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# **Balancing cultural and commercial imperatives: A study of Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management

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2022

## **Abstract**

Indigenous entrepreneurship is increasingly establishing itself as a legitimate research discipline, with theoretical development as one of the priorities. This thesis seeks to explain how Māori and Aboriginal Australian entrepreneurs balance cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice. The research is contextualised around Ngāti Porou entrepreneurs in the Tairāwhiti East Coast region of Aotearoa New Zealand, and Noongar, Wangkatha and Gumbaynggir entrepreneurs located in the Perth locality of Western Australia. The research is approached with an integrated research epistemology consisting of Kaupapa Māori, Indigenous standpoint theory and Western methods including semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis. The thesis finds that Māori entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives whilst Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives. Negotiation is taken to mean an ongoing interaction to reach an acceptable accommodation of both cultural and commercial imperatives; and navigation suggests a process of overcoming or working around barriers to achieve cultural and commercial imperatives. A conceptual framework of reconciling cultural and commercial imperatives is developed that illustrates the process of reconciling imperatives in Indigenous entrepreneurship. The thesis suggests that identity and contextual factors inclusive of Indigenous culture, colonial and postcolonial structures such as racism, mainstream attitudes, and discrimination, play a significant role in determining how Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs balance imperatives.

## **Dedication**

*In memory of Mr S.A. Mukuku (grandfather and educator) and Mrs. J. Manganda (grandmother and nurturer). Thank you for your love and the life lessons you taught me.*

*Muzorore murugare makamirira kudzoka kwaIshe vedu.*

## **Taku pūrākau**

As I stand with my tamariki on the edge of the shore, they run off with excitement to a place that is their home. Their feet gently touch the sand, and the sand reciprocates by gently touching their feet. I watch them walk with pride as they are embraced by the sand. They beckon me to come and hold their hands to lead them along the way. But with my first step, the sand grips my feet tight so much that I cannot move. A voice from the ground asks “Who are you? I say, “I am Admiral Munyaradzi Manganda, I come from a land afar.” The ground replies “I have felt your spirit within my bounds, where are you going?” I reply, my children belong here and need my help. Their home has opportunities if I don’t show them who will? The ground replies “Ahh, they are the ones who have a part of your spirit and mine, calling you to lead.” I reply “Yes, but how shall I lead them whilst you confine me to the shore?” The ground replies “You must know of me first and ensure they know of me too for they belong to me as well.” I agree, then the ground pulls me to it, falling headfirst into the sand. With my forehead to the sand, we have a hongī, and the ground says “Kia ora, we are now connected.” The ground releases me and I stand so that I go on. I will now take my children’s hand and lead them on the path.

## Mihimihi

Tihei mauri ora

Ko Great Zimbabwe te māunga

Ko Mtirikwi te awa

Ko Karanga tōku iwi

Nō Zimbabwe

Ko Wilson rāua ko Ethel ōku mātua

Ko Admiral Manganda ahau

Ko Aroha Fraser taku hoa wahine

Ko Eliana Te Atamira me Ethan ngā tamariki

Ko te pepeha o taku hoa wahine, ko tēnei:

Ko Hikurangi te māunga

Ko Waiapu te awa

Ko Robert Fraser rāua ko Turahira Te Puni ōna mātua

Ko Iopa Te Puni rāua ko Matekinō Te Puni ōna mātua tūpuna

Ko Te Aowera te hapū

Ko Ngāti Porou te iwi

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, I thank the Lord, my creator God who makes all things possible. In times of turmoil and discouragement, I called on the name of Jesus and my prayers were heard. Thank you, father.

The past four years have been the most exciting, challenging, and humbling period of my life as I went from thinking that I know it all to learning that I know nothing. The façade of intellectualism in institutions of learning, betray the human side of the PhD journey. I have learnt that we are all individuals with complex feelings trying to find our place in the world. We experience imposter syndrome, fears, hopes, and dreams and acknowledging this not only makes us better researchers, but makes our human experience better. The circumstances around which this PhD was completed (COVID-19, lockdowns), highlights the importance of relationships and on that note, I would like to acknowledge the people who have supported me along the way.

To my supervisors, Prof. Farah Palmer, Assoc Prof. Jason Mika, Dr. Tanya Jurado and Prof. Christian Felzensztein: I thank you for taking a chance on me by accepting to supervise me as a PhD student. Your guidance and support are well appreciated, and I am forever grateful. Your high-quality feedback and challenges to problem solve have not only produced this body of work but has shaped me into the critical thinker that I am today. I cannot fully express my gratitude for your help except to thank you and lift you up in prayer.

To the participants in the studies, I thank you for allowing me to tell your stories. This thesis would not have been possible without your generosity and support. To my comrades in the trenches, thank you for the support and the freedom to vent frustrations in the lab. I thank

you Majid, Omer, Minh, and Balaji for allowing me to be part of the brotherhood. The philosophical debates and humour, made for interesting conversations. Thank you Alida, Lisa, Christy, and Ishani for the conversations and encouragement. I know that you will all do well in your future endeavours.

To my family, thank you to Mum, Dad, Mainini Elizabeth, my mum in law Turahira, Alex, Wilson, Kerry, Miya, Ari, Olivia, Heavenly, Musori and Tadiwa. Cheers for the calls and encouragement to finish. To Eliana and Ethan, daddy loves you. I pray that I've made you proud and demonstrated the value of hard work. To my wife Aroha, thank you babe. I am grateful for your sacrifices, patience, encouragement, and a whole lot more. You held the fort and took on a lot for my sake. I love you so much and am forever grateful.

Psalm 23: 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

## Publications associated with this thesis

### *Conference papers*

Manganda, A. (2020, February 5) *How Indigenous entrepreneurs balance cultural and commercial expectations*. Seminar presented at Waewae takahia: Tracing the footsteps of our ancestors: Indigenous entrepreneurship in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and United States. Te Au Rangahau, Māori Business & Leadership Research Centre and Development Studies symposium. Massey University, Manawatu, New Zealand.

Manganda, A. (2020, November 18 – 20) *A Zimbabwean researching Indigenous entrepreneurs in New Zealand and Australia [Conference Presentation]*, 9th biennial International Indigenous Research Conference Online 2020. <http://mediacentre.maramatanga.ac.nz/content/zimbabwean-researching-Indigenous-entrepreneurs-new-zealand-and-australia>

### *Articles*

Manganda, A. M. (2021). Researcher positionality as self-reflexivity in Indigenous entrepreneurship research - from Zimbabwe to Aotearoa. *MAI Journal*, 10(2), 180-190. <https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2021.10.2.11>

Manganda, A. M., Mika, J. P., Jurado, T., & Palmer, F. R. (2022). How Indigenous entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives: insights from Aotearoa New Zealand. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, (ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEC-01-2022-0017>

Manganda, A.M., Jurado, T., Mika, J. P., & Palmer, F. R. (2022). ‘I flip switch’: Aboriginal entrepreneurs’ navigation of entrepreneurial imperatives [Manuscript submitted for publication].

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## Glossary of Māori terms

aroha ki te tangata	respect for people
awa	river
e iti noa ana nā te aroha	a small thing given with love
haka	posture dance
he kanohi kitea	a person who is often seen
iwi	tribe
kaitakawaenga	facilitator
kākahu	clothing
kaua e mahaki	don't flaunt your knowledge
kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata	don't trample on the dignity of a person/people
kaupapa Māori	Māori philosophy, Māori approach
kete	basket
kia tupato	be cautious
koha	gifting
korero	speak
kōrerorero	conversations
korowai	cloaks
kura kaupapa	Māori language secondary school
mana	justice and equity
mana	cultural power, authority, respect
manaakitanga	cultural and social responsibility
Māoritanga	being Māori
mātua	parents
maunga	mountains
papakāinga	traditional home place
pepeha	tribal saying
raranga	weaving
tamāhine	daughter
tamāhine	daughter
tangata whenua	people of the land
tapu	a state of the profane or sacred
tauīwi	non-Māori
tautoko	support
Te Matatini	national Māori performing arts festival
Te Puni Kōkiri	Ministry of Māori Development
tiaki	mentor
tika	right, correct, purposefulness
tino rangatiratanga	self-determination
Titiro	look
waiata	songs
wairua	spirit
waka	canoe
whakapapa	genealogy, ancestry, familial relationships
whakarongo	listen
whakawhanaungatanga	relationship building

whānau	family
whāngai	customary practice of adoption
whāngai	Māori form of child fostering
whāriki	woven mat

### **Glossary of Shona terms**

hunhu	spirit, humanness
nziyo	songs
vabereki	parents
vana vevhu	children of the land

### **Glossary of Tongan terms**

Kakala	Tongan practice of flower and leaf weaving.
Luva	gifting of the kakala to the weaver.
Toli	selecting material for making the kakala.
Tui	the process of making or weaving the kakala.

### **A note on writing conventions**

The thesis is written according to Massey University Graduate Research School guidelines for the presentation of doctoral theses with publications (Massey University Graduate Research School [GRS], 2019) and the American Psychological Association (7th edition) writing and referencing conventions (American Psychological Association, 2022). The text is entered in 12-point font, Times New Roman with doubled spacing. Tables, figures, and appendices are single spaced and ordered by chapter. In New Zealand, Māori is an official language under the Māori Language Act 1987. Massey University recognises and provides for its use in assessments, including doctoral theses written in Māori or partially in Māori. The English meanings for Māori words appear in brackets and are derived from Te Aka Māori dictionary (Moorfield, 2005). The English equivalent may change depending on the context.

# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

On 31 July 2021, the New Zealand Listener published a letter titled ‘in defence of science.’ In the letter, seven prominent academics postulated, “...in the discovery of empirical, universal truths, [Indigenous knowledge] falls far short of what we can define as science” (Clements et al., 2021, p. 4). The Indigenous fight for legitimisation has moved from the streets of protest, into scholarly debate. This is a thesis in the field of Indigenous entrepreneurship seeking to further the cause of legitimising Indigenous ways and knowledge. Between 1200 and 1300 AD, Polynesian ancestors of Māori people used Indigenous knowledge to navigate across the Pacific to reach Aotearoa. They settled into their new home, bringing knowledge of trade and enterprise to survive in the new environment (Reid & Rout, 2016) and in Australia, evidence points to the existence of trade amongst Indigenous societies before European contact (Akbar & Hallak, 2019). Chronologically, their ancient version of entrepreneurship predates the Age of Enlightenment (17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> century) where the Western world shaped the dogma of intellectual philosophies and traditions.

Indigenous entrepreneurship is gaining scholarly attention due to the Indigenous renaissance (Hindle, 2007) and recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples (Engle, 2011; United Nations, 2009). The field of Indigenous entrepreneurship research is, however, still relatively young (Frederick & Foley, 2006) in comparison to non-Indigenous entrepreneurship. Colonisation and cultural dominance resulted in Indigenous ways being disregarded in favour of Western approaches to knowledge creation (Rigney, 2001; Ryder et al., 2020). Due to Western hegemony, Indigenous entrepreneurship research struggled to be recognised as a separate discipline with its own attributes (Hindle & Moroz, 2010). According to Hindle and

Moroz (2010), there were difficulties in convincing mainstream academia that Indigenous entrepreneurship has claims to being a distinct research field, however the field is now well recognised and has a growing following (Bruton et al., 2018; see also; Dana, 2006; Mika, 2020b; Mrabure et al., 2018; Peredo et al., 2004; Vázquez-Maguirre, 2020).

