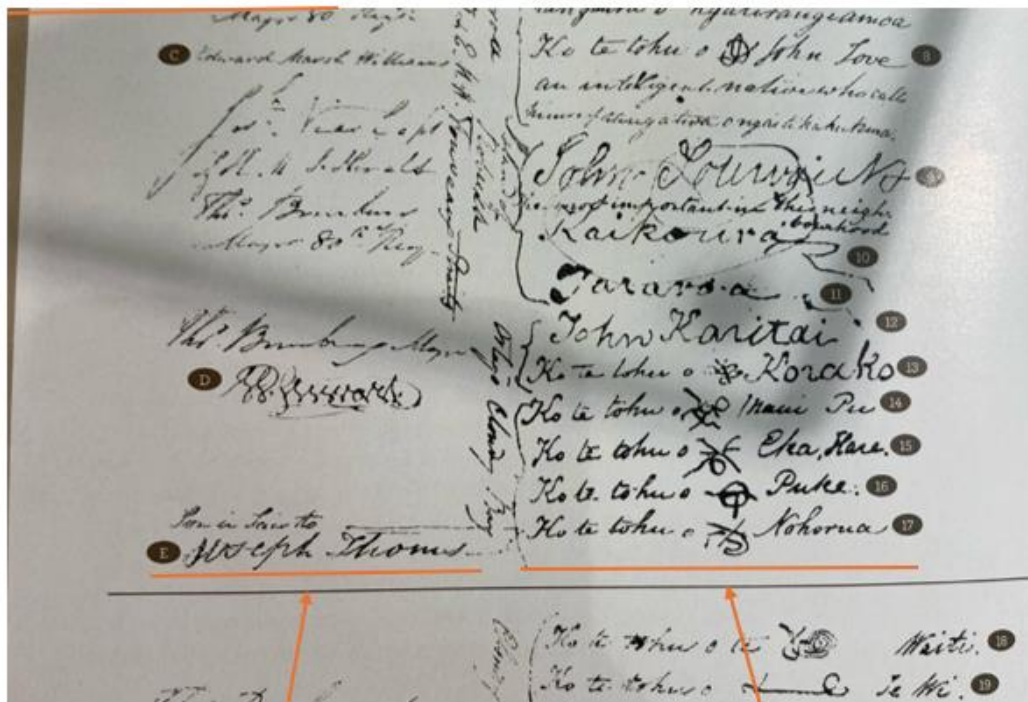
Appendix B: Full Timeline

- **950-1350 AD:** Polynesian navigators, including Kupe, arrive in Aotearoa New Zealand, marking the foundation of Māori culture and society (Huygens, 2007).
- **1769:** Captain Cook's arrival marks the beginning of significant European contact (Orange, 2015).
- **1835:** *He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī* (Declaration of Independence) establishes Māori authority (Winiata & Luke, 2021).
- **1840:** Te Tiriti o Waitangi is signed, intending to lay the foundation for a bicultural society. This agreement is considered the foundation of co-governance in Aotearoa, as it was signed by Crown representatives and over 500 chiefs, primarily in Te Reo (*The Waitangi Tribunal*, 2024).
 - Personal connection: My Pākehā ancestor Joseph Thoms, three times great-grandfather and son-in-law of Ngāti Toa chief Nohorua, signed Te Tiriti alongside Nohorua (tangata whenua), symbolising the commitment to shared governance (*He Tohu Te Tiriti o Waitangi 1840*, 2017).
- **1851:** Tamihana Te Rauparaha visit to London (Petrie, 2006).
- **1854:** The English Law Act introduces English law, which quickly becomes dominant, marking a turning point that diminished Māori customs and governance systems (Durie, 2011).
- **1858:** The establishment of the Kingitanga movement unifies Māori under shared leadership, highlighting Māori efforts to maintain governance structures (*Origins of the Kīngitanga*, 2024).
- **1870:** The new colonial society grew, and The Treaty of Waitangi dropped from settlers' consciousness (Orange, 2015). The colonial, Pākehā view was that Indigenous people were primitive and child-like, so the colonial, Pākehā way became the dominate way (Huygens, 2007).
- **1877:** The *Wi Parata v. Bishop of Wellington* case declares Te Tiriti "worthless," severely impacting Māori rights and disrupting the intended partnership established under Te Tiriti (Winiata & Luke, 2021).

- **1975:** The Treaty of Waitangi Act establishes the Waitangi Tribunal, marking the beginning of legal recourse for breaches of Te Tiriti and setting a pathway for co-governance (Winiata & Luke, 2021).
- **1980:** The Waitangi Tribunal is formally tasked with investigating grievances, enabling Māori to reclaim decision-making power in areas impacting their lives (*The Waitangi Tribunal*, 2024).
- **1987:** Lands Case judgement. This case marked a significant shift in Treaty interpretation. For the first time, the Treaty was framed as an agreement between Māori and Pākehā, rather than its original context as an agreement between the Crown and Māori Rangatira. This fundamental reinterpretation created racial divisions that continue to influence political discourse today (Salmond, 2022).
- **1988:** The Royal Commission identifies the principles of partnership, participation, and protection under Te Tiriti, underscoring Crown obligations to support Māori self-determination and rights.
- **2010:** The adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) acknowledges Indigenous self-determination and aligns with the principles of co-governance (Charters, 2019; Jones, 2021). The Puapua Report commissioned by the Labour Government in 2019 is seen as a road map to co-governance with intended full implementation by 2040 (Charters, 2019; Charters et al., 2019).
- **2023:** "Winston Peters compares co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand to Nazi Germany". This headline created contentious debate over co-governance's place in our society (Pearse, 2024).
- **2024:** ACT's Treaty Principles Bill. This bill aims to redefine the articles of The Treaty, changing the partnership envisioned by Te Tiriti by removing Māori and elevating Western governance in Aotearoa New Zealand (Seymour, 2024).
 - Article 1: The government of Aotearoa New Zealand will have ultimate power. Māori rights and interests are diminished as they are removed from this article also removes Māori from decision-making processes. Co-governance structures would not exist if this was confirmed in law.