The United Nations estimates the worlds Indigenous population to be approximately 476 million people, making up 6.2 per cent of the global population (United Nations, 2021) but Indigenous people are over-represented in poverty measures at 15 per cent of the world's poor and 30 per cent of the world's extremely poor (Hall & Gandolfo, 2016). A legacy of colonisation and discrimination has left most Indigenous people marginalised by states without due recognition of their original rights to lands and resources (Çakal et al., 2016). There is a growing realisation that government policies created to assist Indigenous entrepreneurial activities have the potential to improve the economic and social position of these populations (Dana & Anderson, 2011). State assistance is often evaluated, prescribed according to Westernised standards, and implemented by non-Indigenous legislators (Fletcher et al., 2016) which may result in ineffective interventions that are a poor fit for the circumstances of communities that they are meant to benefit (Peredo & McLean, 2010). According to Wehipeihana (2019), when State interventions are led by Indigenous people, they are more likely to have the cultural capital for respectful engagement, ensure cultural appropriateness of data collection, facilitate understanding of what value is in an Indigenous worldview and ensure nuances of meaning are accurate and culturally valid.

The Indigenous argument is that Indigenous people need to be included in the process of evaluating their own specific needs and should have the right to plan and control their own development (Fletcher et al., 2016; Peredo, 2001) without being generalised into a single

approach or solution. It is an error to assume that all Indigenous people within their respective nations are homogenous, with the same belief systems, cultures, and practices (Bodle et al., 2018; Peredo & McLean, 2010). The complexities of Indigenous cultures require various ways of developing culturally appropriate and effective assistance that is formulated in consultation with them (Peredo et al., 2004), whilst also allowing for self-determination goals to be pursued by the Indigenous communities themselves. Research on Indigenous entrepreneurship needs to allow for different cultural embodiments (Peredo & McLean, 2010) to cater to the diversity of Indigenous peoples. For instance, in Aotearoa New Zealand self-determination for tangata whenua, now known collectively as Māori (Magallanes, 2011), is reflected in the term 'tino rangatiratanga' which is applied to various contexts such as education (Bishop & Glynn, 2000; Broughton & McBreen, 2015), research (Smith, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2021) and entrepreneurship (Henry, 2012). Hindle and Lansdowne (2005) suggest that stimulation of Indigenous entrepreneurship has the potential to repair much of the damage done to Indigenous cultures through a creation of an enterprise culture that not only fully respects Indigenous traditions but empowers Indigenous people as economic agents in a globally competitive world. This thesis adopts Hindle and Lansdowne's (2005, p. 132) definition of Indigenous entrepreneurship as "the creation, management and development of new ventures by Indigenous people for the benefit of Indigenous people." This definition was chosen because it emphasises the economic enterprise as a vehicle for Indigenous self-determination, an element which is apparent in contextualised definitions, for example in Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurship. According to Awatere et al. (2017, p. 81) a Māori entrepreneur's economic activity is "... for economic, social and cultural purposes of benefit to themselves, their whānau (family), hapū (clan), iwi (tribe) and wider community." Similarly Foley (2000, p. 11) describes Indigenous Australian

entrepreneurs “... utilising their resources in the pursuit of self-determination and economic sustainability.”

Lindsay (2005) and Dana (2015) assert that Indigenous entrepreneurs value an holistic approach to entrepreneurship that encompasses both cultural and commercial imperatives. An holistic approach to entrepreneurship considers both economic and non-economic measures of success (Lindsay, 2005), such as profit and perpetuation cultural practices respectively. The term cultural imperative is utilised in this thesis to mean Indigenous cultural priorities such as cultural stewardship, practises, and community wellbeing, while commercial imperative is taken to mean business priorities such as profitability, productivity, and growth. Cultural imperatives may be interpreted as inefficient and counterintuitive from a profit-making enterprise viewpoint but the holistic value systems in Indigenous cultures see them as valid and valuable. Indigenous people tend to exhibit non-monetary motivations for venture creation in contrast to the dominant and mainstream view of profit maximisation as the reason for enterprise formation (Dana, 2015). Ndemo (2005) and Degen (2007) claim that Indigenous tribes ideally use their traditional economic system rather than the mainstream market economy even at the risk of economic loss. A traditional economy is a system of economic activity driven by cultural values, beliefs and practices (Gassiy & Potravny, 2019). Examples include hunting, fishing, bartering and cultural dance. This may suggest some Indigenous people want to be economic agents in a globally competitive world whilst other Indigenous people who prefer their traditional systems may incorporate both mainstream and traditional systems in their entrepreneurial endeavours. For example, Altman (1987) observed that the Kuninjku people at the Mumeka outstation were resisting Western economic rationality and only chose to interact with the market when it suited them. The Mumeka would sell cultural artifacts to fund the purchase of weapons for hunting purposes according to customary obligations. Indigenous

entrepreneurship is most likely a hybrid, with a combination of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous contexts.

Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia are neighbours who have a close economic relationship (Scollay et al., 2011). This thesis acknowledges Indigenous perspectives and will therefore refer to New Zealand as Aotearoa New Zealand. According to tribal narratives, Kuramārōtini, the wife of Kupe the Polynesian explorer first sighted a cumulus cloud formation over the land that is now Aotearoa New Zealand and cried out ““He ao! He ao! He Ao-tea-roa!” which translates to “A cloud! A cloud! A long white cloud!” (Williams, 2015). Amongst other similarities between Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, both are relatively isolated states and have Indigenous peoples as first nations albeit with differing post-colonial relationships and experiences with their governments who are predominantly underpinned by Anglo-Celtic influenced socio-political institutions (Price, 1999; Trigger, 2003). Despite the close relationship between the countries, Frederick and Foley (2006) suggest the need for more research for rigorous comparative analysis between their Indigenous cultures—Māori and Aboriginal peoples. These two Indigenous nations share relatively comparable ancient stories of ancestral enterprise (Akbar & Hallak, 2019; Fleming, 2015; Gillies, 2006b; Petrie, 2013) but differ in modern entrepreneurial propensity due to factors such as historical treaties (or lack of), repression and marginalisation. In this thesis, Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs were included to study how cultural and commercial imperatives may be reconciled in the context of different relationships between an Indigenous people and the same colonising power in both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, the British Crown.

The aim of this thesis is to explore and highlight the experiences of Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs in reconciling cultural and commercial imperatives. Specifically, this

research explores the process of rationalising economic decisions in two distinct Indigenous contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia where tensions may arise for Indigenous entrepreneurs in business. The research also explores how these tensions are potentially resolved. Research will highlight how Indigenous entrepreneurs contend with mimetic isomorphism, that is the pressure to conform to mainstream standards to establish legitimacy despite potentially conflicting with Indigenous cultural precepts (Chen et al., 2009). The thesis contributes to Indigenous entrepreneurial theory and practice with a focus on the process of Indigenous entrepreneurship (Croce, 2017; Mika et al., 2017) and how Indigenous entrepreneurs rationalise economic decisions in diverse cultural contexts (Cain & Spoonley, 2013; Henry & Dana, 2019; Houkamau & Sibley, 2019). It also contributes to fields such as cultural sustainability (Galperin et al., 2021), Indigenous community empowerment (Lewis, 2018), Indigenous self-determination (Foley, 2000), and Indigenous aspirations, capabilities and needs (Peredo et al., 2004).

## **1.2 Research motivation**

This research is motivated by the desire to understand how Indigenous entrepreneurs navigate Indigenous cultural philosophies and practices and Western cultural philosophies and practices in business and entrepreneurship. Western and Indigenous philosophies are typically contrasted as conflicting ideologies and existing in an imbalanced power relationship in which commercial priorities are presented as being more valued. In this thesis, the terms Western, mainstream, and non-Indigenous are used interchangeably to describe the dominant Anglo-Celtic culture in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. In 1977, Tushman asserted that Indigenous entrepreneurs assumed the complex role of boundary spanners, who straddle the line between multiple sets of interest (Tushman, 1977; Williams, 2002). Indigenous

entrepreneurs occupy the unique position of ‘having a foot’ in both their Indigenous culture and the society’s dominant culture. The focus of this study is to explore how Indigenous entrepreneurs may demonstrate boundary spanning through processes they employ when navigating cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial endeavours. By understanding this process, the knowledge gathered may be used to formulate guidelines on how to support Indigenous entrepreneurs with respectful, culturally appropriate, effective and empathic approaches to business support systems for Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

### **1.3 Research questions**

The research aims to answer the overarching question: How do Indigenous entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice? The research is an intercultural study, focused on Māori entrepreneurs in Tairāwhiti (East Coast), Aotearoa New Zealand and Aboriginal entrepreneurs in Perth, Australia. Intercultural research focuses on interactions between cultures and is not concerned with comparisons (Cushner, 2011). This is a PhD thesis by publication, which satisfies the criteria for a minimum of three published or publishable research papers. The first paper (Chapter 4), is a reflexive autoethnography answering questions of my positionality and methodological choices. The second paper (Chapter 5) answers the question: How do Māori entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives? The third paper (Chapter 6) answers the question: How do Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives?

## **1.4 Thesis structure**

Chapter 1 introduces the purpose, aims, objectives and rationale behind the research. The background of the study is discussed to give some context to the area of focus throughout the thesis. The research question is introduced and its scope is elaborated.

Chapter 2 situates this thesis in Indigenous entrepreneurship research through a review of relevant literature. The chapter takes a top-down approach, initially exploring Indigenous entrepreneurship then focusing on Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurship. Definitions, values and practices in Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurship are explored, including the boundary spanning activities of Indigenous entrepreneurs as they straddle the figurative line between Indigenous and non-Indigenous culture and business practice. Chapter 2 also contextualises this research in the idea of culturally sustainable entrepreneurship (Swanson & DeVereaux, 2017).

Chapter 3 is the methodology section. This chapter outlines how the research was designed and implemented. The chapter argues for a weaving of Indigenous methodologies with Western approaches to address the research question. Weaving these research traditions reflects how Indigenous people in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia are immersed in both Western and Indigenous contexts and creates spaces for innovative knowledge creation. The chapter uses raranga (weaving) as a metaphor for threading together various methodologies for Indigenous entrepreneurship research.

Chapter 4 is a published paper containing a reflexive autoethnography addressing questions of positionality and methodological choice. This chapter discusses my origin story

and childhood experiences and situates me, the researcher, in relation to this research, its methods, and participants.

Chapter 5 is a published paper addressing the research question of how Indigenous entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives from a Māori perspective. This paper is situated in the community of Māori entrepreneurs of the Tairāwhiti, Aotearoa New Zealand. The paper proposes a typology of Māori entrepreneurs' approaches to explain their negotiation of cultural and commercial imperatives.

Chapter 6 is an unpublished paper situated in the community of Aboriginal entrepreneurs in Perth, Australia. It explores the strategies entrepreneurs in this community use to navigate cultural and commercial imperatives. The chapter discusses the complementarity of cultural and commercial imperatives in protecting their indigeneity while ensuring business objectives are also met. The paper proposes a conceptual framework of how these Indigenous entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives.

Chapter 7 is a discussion of the findings in Chapters 4 on positionality, 5 on Māori entrepreneurship and 6 on Aboriginal entrepreneurship. The chapter assesses how the overarching research question was addressed. Chapter 7 proposes a conceptual framework for the processes Indigenous entrepreneurs use in navigating cultural and commercial imperatives.

Chapter 8 is the conclusion. This chapter summarises findings and insights. This chapter connects the final strands of the raranga process of constructing and interpreting meaning, metaphorised as a whāriki (woven mat). Research contributions are discussed, limitations are acknowledged, and possible future directions are proposed for consideration by

other Indigenous scholars. The conclusion acts as a reminder that this thesis is only the beginning of knowledge creation in this area of Indigenous entrepreneurship.

## **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter frames the research by critically reviewing literature on Indigenous entrepreneurship, with a focus on how such entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives. To begin, this chapter explores the definition and discipline of mainstream entrepreneurship. In this context, social and ethnic entrepreneurship and their connection to Indigenous entrepreneurship is reviewed, highlighting important distinctions. Research on Māori entrepreneurship in Aotearoa New Zealand and Aboriginal entrepreneurship in Australia is reviewed. This covers aspects of culture and practice, and the boundary spanning activities of Indigenous entrepreneurs.

A critical review of literature will help in identifying and defining the research gap. According to Farooq (2017, p. 66), a research gap “is a research question which has not been addressed properly.” A systematic literature review was conducted with protocols for selecting relevant literature such as inclusion criteria, exclusion criteria, search parameters, and quality assessment (Gough, 2007). Literature reviews evaluate and synthesise relevant literature to compare the findings of prior studies in a field (Paul & Criado, 2020), to identify knowledge gaps. Searches were based on specific keywords to meet inclusion criteria, whilst exclusion criteria was applied to avoid literature irrelevant to the topic (Farooq, 2017). The literature review process helps to ensure the diversity of knowledge for a discipline is traversed and a contribution to the existing body of knowledge can be established (Tranfield et al., 2003). Studies were selected using keywords such as ‘Indigenous entrepreneurship’, ‘Māori entrepreneurship’, ‘Aboriginal entrepreneurship’, ‘cultural practices in Indigenous

entrepreneurship’, ‘commercial and cultural imperatives’ and other closely related search terms. The exclusion criteria included studies focused on deficit based quantitative studies and those that denigrate Indigenous paradigms, such as colonial anthropology. To minimise the risk of having a poorly designed study with over-inclusion and over-exclusion biases, an intermediate approach to selecting studies for systematic review (Abrami et al., 1988) was adopted. This approach considered a broad range of studies with predetermined thresholds of quality such as relevance, number of citations, journal quality and author reputation (Meline, 2006).

## **2.2 Mainstream entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship research is a standalone discipline but its knowledge-base is found within many knowledge categories, including psychology (McClelland, 1961), management (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), economics (Parker, 2009), and development (McMullen, 2011). As a consequence, its definitions are inclusive of opportunity creation (Kirzner, 1973), the formation of new organisations (Barot, 2015; Gartner, 1985), opportunity recognition and exploitation (Hessels & Naudé, 2019; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) and the roles and functions of the entrepreneur (Yamada, 2004). There are three schools of thought on entrepreneurship. First, the German school, also known as the Schumpeterian school of Schumpeter, von Thunen and Baumol, which emphasises the entrepreneur as an economic actor who breaks the statics to push the economy toward fundamental changes (Vaz-Curado & Mueller, 2019). Second, the Austrian school of von Mises, Menger, and Kirzner, in which the entrepreneurs’ role is to be alert to opportunity and act on them to satisfy human want (Kirzner, 1999). Third, the neoclassical school of Knight, Marshall, and Schultz, which defines the role of entrepreneurs engaging in activities the lead to an equilibrium in the market (Wennekers & Thurik, 1999).

The concept of entrepreneurship is not always clear (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), but Gartner (1990) suggests a broad definition which describes entrepreneurship as activities promoting socio-economic stability and effective resource exploitation whilst creating new values and employment opportunities. Hessels and Naudé (2019, p. 397) define entrepreneurship broadly as “the resource, process and state of being through which individuals with ability and agency utilise positive opportunities in the market for generating individual and/or social value.” Hessels and Naudé’s (2019) definition aligns with the creation and discovery theories of entrepreneurship, citing individual agency and opportunity exploitation. There are two key streams in entrepreneurship research: creation and discovery theories (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). In creation theory, opportunities arise from entrepreneurs’ efforts to produce new products or services (Gartner, 1985). In discovery theory, opportunities are discovered, evaluated, and exploited (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). In other words, opportunities already exist and await effectuation by willing and alert entrepreneurs (Sarasvathy et al., 2010). According to Welter et al. (2017), entrepreneurship research has tended to have an essentialism problem, working at the individual level whilst ignoring context. Whilst entrepreneurship research is well established, Welter et al. (2017) contends that theory building is relatively underdeveloped and needs to cater to diversity. This thesis is dedicated to primarily applying Indigenous ways of knowing and utilising mainstream methodologies in an auxiliary manner because combining Indigenous and Western scientific bodies of knowledge creates opportunities for novel ways of knowledge creation (Durie, 2004b; Massey & Kirk, 2015).

### *2.2.1 Social entrepreneurship*

As a sub-category of entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship is a mature field of research (Gupta et al., 2020) that sits at the intersection of social innovation, non-profit management and entrepreneurial studies (Dacin et al., 2011), and is conceptualised in different constructs making it hard to define (Short et al., 2009). Short et al. (2009) further claims social entrepreneurship research is mainly descriptive and lacking theoretical foundation with a focus of conceptual rather than empirical research. However, it is widely acknowledged that social entrepreneurship integrates economic outcomes with social value for societal benefit (Hartigan, 2006; Mair & Martí, 2006; Zahra & Wright, 2016).

Researchers have attempted to contextualise social entrepreneurship into schools of thought including leadership and social mission (Sullivan Mort et al., 2003). When a leadership approach is taken, it is claimed that social entrepreneurs possess leadership qualities capable of generating followers with a unity of purpose in solving social issues rather than personal economic prosperity (Sullivan Mort et al., 2003). In contrast to other entrepreneurial pursuits, social entrepreneurship seeks to address the cause of social and economic problems (Widjojo & Gunawan, 2020), to offer solutions that are geared toward creating social value over private economic gain (Bedi & Yadav, 2019; Gupta et al., 2020). Similarly, a social mission approach entails the establishment of social purpose enterprises with a central mission of solving particular issues (Certo & Miller, 2008; Gupta et al., 2020). These social enterprises may trade as a for-profit business, but the profits serve a social purpose. Organisations with a social mission may also be affirmative action oriented to avail opportunities to economically marginalised groups of society. According to Crosby et al. (2006) affirmative action is the proactive allocation of resources to ensure that people are not discriminated on based on their

gender, race, or ethnic group. This alignment to economically marginalised group such as Indigenous communities and the collectivist principles found in Indigenous communities (Dawson, 2012; Foley, 2003a) ties social entrepreneurship to Indigenous entrepreneurship; however, it is important to demarcate disciplinary boundaries in the case of these disciplines.

Indigenous phenomena has historically been interpreted in Western frameworks and, therefore, misreported with unwarranted assumptions. An example is some anthropologists maintaining that Indigenous traditional value systems are a barrier to living fulfilling lives (Groenfeldt, 2003). By framing and contextualising Indigenous focused research, representation is fair and follows culturally acceptable guidelines as set by the Indigenous community of interest. In that way, Indigenous focused research becomes localised and accurately represents the community participating in the research process. On the other hand, social entrepreneurship is a Western influenced discipline, with the term first appearing in the seventeenth century (Say, 1836, as cited in Dawson, 2012). Social entrepreneurship is generalised in nature as a result of non-consensus in philosophical, conceptual, and definitional matters. This generalisation means that social entrepreneurship has a variety of meanings (Mair & Martí, 2006).

Indigenous entrepreneurship is a discipline with its own characteristics, presents differently in varying contexts, and can be emancipatory in effect. Rindova et al. (2009, p. 480) define emancipation as “breaking free from the authority of another.” Stavenhagen (1996) asserts that emancipation is synonymous with self-determination as both concepts pertain to Indigenous people in their struggle against colonisation and its lingering effects. Emancipation is an aspect of Indigenous entrepreneurship (Henry, 2017) and has been theorised in social entrepreneurship. Rindova et al. (2009) were initial proponents of researching emancipation in

social entrepreneurship. They describe ‘entrepreneurial emancipation’ as the creation, and amplification of cracks in rigid social and economic relationships that impose constraints on agents, thus opening the way for emancipation. Verduijn and Essers (2013) and Rindova et al. (2009) hold contrasting positions on the levels of liberation entrepreneurship actually possesses and achieves. Verduijn and Essers (2013) argue that entrepreneurship is sometimes romanticised and may be far less liberating than has been suggested. According to da Costa and Silva Saraiva (2012), the negative aspect of entrepreneurship is that it supports capitalistic ideas of concentration of capital which may lead to economic inequality. Verduijn et al. (2014) suggest that emancipation and oppression are both inherent potentials of entrepreneurship, arguing that they exist in a duality.

### *2.2.2 Ethnic entrepreneurship*

Indigenous entrepreneurship also shares similar characteristics to ethnic entrepreneurship (Peredo et al., 2004). Ethnic entrepreneurship has a range of definitions, but according to Valdez (2008) ethnic entrepreneurship is the ownership of businesses amongst immigrants, ethnic group members or both. Ethnic entrepreneurship emerged as a reaction to limited opportunities in the labour market for foreign born individuals because of barriers such as language and discrimination (Light & Gold, 2000); and has evolved to cater to demand for specialist goods and services in ethnic communities (Volery, 2007). There are two dominant theories on the business entry decision of ethnic entrepreneurs, the culturalist approach and the structuralist approach. According to Masurel et al. (2004), the culturalist approach supposes that some cultures have culturally determined features to engage in entrepreneurial activity. An example would be the relatively high number of dairy shops (convenience stores) owned by Indian immigrants in New Zealand (Vallabh, 2013), and vegetable markets owned by Chinese

immigrants (Paulose, 2011). The structuralist approach suggests that barriers to employment in the host country such as language barriers, discrimination, and qualifications not being recognised, leads immigrants into self-employment (Masurel et al., 2004). Ethnic entrepreneurship is a complex phenomenon with diverse views combining aspects of both culturalist and structuralist approaches are suitable to understanding the field (Volery, 2007).