- Article 2: Māori Rights are greatly diminished, there is no acknowledgment to resources, lands or Taonga. All Māori rights will be dependent on Crown approval through legislation.
- Article 3: Equality, everyone has the same rights. Māori rights and status as a Treaty partner do not exist in the rewriting of this article. They have been removed as playing in part of our founding document.

Appendix C: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Signed by Joseph Thoms and Nohorua



Joseph Thoms

Nohorua

(He Tohu Te Tiriti o Waitangi 1840, 2017)

Appendix D: Participant Consent Form



The Exploration of Co-Governance from a Māori Perspective

Participant Consent Form

I've gone through the information sheet and received a thorough explanation of the study. Any questions I had were addressed satisfactorily. I understand that I might be asked additional questions later on and that I can opt out of this research project at any point, without needing to provide a reason or facing any consequences.

- I agree/ do not agree that this interview can be recorded and transcribed according to the research parameters outlined in the information sheet.
- I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me at the end of the study.
- I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the information sheet.
- I have read the information sheet and have been told everything I need to know.
- I know I will not be identified in the research nor will my place of work, I know all my personal information will be kept private.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: / /

I, Kylie Tuffery (Solomon) agree to abide by the research parameters outlined in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____

Date: / /

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Massey University Human Ethics by email: humanethics@massey.ac.nz

Appendix E: Participant Information sheet



The Exploration of Co-Governance from a Māori Perspective

Ko wai au?

Tēnā Koutou, ko Kylie Tuffery (Solomon) tōku ingoa, Ko Ngāti Toa Rangatira tōku iwi. I would like to invite you to participate in my research project. I am a student enrolled at Massey University completing a Master of Business studies (Management) in the College of Business.

What is the study about?

This study seeks to explore the experiences, values, and insights of Māori leaders in co-governance roles, aiming to foster a deeper understanding of co-governance itself. Employing a Kaupapa Māori research methodology, which incorporates Māori protocols and practices, the research will conduct semi-structured interviews with participants actively engaged in co-governance positions.

By examining co-governance through a Māori lens, the research endeavours to illuminate how Te Ao Māori (the Māori worldview) can positively shape organisational governance. This study aspires to contribute to the comprehension and practical implementation of co-governance, ultimately fostering positive change and benefiting Māori communities while enriching our understanding of co-governance dynamics in Aotearoa.

What would you have to do?

If you agree to be part of this research project, then I would invite you to share your insights and experiences regarding your involvement in a co-governance role. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Should you agree to take part, the interview is expected to last approximately 1 hour.

Participants have the right to invite a support person or whānau to the interview. These interviews will be recorded (audio only) and interview times, date and venues will be mutually agreed, and written consents will be obtained from willing participants prior to the interviews.

What will happen to my information?

The research incorporates principles of Māori data sovereignty, ensuring that all data collected is treated with deep respect and allowing participants the opportunity to review and consent to its



use. The aim is to gather data that is relevant, responsive, and beneficial to Māori, positively contributing to the understanding of co-governance from a Māori perspective.

It is essential to recognize that all data (mātauranga) obtained from participants will be handled with the utmost respect for ownership, control, access, and possession. Participants' data (mātauranga) will be shared with them for their review and agreement, starting from the initial transcripts through to the final report. Under no circumstances will their data (mātauranga) be shared without their explicit consent.

What can you expect?

I would be delighted if you agreed to participate, but please be assured that you are under no obligation to do so. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question.
- withdraw from the study at any time.
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation.
- provide information on the understanding that your identity, workplace, and any identifying factors will remain confidential
- read the transcription of your interview so you can confirm that the information provided by you does not need to be edited or deleted.
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Who can you talk to about the research?

Kylie Tuffrey kylietuffery@gmail.com

Professor Jarrod Harr jhaar@massey.ac.nz

Dr Angeliqe Reweti a.reweti@massey.ac.nz

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Massey University Human Ethics by email: humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix F: Participant Interview Run Sheet

The Exploration of Co-Governance from a Māori Perspective, Nā Kylie Tuffery

My study seeks to explore the experiences, values, and insights of Māori leaders in co-governance roles, aiming to foster a deeper understanding of co-governance itself.

By examining co-governance through a Māori lens, the research endeavours to illuminate how Te Ao Māori (the Māori worldview) can positively shape organisational governance. This study aspires to contribute to the comprehension and practical implementation of co-governance, ultimately fostering positive change and benefiting Māori communities while enriching our understanding of co-governance dynamics in Aotearoa.

The interview will revolve around these following six key questions, however the interview will be very fluid and participant directed:

1. How do Māori leaders define co-governance?
2. What insights does history provide about Māori leadership, Māori knowledge, and co-governance?
3. How does a Māori worldview and Māori leadership contribute to organisational dynamics?
4. What are the perceived benefits of co-governance?
5. How does your work connect to and benefit all of creation?
6. Do you notice a difference between prioritising profit and prioritising wellbeing in your contributions?

Hui Format

Karakia Tīmatanga

Mihi

Pātai

Uiuinga (Interview)

Mihi

Karakia Whakakapi