Compared to Indigenous entrepreneurship, which is focused on the economic activity of Indigenous groups, ethnic entrepreneurship is concerned with the economic activity of immigrant groups who have settled into an area (Peredo et al., 2004). In the New Zealand example, Indigenous entrepreneurship would be Māori focused, whilst ethnic entrepreneurship would be Chinese entrepreneurs. In the period following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (1860s), Chinese were the largest non-British group to immigrate to New Zealand. Chinese immigrants faced discrimination and were denied New Zealand citizenship status until 1951 (Meares et al., 2011). There were two waves of Chinese immigration, the first wave (1865-1900) and the second wave (1890s – present), which impact on the drivers of ethnic Chinese entrepreneurship. According to De Vries and Kantor (2013) both first wave and second wave Chinese entrepreneurs engaged in the pursuit of self-determination as a driver for entering into business but second wave immigrants cite challenges in the job market as a motivating factor. Second wave Chinese immigrants are not well assimilated to New Zealand language and society and consider themselves Chinese living in New Zealand rather than Chinese Kiwis. Another point of difference is that Indigenous entrepreneurship often emphasises on collective self-determination of Indigenous people, whilst ethnic entrepreneurship involves immigrants seeking individual self-determination in lieu of employment. According to Peredo et al. (2004), individual self-determination is present within Indigenous entrepreneurship, but is viewed by governments and others as a component of economic development.

### **2.3 Indigenous entrepreneurship**

Unlike mainstream entrepreneurship, Indigenous entrepreneurship is rooted in the concept of indigeneity. Indigeneity has a variety of definitions as scholars try to capture the meaning of being Indigenous. Definitions range from self-identification and community acceptance (Gausset et al., 2011; Hindle & Lansdowne, 2005); and a pre-colonisation ancestral connection to the land (Dana, 2006; Foley, 2003a; Paradies, 2005; Salmond, 2012). Consequently, although varied, the definition of Indigenous entrepreneurship has a core theme of economic self-determination for Indigenous communities (Anderson & Peredo, 2006; Cahn, 2008; Foley, 2000; Henry et al., 2018; Hindle & Lansdowne, 2005). Indigenous entrepreneurship serves to redress some of the historic and prolonged community disadvantage Indigenous peoples experience as a result of colonisation (Anderson & Peredo, 2006; Cahn, 2008), including exploitation of traditional lands and resources (Barta, 1987; Porter, 2017).

Dana (1994) was credited by Hindle and Lansdowne (2005) as the first scholar to complete a PhD in Indigenous entrepreneurship, however, earlier work can be credited to (Ingram, 1990). Subsequently, the development of Indigenous entrepreneurship scholarship was relatively slow, with Peredo et al. (2004) pioneering theory development in the field, albeit in the English language academic literature. Dana and Anderson (2007) are credited as conducting some of the first empirical studies of Indigenous entrepreneurship worldwide. Indigenous entrepreneurship differs from mainstream forms of entrepreneurship in that an Indigenous cultural context is fundamental (Dana, 2015), meaning that depending on cultural context, Indigenous entrepreneurship is more nuanced. This contextualisation makes definitions broad and difficult to condense into a universal definition (McCormack, 2011; Weaver, 2001), therefore, cultural-specific definitions become pertinent. For example Māori

entrepreneurship is a localised expression of Indigenous entrepreneurship amongst the Māori people of Aotearoa New Zealand whilst Aboriginal entrepreneurship is concerned with Aboriginal people in Australia. Collective practices in Indigenous cultures influence how success is perceived in Indigenous entrepreneurship (Foley, 2003a; Gambrell, 2017). Success measurements include economic benefit, non-economic benefit, and collective benefit over individualistic pursuit in most circumstances (Anderson & Peredo, 2006; Barr & Reid, 2014; Croce, 2017).

Historically, Indigenous related issues have been approached with a central assumption of homogeneity (Bodle et al., 2018; Peredo & McLean, 2010) which is antithetical to the heterogeneity and contextuality of Indigenous peoples, with nuances in their world views and practices (Dana, 2015; Mika et al., 2017; Skille, 2021). Peredo and McLean (2010) further explain that homogenous assumptions of Indigenous communities are founded on the belief that Indigenous people are conformed, have conformed and will conform to mainstream and its assumptions. Context and place matter, as well as the consideration of the social impact of entrepreneurial activity which is finding traction in mainstream entrepreneurship (Peredo & McLean, 2006; Welter et al., 2017). It has become apparent in the mainstream that there is no one type of entrepreneurship, ideal entrepreneur, best way, and ideal context. Entrepreneurship presents differently and essentialising distinctions leads to narrow views of what entrepreneurship is (Welter et al., 2017). Despite the emergence of sub-categories such as social entrepreneurship, mainstream entrepreneurship models may have difficulty understanding Indigenous entrepreneurs' attitudes and rationale towards entrepreneurship (Dana, 2015). This difficulty is because depending on the Indigenous culture, the causal variables and rationale behind attitude towards enterprise is nuanced. For instance, Lindsay (2005) suggests that Indigenous entrepreneurs value a more holistic approach to

entrepreneurship taking into account both economic and non-economic objectives. The adoption of non-economic objectives may be interpreted as inefficient from a mainstream economic perspective but the values systems in Indigenous cultures would see them as valuable. Indigenous people exhibit non-economic motivational factors for venture creation which opposes the mainstream economics of profit maximisation (Dana, 2015). An example of this phenomenon is research on the Maasai of Kenya, an Indigenous tribe which prefers using a traditional economic system rather than the mainstream market economy even at the risk of economic loss (Ndemo, 2005). The Maasai see modernity and the changes it brings as a threat to their social structures and way of life. The Maasai live a semi-nomadic lifestyle with cattle being the primary store of wealth. According to Ndemo (2005) the Maasai have used cattle as a medium of exchange under a bartering system amongst themselves and with other communities for centuries,. Even though colonisation has eroded many of their traditional ways and has produced a hybridity of the traditional and modern, some Maasai still resist the modern market-based economy. Change is seen as an interference into their strict social and economic structures, however, it is inevitable that Maasai will be fully participating in the market-based economy as they recognise the value of money and seek to acquire it.

The contextual nature of Indigenous entrepreneurship contributes to discourse on the possibility of developing universal theoretical models akin to mainstream entrepreneurship. As Croce (2017, p. 889) points out, “the universality of Indigenous entrepreneurial models is still a relatively un-explored phenomenon” and will remain unresolved because a universalistic modelling approach is highly reductionist. Reductionism values objectivity, rigour, and logic, which contrast the holistic, subjective, metaphysical, and spiritual aspects of the Indigenous worldview (Cheung, 2008). This universalistic approach risks repeating the mistakes of imperialist research into Indigenous peoples which presented understanding based on Western

paradigms and diminished the Indigenous world view (Smith, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2021). As the field of Indigenous entrepreneurship research matures, there is an opportunity to expand the scholarship through contextualised analysis of entrepreneurial phenomena amongst the world's Indigenous groups (Croce, 2017; Hindle & Moroz, 2010).

## **2.4 Māori entrepreneurship**

Māori are the Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand and represent approximately 17 percent of the total population (Stats NZ, 2022). They trace their history to the 3,000 year old Polynesian diaspora, and were the first people to inhabit Aotearoa New Zealand (Henry et al., 2018). From about 950AD, Māori have had a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation (Gillies, 2006b; Petrie, 2013; Spiller, Pio, et al., 2011), and when Europeans arrived in greater numbers in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, they were actively involved in national trade and commerce (Frederick & Henry, 2004; Petrie, 2013; Wanhalla, 2007). This tradition of Māori entrepreneurship has claims to be recognised as a standalone subset of Indigenous entrepreneurship (Hindle & Moroz, 2010) because of contextual factors inclusive of history and cultural values.

Awatere et al. (2017, p. 81) broadly define Māori entrepreneurship as “the process by which a Māori person (or people) operating within a Māori world view generates value by identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets for economic, social and cultural purposes of benefit to themselves, their whānau (family), hapū (clan), iwi (tribe) and wider community.” Accordingly, Māori businesses of today take various forms which include whānau (family) based trusts, rūnanga (tribal councils), limited liability companies and privately-owned businesses (Harmsworth, 2009; Mika et al., 2019; Stats NZ, 2018). The Māori

economy is worth an estimated \$68.7b and has grown by 60% in the years 2013-2018, from \$42.6b to \$68.7b (Nana et al., 2018).

Māori are well renowned worldwide for their entrepreneurial streak and according to Frederick and Henry (2004), Māori are one of the most entrepreneurial Indigenous groups in the world. Data released by Statistics New Zealand shows that 1 in 5 Māori small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are exporting to overseas markets (Stats NZ, 2016), exported \$202 million of commodities and had an innovation rate of 60% (Stats NZ, 2020). The New Zealand government has played a part in attempting to level the playing field for Māori entrepreneurs through economic reforms. Zapalska and Brozik (2017), point to the fact that since 1987 the country has experienced extensive economic reforms to correct a distorted structure of incentives and restore the competitiveness of Māori business.

#### *2.4.1 The Treaty of Waitangi and Māori entrepreneurship*

The Treaty of Waitangi is an agreement signed between representatives of the British Crown and Māori rangatira (chiefs) on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1840. The Treaty placed British sovereignty over the land, with the power to function as a legislator of laws whilst promising to honour Māori rights as equal to British subjects (Orange, 2017). The Treaty was meant to be a partnership between the British Crown and Māori, guaranteeing Māori ownership of land, fisheries, and forestry; however, successive governments since the signing have breached these agreements (Durie, 1998a). Through legislative mechanisms such as the New Zealand Constitution Act 1852 and the Native Land Act 1862 (Dawson, 2012; Sorrenson, 1956), Māori were socially and economically alienated. There are two versions of the Treaty, one in English and the other in Māori (Calman, 2014; Rinehart, 2016). When translated, the Māori version does not match the wording in the English version. An example to highlight this is the use of

the word ‘cede’, which was used to translate the Māori phrase ‘tuku rawa atu’. The concept of ‘tuku rawa atu’ implies reciprocal gifting obligations in the Māori context whilst the British term implied absolute giving (Stokes, 1992). This has been a contentious issue in how the treaty texts have been interpreted (Calman, 2014; Henry et al., 2018). In response to Māori activism and political pressure, the New Zealand government acting on behalf of the Crown, established the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 to hear Māori claims to redress the historical breaches (Buchanan, 2007; Stokes, 1992). According to Katschner (2005), Treaty settlements provide the foundation for Iwi to build upon for economic growth through enterprise and investment.

Māori claims of self-determination have been at a juncture of political and economic discourse in New Zealand, with the government, previously concerned over what this might mean for state control of land, water and other resources of national importance (Salazar, 2009). Māori, on the other hand, are concerned about restitution of their Indigenous right for tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) (Durie, 1995). Citing incongruencies with the Treaty of Waitangi and legal arrangements (Round, 2009), the New Zealand government, along with Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, Finland and the United States of America voted against the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (United Nations, 2008). According to Round (2009) the New Zealand government expressed concerns with the following Articles of the declaration:

Article 26 guarantees Māori rights “to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned”; in other words, to the whole country. Article 28 requires compensation for lands taken by land of equal size and quality. Again, that is impossible; it ignores the legitimate claims of others, including rival Māori claimants, and also ignores the latest round of full and final settlements of Treaty claims. Articles

19 and 32(2) would effectively grant Māori a power of veto over all laws and decisions which might affect them, including plans for resource management. (p. 395)

Contrarily, Māori argued for the government to give maximum effect to Indigenous rights, including self-determination, within the framework of New Zealand's constitution, laws and policies in compliance with the declaration (McCreery, 2012; Stevenson, 2008). In 2010, the New Zealand government officially supported the UNDRIP (Round, 2009; Sharples, 2018) and as of 2020, is working on a plan to implement, coordinate and monitor its performance in honouring the declaration (New Zealand Government, 2019; Sharples, 2018). There is an expectation from government that tribes should be able to address socioeconomic disparities, re-establish tribal economies, compete favourably in the modern economy and provide socioeconomic opportunities for their people because they are well resourced (Belgrave, 2014; Lashley, 2000). However, Māori argue that treaty settlements do not provide an equitable basis for Māori enterprise to compete because nothing substantially changes in the political and economic system (Henare, 2011). Māori still face discrimination in economic systems, for example securing financing from mainstream financial institutions (Houkamau & Sibley, 2015; Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2022); justice system (Jackson, 1987); and in the education system (Houkamau et al., 2017). Additionally, theorists argue that the treaty principles of partnership, participation, and protection are colonial constructs and do not resolve grievances from a Māori perspective (Barrett & Connolly-Stone, 1998; Durie, 1998b; Joyce & Forsyth, 2022).

As part of meeting the principles of the Treaty, Māori-led interventions such as kōhanga reo (Māori language preschools), kura kaupapa (Māori language school), and Māori health have underscored attempts at integrating kaupapa Māori (Māori principles) into Western

approaches to social and economic development. Moreover, there has been research exploring the possibility of integrating kaupapa Māori (Māori principles) with Western approaches to business which has found that amongst other benefits, incorporating tikanga improves relational accountability to iwi, hapū, whanau, and improves standards and ethics (see for example, Harmsworth, 2005; Henry et al., 2018; Mika, 2014; Tapsell & Woods, 2008; Tonumaip'e'a, 2018).

In Māori entrepreneurship, economic decisions are culturally informed (Cain & Spoonley, 2013; Houkamau et al., 2019), and Māori values are typical of economic activity (Mika, 2015; Mika et al., 2019; Spiller, Pio, et al., 2011; Tapsell & Woods, 2008). Therefore, contemporary Māori entrepreneurial activity consists of a mix of te ao Māori (Māori world view) and a Western world view (Warren et al., 2017). Māori enterprise in various sectors have shown that it is possible to integrate kaupapa Māori principles—Māori philosophy and values—with Western approaches to business. Tohu Wines, a joint venture between Wakatu, Ngāti Rarua Atiawa Iwi Trust and Wi Pere Trust is an example of this (Harmsworth, 2005). Tohu wines uses Māori imagery, stories and names and employs Māori sustainability principles such as kaitiakitanga (stewardship) in its entrepreneurial activity (Missens et al., 2010).

#### *2.4.2 State intervention in Māori entrepreneurship*

The colonial narrative supposing Indigenous people being disinclined to commerce and resource exploitation for material gain, influenced the vast land grab following the ratification of the Treaty of Waitangi (Mika, Dell, Elers, et al., 2022). The colonial government confiscated land and appropriated Māori fishing interests under the ideology of Māori being incapable of managing economic resources (Mika, 2020a; Reid & Rout, 2016). This ideology was erroneous, considering the vast evidence of Māori adopting concepts of Western capitalism

into their paradigm of economic activity (Frederick & Henry, 2004; Petrie, 2013; Wanhalla, 2007). As part of the redress of historical Māori disadvantage and Treaty breaches, the New Zealand government is actively involved in Māori economic development through legislative and specialist agency interventions.

As highlighted in their initial hesitancy to UNDRIP, the New Zealand government had been wary of Māori autonomy and tino rangatiratanga aspirations as contrary to a nation-statehood status for New Zealand (Paora et al., 2011). According to O’Sullivan (2001), nation state systems affirm the right of the state to govern its people as a homogenous whole without making certain distinctions for Indigenous groups. In the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century, owing to political pressure and activism, the New Zealand government began to enact policies and programs to stimulate and sustain Māori economic development (Reihana et al., 2007) from central government down to local government (see examples in Table 1). The examples directly impact on Māori entrepreneurship and satisfy the Treaty principles of partnership, participation, and protection.

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Waitangi Tribunal (1975)	Tasked with investigating, resolving, and making recommendations for reconciliations on claims of historical treaty breaches.
Te Puni Kōkiri (1992) also known as the Ministry of Māori Development	Evolving from the now defunct Ministry of Māori Affairs and the Iwi Transition Agency, Te Puni Kōkiri acts as the New Zealand government's principal advisor on Māori affairs including Māori economic development and provision of Māori focused services.
Treaty of Waitangi Exception Clause (since 2001)	Enables the New Zealand Government to honour the Treaty of Waitangi and adopt policies that fulfil its obligations to Māori in free trade agreement negotiations.
Provincial Growth Fund (2018)	Investment in the regions to stimulate economic growth through job creation, diversification in the economy, environmental sustainability, and realisation of Māori aspirations
Crown–Māori Economic Development Strategy	Focuses on increasing positive economic outcomes for Māori. The areas of economic priority are in growing Māori employment, rangatahi (youth) support, enterprise support, regional development and education to upskill Māori.

**Table 1 Examples of state interventions in Māori entrepreneurship**

The Māori economy is growing, and the New Zealand government realises the potential for Māori businesses to transform the economy and society. According to Reihana et al. (2007) policies and programmes (such as those in Table 1) are aimed at stimulating, sustaining economic performance within New Zealand's business sector and exploiting global market opportunities.

## **2.5 Aboriginal entrepreneurship**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are the Indigenous people of Australia, with a history dating back to an estimated 71,000 years (Charles, 2020). The basis of Aboriginal or Torres

Strait Islander classification was defined in a High Court judgment, *Commonwealth v Tasmania* (1983) (McCorquodale, 1986). According to Hindle and Lansdowne (2005, p. 132), the case stipulated that “an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.” In Australia Aboriginal inter-tribal trade of goods and resources between approximately 500 diverse Indigenous groups (Regan, 1975) existed before the arrival of Europeans in the eighteenth century (Bodle et al., 2018; Foley, 2004). Further, Akbar and Hallak (2019) suggest that international trade in boomerangs, shell ornaments and ochre with the Makassan, Malay and Javanese people along established trade routes was occurring before the arrival of English settlers.

Indigenous Australian businesses of today bring in approximately \$A4.9 billion to the Australia economy. In the period between 2006 and 2018, Indigenous businesses have created 22,000 jobs and registered an average of \$1.6 million in gross income (Evans et al., 2021). Indigenous Australian businesses employ Indigenous people which positively affects income levels, reduces welfare dependency, and unemployment levels. Additionally, Evans et al. (2021) suggest that Indigenous businesses serve local communities in a culturally sensitive manner and change negative perceptions of Indigenous Australians. Although Aboriginal culture is collectivist and pluralist (Foley, 2003a), as other entrepreneurial Indigenous cultures are (Gambrell, 2017; Ratten & Dana, 2017), systematic and institutional repressions such as racism has hindered opportunities for them to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Shirodkar & Hunter, 2019; Shirodkar et al., 2018). Collectivism does not necessarily mean an aversion to entrepreneurial orientation but contrasts sharply with a highly Individualistic mainstream Australia (McFarlane et al., 2006). Aboriginal entrepreneurs experience social and institutional barriers to entry that are tied to a history of racism and discrimination (Denny-Smith &

Loosemore, 2017). Since the 1960s, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have advocated for the right to self-determination and a redress of historical disadvantage (Paradies & Cunningham, 2009). As a colonial power, the Crown had no treaty with Aboriginal Australians and this has been of prolonged disadvantage. According to Buchan and Heath (2006), the Crown did not pursue a treaty with the Indigenous people of Australia because they supposed them to be a small number of savages with no recognizable societies, agricultural system, laws, and self-organization.

Indigenous enterprise in Australia is organised into many forms with the majority being private small to medium enterprises (SMEs) whilst others include partnerships between Indigenous corporations, communities and corporate Australia, Indigenous community-owned enterprises; and Indigenous social enterprises and co-operatives (Collins et al., 2017). Frederick and Foley (2006) found that Aboriginal entrepreneurship may be on the decline due to a lack of capital, and an economic tradition incongruent with capitalism although some examples still exist, however, there has been a significant increase more recently possibly as a result of more people identifying as Indigenous (Galperin et al., 2021). PwC Indigenous Consulting (2018) evidence the growth, showing conservative projections of an up to 29.8% increase from 8,891 (2011 figures) to 11,538 (2016 figures) in the number of Aboriginal operations. Salt and Reys (2018) also reported that new Indigenous businesses are growing at a net average rate of around 600 businesses annually. The Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland have the highest number of registered Indigenous organisations out of the top 500 registered Indigenous organisations with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) at 33 per cent, 25.4 per cent and 19 per cent respectively (PwC Indigenous Consulting, 2018).

### *2.5.1 State intervention in Aboriginal entrepreneurship*

Successive governments have implemented varying degrees of formal mechanisms to reconcile with the Indigenous people (Paradies & Cunningham, 2009; Wyn & Harris, 2004). These mechanisms include The Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Land Rights Act (Northern Territory, 1976) which legally recognised the Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander system of land ownership through making inalienable free hold title in the Northern Territory into law (Galperin et al., 2021; Gorman & Vemuri, 2017), the Federal Indigenous Procurement Policy which prioritises Indigenous business as preferred suppliers of goods and services for state construction projects (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017), judiciary rulings as in the Mabo vs Queensland ruling (Porter, 2017) and representative bodies such as the Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) which have been the channel with which the Australian government provides funding and assistance for housing, venture creation and investing to Indigenous Australians (Maritz & Foley, 2018). Whilst these efforts to close the gap in Indigenous inequality have seen some success, Aboriginal Australians are severely disadvantaged (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017) making entrepreneurship challenging.

Closing the Gap is the national policy framework for addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage (Dawson et al., 2021). The policy was a bipartisan approach to Indigenous policy, to address a range of health and socioeconomic indicators. Between 2008 and 2020, the policy failed to meet five of the seven targets of health and socioeconomic disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within the policy timeframe. The targets were early childhood, schooling, health, economic participation, healthy homes, safe communities, and governance and leadership. The policy has been criticised for being similar to previous approaches, have an unreasonable timeframe and being reliant on deficit

discourse (Altman et al., 2009; Hoy, 2009; Marks, 2008). In 2019, the Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap agreement was made to develop a new Closing the Gap framework. According to the Commonwealth of Australia (2020), an agreement was reached for the Commonwealth of Australia to work with all states and territories, local government associations and the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak organisations to develop realistic targets for metrics, priorities, and service delivery.

Another example of government intervention includes the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR) established under the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act 1991, which laid the foundations for Reconciliation Australia. Reconciliation Australia is a body responsible for implementing reconciliation policies for improved race relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), introduced by the Howard government in 2006, aims to generate positive outcomes and close the gap in disparities (social, health, education, economic) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (Lloyd, 2018). Reconciliation Australia works with organisations to bring understanding of Indigenous issues in the workplace and foster constructive engagement between mainstream non-Indigenous Australia and Indigenous Australia. RAPs are voluntary and not legally mandated (Schepis, 2020).

Entrepreneurship emboldens Indigenous people as economic actors and has the potential to improve their social and economic standing in a way that includes their traditions. It focuses on reducing Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander disadvantage through culturally appropriate means of acquiring wealth without treading upon heritage values such as Indigenous knowledge, practices, and representations (Bodle et al., 2018; Hindle & Moroz, 2010). Indigenous enterprise increases the standards of living for the communities involved

and creates employment opportunities for members of the community (Collins et al., 2017). Indigenous entrepreneurs are more likely to employ other Indigenous workers than other non-Indigenous enterprises (Hunter, 2015). Collins et al. (2017) suggests Indigenous entrepreneurship as a complex issue consisting of social, cultural, and economic dimensions. The implication for this thesis is that the balancing of cultural and commercial imperatives occurs in the context of situational factors.

## **2.6 Indigenous narratives**

Indigenous narratives have been the subject of many definitions which vary depending on disciplines studying it. Ben-Amos (1971) highlights Indigenous narratives being defined by anthropologists as literature and as culture by scholars of literature, however, he suggests looking at it from three basic conceptions underlying the many definitions which view Indigenous narratives as a body of knowledge, a mode of thought and a kind of art. He also goes on to suggest that it must pass at least to one other generation through oral transmission as any other medium may disqualify the material from being Indigenous narratives.

Indigenous people value narrative as a medium of perpetuating knowledge, wisdom and cultural precepts between generations and is the foundation of culture in general (Henry et al., 2018). With an element of entertainment value, lessons are taught to the Indigenous people sometimes without them being conscious that they are being educated (Canonici, 1995). Narratives sanction accepted social behaviours, religious and socio-economic structures (Bascom, 1953; Canonici, 1995; Chiparausha & Mavhunduse, 2014) and familial lineages or whakapapa in Māori. An example of this value is the ability of Ngāti Porou iwi of the East Cape-Gisborne region, which can trace its ancestral lineage to Māui-Tikitiki-a-Taranga (Māui) through the tale of him fishing out Te Ika a Māui (North Island of New Zealand). It is said that

his waka (canoe) Nukutaimeha rest atop the ancestral mountain Hikurangi, which is in the Ngāti Porou tribal area (Keelan, 2009).

Keelan and Woods (2006) developed the Māuipreneur model based on the metaphorical interpretation of the behaviours exhibited by Māui in folklore of his adventures. This model is useful in engaging and encouraging Māori entrepreneurs by allowing an understanding of entrepreneurial behaviour from a Māori world view. Keelan and Woods (2006) suggest a synergistic relationship of people, spirits and nature in the Māori paradigm thus transforming the story of Māui from myth to a real role model. The same can be said for Dreamtime stories which tell of the creation story of the world by ancestral spirits from the religious-cultural Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander world view. These stories are used as education tools to teach successive generations about how to hunt, gather the best food and how they and their surroundings came to be (Irwin et al., 1997). Dreamtime stories are expressed through art, custom, music, and oral tradition (Rigney, 2001). They range from complex spiritual belief systems such as the period before creation where time did not exist to the transmitting of skills and knowledge of hunting, relating to nature, and origin stories of Aboriginal nations (Barber, 2001; Irwin et al., 1997). In the context of entrepreneurship, Aboriginal people are embedded in the Dreaming view of the world (Cecil, 2014) and, therefore, operate in a convergence of cultural and entrepreneurial practice. For example, Aboriginal Australians have cultural requirements to attend to rituals aligned with ‘sorry business’ (death) that have no definitive time periods while contending with commercial imperatives such as operational continuity (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017). How Aboriginal and Māori entrepreneurs navigate or negotiate these imperatives is not widely explored.

## 2.7 Boundary spanning

Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs operate in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous contexts. This section explains how Indigenous entrepreneurs assume the complex role of boundary spanning. Boundary spanners are individuals who straddle the line between multiple sets of interest (Tushman, 1977; Williams, 2013). These individuals work in collaborative environments coordinating, facilitating, and servicing the processes of collaboration between a diverse set of interests and agencies (Williams, 2002, 2013). Boundary spanners occupy the unique position of ‘having a foot’ in both their culture and the dominant society. They have been studied by researchers (Brown, 2017; Ryan & O’Malley, 2016; Williams, 2002, 2013) along organisational behavior, psychology, and policy lines. There seems to be similarities in entrepreneurial traits and those that make an effective boundary spanner.

Researchers have examined traits of boundary spanners (Brown, 2017; Williams, 2002) which seem to mirror some of the desired traits for entrepreneurial individuals, that is, characteristics that aid performance (Al Mamun & Ekpe, 2016). Brown (2017) mentions the ability to navigate ambiguities, multiple accountabilities and operate against the status quo for effective boundary spanning activities which are elements that feature in the observed ‘toolbox’ of entrepreneur skill requirements. Williams (2002) shares the same sentiments elaborating on how boundary spanners are characterised by their ability to build relationships, work outside their comfort zone and break boundaries whilst at the same time being able to draw boundaries to filter out undesired influences on their endeavors. Indigenous entrepreneurs occupy a position where they have to navigate ambiguities, have multiple accountabilities and operate against the status quo with a backdrop of expectations from differing viewpoints on what is socially expected of them (Klyver & Foley, 2012). If an Indigenous entrepreneur adopts a more

Western individualistic approach to opportunity exploitation, he or she risks losing links to their community and culture since the capitalist measure of success may clash with Indigenous cultural norms (Foley, 2003a; Klyver & Foley, 2012). However, this can be subjective as some Indigenous enterprises implement capitalistic models to achieve positive social outcomes. For example, Tainui Group Holdings in New Zealand, an iwi (tribe) owned entity with investments in tourism, fisheries, properties, and forestry do so for the social benefit of its tribal members.

## **2.8 Modernity versus tradition**

The either/or mind-set of modern versus traditional thinking is often divided along conflicting lines and appears in academia as two distinct positions relative to each other. Germond-Duret (2016) frames this positioning of extremes as binary opposition, where one is at either end of the spectrum and differ in meaning. He goes on to suggest that literature from both academics and practitioners is often divided along these two conflicting lines. Kothari (1968) also talks of prevailing theories of development having the dichotomous concept of change, in which tradition and modernity are taken as opposites and measures of progress as being ones of replacing the former by the latter. An example of opposing stances is the collectivist nature of traditional cultures cast against the individualism of modern capitalism. A study of Indigenous Australians by Foley (2003a) found this conflict of ideas where Indigenous entrepreneurs felt guilty for reinvesting money in their business for growth (capitalist concept) instead of sharing the profit with either their family or community (cultural concept).

This binary thinking is flawed in that stativity is assumed whereas tradition and modernity are dynamic. Kothari (1968) simplifies it by suggesting that there is constant adaptation of the new to the old and the old to the new. Thus, the process requires recapturing, reinterpreting, and restructuring of old traditions into accepted institutional behaviour. Mead

(2003) as cited in Mika (2014) echoed these sentiments by casting the Māori culture as dynamic rather than time locked. In the course of time, new definitions or interpretations of cultural principles present as they find meaning in modern circumstances. Ascribed to the Indigenous entrepreneur, this decision dichotomy is not that simple because of intersecting sets of favourable characteristics on both ends of the tradition-modernism continuum and in the case of this research, cultural-commercial imperatives. Collins et al. (2017) and Redpath and Nielsen (1997) suggest that culture both enables and constrains Indigenous entrepreneur enterprises, and the entrepreneur must find the right balance of cultural and commercial imperatives to realise efficiency.

Even though successful Indigenous entrepreneurship can occur without compromising traditional values (Redpath & Nielsen, 1997), cultural influences may restrict innovation to developing and acting upon new and unique business activities that only conform to cultural norms (Anderson, 2014; Lindsay, 2005; Redpath & Nielsen, 1997). Ideally, the Indigenous entrepreneur would be at an advantage if able to sit in a favourable position along the continuum. The challenge for the Indigenous entrepreneur is how to find the right balance of aspirations for cultural enrichment against those of modern economic and commercial advancements (Harmsworth, 2009). Saffu (2003) suggests equipping the Indigenous entrepreneur with adaptability, flexibility, and the ability to blend cultural nuances and norms with the commercial to find this balance.

## **2.9 Research gap**

As the body of Indigenous entrepreneurship research matures, previously proposed theories are clarified and in some cases disproved. The literature review established that research into the

interaction of Indigenous culture and mainstream values has manifested into several strands.

These themes include:

- dynamic nature of culture (Collins et al., 2017; Foley, 2003a; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Redpath & Nielsen, 1997)
- cultural contexts (Hindle & Lansdowne, 2005; Klyver & Foley, 2012; Lindsay, 2005)
- boundary spanning (Brown, 2017; Ryan & O'Malley, 2016; Tushman, 1977)
- theories of value (Mika, Dell, Newth, et al., 2022)
- entrepreneurial intention (Mrabure et al., 2018)
- hybridity (Altman, 2001; Colbourne, 2018)
- entrepreneurship processes (Croce, 2017; Mika et al., 2017)
- contingency theory (Linton, 2014; Peredo et al., 2004).

This research takes a context-based approach to understanding how Indigenous entrepreneurs reconcile their cultural and commercial imperatives. According to Tsui (2004), contextualisation avails novel results and insights from research. The thesis will contribute to understanding Indigenous cultural values in mainstream business contexts.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the methodological approaches to the research which are expanded upon in Chapter 4 on positionality. Readers can expect to encounter some overlap between Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. This chapter outlines the methodological choices used for this intercultural research—kaupapa Māori, Indigenous standpoint, and phenomenological—and their rationale in the study of Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurship. A weaving metaphor is used to explain how the complexity of this research was resolved. While cross cultural research compares cultures (Landis & Wasilewski, 1999), intercultural research focuses on interactions between cultures (Cushner, 2011). Rather than comparing Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs this research sought insight of Indigenous entrepreneurial processes in specific cultural contexts. An understanding of Indigenous epistemologies and ontology is a prerequisite to applying appropriate methodology. Epistemologies are theories of knowledge focusing on the nature, origin and scope of knowledge (Lycan, 2002), ontology is the nature of being, describing substance and cause (Creswell, 2009). Indigenous methodologies are informed by Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies (Kovach, 2010). Method is a technique utilised in gathering evidence and methodology is a theory and analysis of how research should be conducted (Harding, 1987). The epistemological approach for this research uses the metaphor of raranga (weaving), where multiple strands of flax are woven together to create a whāriki (woven mat) (Erueti & Palmer, 2014; Timu-Parata, 2010). The strands represent the varying epistemologies and research methodologies whilst the whāriki represents the thesis (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Ka'ai-Mahuta, 2010), which combines chapters and papers to create a platform or place for practitioners and researchers to gather, share and discuss Indigenous entrepreneurship.

There are many ways to construct a whāriki through a thesis to allow for robust discussion and debate regarding topics such as Indigenous entrepreneurship. Officially, this is a 'thesis by publication' but in order to create a whāriki that is cohesive and complete, the publications are surrounded by chapters that create a cohesive platform that makes sense to the audience this thesis aims to engage with. Chapter 4 is a published reflexive autoethnographic paper where I detail the process I underwent to reconcile my positionality as a Zimbabwean-born Kiwi who is researching Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs. This process helped me to determine an appropriate methodological approach to this research. Chapter 5 is a published paper on the experiences of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives for a selection of Māori entrepreneurs and Chapter 6 is a paper on the experiences of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives for a selection of Aboriginal entrepreneurs. Each paper provides an account of the methods applied and this chapter justifies and outlines the methodological choices for each of the papers, and for the thesis overall.

### **3.2 Introduction**

The method is the technique utilised to gather evidence, while methodology refers to the theory and analysis of how research should be conducted (Harding, 1987). Research methodologies to conduct research with Indigenous communities and participants, were applied to address the research question guiding this thesis: how do Indigenous entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice? Specifically, the rationalisation of economic decisions in diverse cultural contexts and how tensions in cultural values and business practice are resolved. Studies of Māori entrepreneurs in Tairāwhiti, Aotearoa New Zealand and Aboriginal entrepreneurs in Perth, Australia were conducted to address the

research question and to gain a deeper understanding of the Indigenous entrepreneurship process from the perspective of the Indigenous entrepreneurs interviewed.

Participants of this research self-identify with either New Zealand Māori and Aboriginal Australian ethnic groups that have been misrepresented and subject to belittling hegemonies due to unequal power relations that arose and persist, as a consequence of colonisation (Bishop, 1999). Smith (1999); L. T. Smith (2021) argues that academic research also tends to misrepresent and belittle Indigenous people as it is seen as an imperialist endeavour to exploit, oppress and minimise Indigenous societies. To address this, Indigenous approaches to research are necessary for Indigenous contexts (Smith, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2021). Indigenous methodologies are paradigmatic, that is, Indigenous philosophical frameworks influence the choice of methods, data collection, analysis, and interpretation found in Indigenous knowledge. Indigenous people are heterogeneous and have significant differences in cultures, values and beliefs between nations, as well as within nations and communities (Dana, 2015). The cultural heterogeneity of Indigenous peoples mean that Indigenous methodologies act as an ethical guide to do research in a culturally sensitive manner (Foley, 2003b; see also; Rigney, 2006; Singh & Major, 2017; Smith, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2021) that “integrat[es] [the] cultural beliefs, characteristics, attitudes, values, traditions, experiences, and norms of a target population into research design, implementation, evaluation, and materials” (Guntzviller, 2017, p. 319). The research for this thesis has been undertaken in a culturally sensitive manner to respect the legitimacy of cultural beliefs and experiences of Indigenous participants.

Research involving Indigenous people requires understanding the research philosophy of their local contexts. For Māori, kaupapa Māori can be described as a theory based on the

Māori world view (Barnes, 2000; Smith, 1992). For Aboriginal Australians, Indigenous standpoint theory is a theoretical construct for knowledge production that was developed for Indigenous Australians to negotiate the contested space that Indigenous and Western knowledge systems occupy (Foley, 2003b; Nakata, 2007). Kaupapa Māori and Indigenous standpoint theory approaches are utilised in this research because of their contextual guidance of how to conduct research with Māori and Aboriginal participants. Both approaches have merit, validity, and relevance as approaches to take for conducting research with common objectives that originate from different paradigms and cultural contexts. Qualitative methods are also utilised. Qualitative approaches are suited to understanding social phenomenon, meanings and experiences from a subjective stance (Crowe et al., 2015).

In this research, Western research methodologies were also considered to work alongside the Indigenous approaches. In this way the areas of collaboration between Indigenous and Western approaches can be enriched and decolonised (Smith, 1999); whilst the validity of constructs and results can be increased by exploiting inherent method strengths (Botha, 2011). An example could be triangulation of the transcript analysis to ensure Indigenous stories are interpreted accurately. This research brings together research approaches from Māori, Aboriginal, Zimbabwean world views and qualitative methods can be the space “for dialogue across difference[s]; to analyse and make sense of complex and shifting experiences, identities and realities” (Smith, 2005, p. 103). As a researcher who is neither Māori nor Aboriginal, a complexity in appropriate methodology was apparent. This complexity was in establishing my positionality in relation to research participants, conducting and interpreting participant narratives across multiple cultures, and ensuring I am being culturally sensitive in the research process. As Chapter 4 explains, I do not whakapapa to the Indigenous communities participating in this research so had to navigate how to do research in a culturally

sensitive way so as to maintain the mana and validity of Indigenous experiences and knowledge. This is where qualitative approaches used often in Western research contexts, such as 'phenomenological enquiry' were considered to acknowledge the world views, perspectives and experiences shared by Indigenous entrepreneurs in New Zealand and Australia.

According to Simonds and Christopher (2013), it is also possible to adapt Western research methods to Indigenous ways of knowing where appropriate and vice versa, thereby acknowledging coequality in both constructs of research methodology. Coequality means that Indigenous approaches to research are as equal to, legitimate and valid as Western research methods. Due to colonisation, Māori and Aboriginal people tend to reside in countries and contexts informed by a combination of Western and Indigenous knowledge (Massey & Kirk, 2015). Combining Indigenous and Western scientific bodies of knowledge may allow novel ways of thinking and knowledge creation whilst sustaining the credibility of both world views (Durie, 2004b; Massey & Kirk, 2015). This thesis, therefore, weaves together Western and Indigenous methods in the research, process, and analysis.

### **3.3 Indigenous methodologies**

This section discusses Indigenous methodologies and how methodological complexities for this research are resolved. Growing up in 1980s post-colonisation Zimbabwe and having an account of how Indigenous entrepreneurship presents (as expressed in Chapter 4), when we moved to New Zealand as a family, I became aware of and intrigued as to how Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship given their history as Indigenous people who have also experienced colonisation (as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6). The fact that I have made New Zealand my permanent home, with a Māori wife and children who whakapapa to Ngāti Porou as well as my Aboriginal friends were the foundation stones

of my personal motivation to embark on this research journey, which I address in Chapter 4. I have endeavoured to adopt a strength-based view of Indigenous research (Hamby, 2022) which seeks to disrupt deficit-based narratives of Indigenous research (Walter, 2018). The strengths-based approach is achieved through a focus on Indigenous advantage, casting Indigenous entrepreneurship as a vehicle to achieving self-determination and economic sovereignty (Collins & Norman, 2018; Foley, 2003a). Colonisation has resulted in an erosion of Indigenous people's societies, cultures, languages and ways of acquiring knowledge (Olsen, 2017). Intellectual emancipation and sovereignty therefore entail Indigenous intellectual traditions being free from the constraints of Western academic traditions and thriving in their own fertile grounds of intellectual engagement (Foley, 2018; Rigney, 2001; Warrior, 1999). For example, the legitimisation of Indigenous methodologies in research to tell Indigenous stories accurately (Smith et al., 2016).

Indigenous methodologies challenge Western paradigms of research and knowledge creation by offering an alternative Indigenous perspective on research practice (Smith, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2021). In contrast to positivism and objectivity which are Western paradigms, Indigenous methodologies prioritise Indigenous world views, languages, and cultural values to accurately represent Indigenous people who are part of the research process (Keane et al., 2017). The rationale behind decolonising research methodology varies, but involves highlighting the effects of colonisation (Olsen, 2017), upending Western approaches to knowledge creation that subjugate Indigenous people and make claims to a universal truth (Mahuika, 2008). Decolonising methodologies is a part of the discourse in postcolonial theory, focused on undoing the damage done by Eurocentric approaches to researching Indigenous people (Barnes, 2018; Mika, 2015; Smith, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2021). As an example, the emphasis placed by positivist Western methodologies on validity and reliability fail to capture

the complexity of Indigenous world views (Bishop & Glynn, 1999), which encompass spirituality and holism (Marsden, 2003). According to Barnes (2000, p. 14), “[t]he need to define, discuss or explain its existence [Indigenous methodology] in itself serves as a reminder of the power of colonisation.”

Indigenous methodologies are alternate ways of thinking about the research process (Nakamura, 2010), taking into account relational accountability (Wilson, 2001), respectful representation (Louis, 2007), and intellectual emancipation and sovereignty (Foley, 2018; Rigney, 2001). Relational accountability is a concept that describes the interconnectedness of people to all things including the spiritual, all forms of life, land, water and so forth (Steinhauer, 2002). Indigenous researchers examine if they are fulfilling their relationships with the world around them. In relational accountability, there is a co-dependency of people and their relations. For example, from a Māori world view this aligns with being kaitiaki (steward) to the whenua (land) and the whenua reciprocating with kai (food). The morals (axiology) of the research should, therefore, be more than just an abstract pursuit of gaining knowledge but instead have a focus on positive contributions to research relationships (Wilson, 2001). This research goes beyond contributing to scholarship by reciprocating to the communities involved. This reciprocity is achieved through reporting back the outcomes of the research, as well as maintaining ongoing relationships with intermediaries, who both had expressed an interest in the research. A planned hui (meeting) in Tairāwhiti to present the research outcomes to the participants has not yet taken place as it was disrupted by the COVID-19 lockdowns, and the person who is my intermediary in Australia is helping me to find a way to reciprocate to participants in a meaningful way. These plans will be revisited after the thesis is completed.

Respectful representation involves Indigenous people protecting themselves from further misappropriation through misinterpretation and simplification of Indigenous knowledge (Bishop, 1999; Louis, 2007). Respectful representation is achieved through working with cultural insiders to ensure accuracy in reporting (Burnette et al., 2014). Misrepresentation has negative consequences: it impedes non-Indigenous people from seeing who Indigenous peoples really are (Louis, 2007); it risks Indigenous people being othered, marginalised and excluded from the mainstream society (Porter, 2018; Rigney, 2001); and it leads to Indigenous peoples' over-representation in deficit-based studies (Hamby, 2022; Walter & Suina, 2019). Examples of misrepresentations include Indigenous peoples being caricatured as despicable specimens of human beings (Rhodes, 1877), romanticising of Indigenous knowledge (Fotiou, 2016), cast as barbaric warriors that the white hero must defeat (Mahuta, 2012) and the idea of Māori privilege where “where undue rights and privileges are granted [to Māori] on the basis of ‘birth right’” (David, 2007, p. 59).

Indigenous research methodologies allow Indigenous people to tell their stories their way and realise benefits from being part of the research process (Smith, 1999). To arrive at an appropriate methodology for this research, kaupapa Māori and Aboriginal research paradigms were explored to gain an understanding of research philosophies from scholars in Māori and Aboriginal cultures (Kovach, 2010). Moon and Blackman (2014) suggest that having sufficient understanding of the philosophical principles and theoretical assumptions of world views helps interpret research results meaningfully and appropriately. This research risks misrepresenting Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs if their associated Indigenous world views and research paradigms are not well understood. In the following sections I will explore the kaupapa Māori and Aboriginal research paradigms.

### *3.3.1 Kaupapa Māori research paradigm*

Emanating from the social sciences, health and Treaty of Waitangi claims research disciplines (Durie, 2004a; Pihama et al., 2002; Smith, 1997; Smith, 1999), kaupapa Māori research was developed through a critical theory lens to resist Western approaches to research and knowledge creation. These approaches othered and exploited Māori (Simpson & Ake, 2010; Smith, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2021) and delegitimised Māori ways of knowing and being (Mahuika, 2008). Kaupapa Māori research is grounded in the concept of tino rangatiratanga (self-determination), where Māori have control of research agendas and processes for positive outcomes benefiting Māori (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Walker et al., 2006). Kaupapa Māori insists for research within te ao Māori (Māori world view) and the application of tikanga Māori (principles or values) in the research process. In fact, kaupapa Māori research is ‘for Māori by Māori’, where Māori have control of the research process, including designing research, gathering information, analysis, and dissemination of findings (Eketone, 2008; Irwin, 1994; Smith, 1999; Walker et al., 2006).

Critics of the ‘for Māori by Māori’ view in kaupapa Māori argue against perceived essentialism (van Meijl, 2009). Essentialism is “the policing of this collective category, the treatment of its supposedly shared characteristics as the defining ones that cannot be questioned or modified without undermining an individual's claim to belong to that group” (Phillips, 2010, p. 47). Essentialism not only draws boundaries that invalidate research on Māori by non-Māori, but also excludes internal criticism from Māori researchers themselves (van Meijl, 2009). Additionally, Hine Waitere-Ang (1998) as cited in Mahuika (2008) hints at a danger of institutionalisation of Māori researchers, where a romanticising and generalisation of Māori stories occurs within institutions (Smith, 2000b). The essentialism argument against kaupapa

Māori research is flawed in that kaupapa Māori is not essentialist, rather, it allows for tino rangatiratanga to be realised through Māori sovereignty over the research process (Pihama et al., 2002). Kaupapa Māori does not exclude non-Māori from participating in research (Hoskins & Jones, 2017) but encourages Māori involvement to ensure accurate storytelling, cultural competency and research relevance to Māori communities (Mika, 2015). At the same time, practitioners of kaupapa Māori self-evaluate and reflect as a form of internal criticism (Hoskins & Jones, 2017), thereby minimising the threat of institutionalisation. The evolution and constant reshaping of kaupapa Māori research (Barnes, 2019) evidences a process of continual improvement. Bishop (1995) and Powick (2003) argue that non-Māori can utilise kaupapa Māori research if Māori have control of the research process. Whilst this research involves Māori participants and is guided by Māori supervisors, the fact that a non-Māori PhD student controls the research process and that the study also involves Aboriginal participants complicates selecting kaupapa Māori as the sole methodological choice.

This methodological conundrum led to conducting reflexive exercises and examining positionality within the research process (see Chapter 4), and to careful research design before and during the study. Learning and incorporating aspects of kaupapa Māori research with other qualitative approaches in a way that is respectable and impactful to tino rangatiratanga has been evidenced before, (see Barnes, 2013; Paine et al., 2020). Designing the research not only meant answering ‘how the research was to be conducted?’ but also ‘why the research was conducted in that way?’ In answering those questions, I moved from controlling the research process, to having a shared responsibility with participants and my research supervisors to ensure culturally competent research is produced. This research combines aspects of kaupapa Māori, Indigenous standpoint theory and phenomenological approaches to meet its objectives; and

makes a methodological contribution to intercultural research. In the next section, the Aboriginal research paradigm adopted for this research is discussed.

### *3.3.2 Aboriginal research paradigm*

Aboriginal participants are a part of this thesis because like the Māori participants, they parallel my culture of a deep connection to land, they have experienced colonisation, racism and discrimination at both the state and the personal level, and they have a desire for self-determination through various means, including entrepreneurial endeavour. For the reasons mentioned above, and expanded on in Chapter 4, it is imperative to understand the foundations of Aboriginal research philosophy. Indigenous Australian epistemologies frame knowledge creation and acquisition in Aboriginal communities. Amongst these is the Indigenous standpoint theory, of which Professor Martin Nakata and Professor Dennis Foley are advocates, both leading scholars in Indigenous studies in the fields of Indigenous business, entrepreneurship, education and knowledge research. Indigenous standpoint theory approaches knowledge production with a goal of enabling First Australians to negotiate the contested space between Indigenous and Western knowledge systems (Nakata, 1997, 2007). Foley (2003b), proposes an Indigenous standpoint theory that is inspired by three theories: the Indigenists approach, the Japanangka paradigm, and the Hawaiian epistemology. First, Rigney's (1999) Indigenist approach which emphasises research as part of self-determination, political empowerment through autonomy, and control over Indigenous knowledges, languages and cultures. The Indigenist approach privileges Indigenous voices in communicating the experiences of their communities (Rigney, 2006). Second, West's (1998) Japanangka paradigm, an Aboriginal teaching and research paradigm, which connects the physical, human and sacred worlds and argues that unlike Western epistemology, Indigenous Australian

epistemology accounts for the origin, nature, methods and limits of their knowledge systems. The Japanangka paradigm is a complex, holistic approach to Indigenous research practice (Foley, 2003b; see also; Koomen, 2020; Lee, 2019). Third, the Hawaiian epistemology (Meyer, 2003). The Hawaiian epistemology as a long-term idea that co-exists as both ancient and modern, indistinguishable from the fabric it is sewn into. It is constant but also metamorphosises and changes over time and influence (Meyer, 2003). The Hawaiian epistemology substantiates a framework of community and family dependence, classifying knowledge types and the methods of which that knowledge is transmitted through time and space. The Hawaiian epistemology is adopted as it bears resemblance to the Aboriginal Gai-Mariagal metaphor of which Foley (2003b) is familiar with. The Gai-Mariagal metaphor illustrates a caring of the land and like the Hawaiian epistemology considers the spiritual connections between the earth, sea and sky (Foley, 2017). An amalgamation of the Indigenist, Japanangka and Hawaiian epistemologies provides a basis to explain the physical and metaphysical aspects of Aboriginal knowledge systems (Foley, 2003b). The Indigenous standpoint theory reflects the holistic nature of the Māori world view, which considers the physical and metaphysical view of how things relate (Eketone, 2008; Pihama et al., 2002).

Indigenous standpoint theory creates a research space that enables Indigenous people to be Indigenous despite the dominance of mainstream spaces that do not recognise their knowledge systems (Foley, 2006c). Indigenous standpoint theory traces its evolutionary base (applied in research contexts) to the feminist standpoint (Haraway, 1988) and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1997). While the feminist standpoint theory acknowledges the subjectivity of lived experiences embedded within the creation of knowledge and research design (Cox et al., 2021; Harding, 2004), intersectionality goes further to take into account how multiple identities, for

example race and gender, intersect at an individual level to connect to systems of privilege and oppression at the social-structural level (Cox et al., 2021; Crenshaw, 1997). Similar to kaupapa Māori research, the Indigenous standpoint theory is built on critical theory to resist the hubris of objectivity, validity, and universal truth in positivist approaches to knowledge creation (Hill-Collins, 1991; Mahuika, 2008). Both theories emphasise the heterogeneity and subjectivity of lived experiences (Cox et al., 2021), holism (Marsden, 2003), self-determination (Rigney, 2006) and legitimacy of Indigenous approaches to research (Foley, 2018). As an Indigenous Zimbabwean person, I understand the intertwining of the physical and spiritual realms in a way only Zimbabweans can understand (Viriri & Mungwini, 2009). As a non-Māori and non-Aboriginal researcher, I acknowledge the legitimacy of their world views, that only they can fully comprehend. Only with proper guidance and support from Māori and Aboriginal participants, I can endeavour to do research that is respectful and mindful and contribute to self-determination goals of the communities involved.

### **3.4 Research approach**

Quantitative methods are insufficient for describing the lived experiences of Indigenous participants and are treated with suspicion by marginalised groups due to their association with deficit-based discourse (Walter & Suina, 2019). Whilst Walter and Suina (2019) argue for the potential of Indigenous quantitative methods as powerful tools in research, this research is suited to a qualitative approach. There are many different views on what qualitative research is (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Aspers and Corte (2019, p. 155) define it as “an iterative process in which improved understanding to the scientific community is achieved by making new significant distinctions resulting from getting closer to the phenomenon studied.” According to Moriarty (2011), qualitative methods can be broadly defined as having a set of core

characteristics including (1) providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of research participants' lived experiences; (2) purposively selected small samples on the basis of salient criteria; (3) data collection methods which usually involve close contact between the researcher and the research participants; (4) collection of rich and extensive information; (5) analysis which is open to emergent concepts and ideas leading to development of typologies and explanations; and (6) interpretations of social meaning through mapping and 're-presenting' the social world of participants. This research was qualitative, owing to the focus on depth of understanding over breadth of participant numbers (Russell & Gregory, 2003). Qualitative methods help answer complex questions of 'how' and 'why' (Hamilton & Finley, 2019), which is the focus of this research in terms of how Indigenous entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial endeavours. The 'why' emerges as explanations for the 'how', meaning that as the participants explain their methods or strategies, they will also answer why they choose to do so.

This research involved an interpretative phenomenological approach to provide detailed understandings of lived experiences of Indigenous entrepreneurs (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis attempts to make sense of subjective meanings of experiences of the research participants (Johnson & Duberley, 2000; Smith & Osborn, 2008). Knowledge acquired in interpretative phenomenology is socially constructed and understood through the social, historical and contexts to which their lived experiences are bound (Andrews, 2012; Dana & Dana, 2005; Eatough & Smith, 2008). Knowledge and understanding are always incomplete, what was known is viewed in the context of current interpretations and current interpretations will influence future understanding (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988). Research questions from this perspective, therefore, are constructed in a broad

and open manner, with more concern over exploration rather than hypothesis testing (Smith & Osborn, 2008).

As this research includes Māori and Aboriginal Indigenous contexts, precepts from both Kaupapa Māori and Indigenous standpoint theory were considered. As outlined above, Kaupapa Māori and Indigenous standpoint theory legitimatise Indigenous world views and accepts Indigenous languages, beliefs, knowledge, and values as legitimate in their own right (Bishop, 1999; Foley, 2003b; Tinirau & Gillies, 2011). If Indigenous participants are considered to be partners in the knowledge creation process, then an Indigenous research approach should ensure a safe space for the Indigenous communities involved in the research to be unapologetically Indigenous (Foley, 2006c; Irwin, 1994; Walker et al., 2006). This means the researcher should show respect to participant cultures and world views and engage with research issues of relevance and of benefit to Indigenous communities. My experience of being from a former British colony (Zimbabwe), and a close affinity to Māori culture when I immigrated to Aotearoa New Zealand gives me a level of respect and understanding of Indigenous aspirations that created rapport with Indigenous participants. To this end this research focuses on the entrepreneurial endeavours of Māori and Aboriginal communities and supports the aspirations of cultural sustainability in Western-influenced business environments.

### *3.4.1 Weaving methodologies*

In this section, the specifics of combining Indigenous methodologies with Western methodologies are discussed. Initially, the search for an appropriate approach to the research process led me to the concept of ‘bricolage’, which Lincoln (2001) described as working in the margins and knitting differing types of knowledge spheres to form new consciousness.

According to Salunke et al. (2013), bricolage has been applied in entrepreneurship studies more than any other field, for example, innovation studies (Garud & Karnøe, 2003), entrepreneurial behaviour (Fisher, 2012), social value creation (Salunke et al., 2013), service innovation (Witell et al., 2017), and social entrepreneurship (Janssen et al., 2018). Bricolage moves beyond simple triangulation and complementarity for an enriched way of looking at data. Bricolage resembles the idea of a pragmatist research paradigm. Pragmatism asserts that researchers should utilise philosophical and methodological approaches that are most suited to the research endeavour (Creswell, 2009). The pragmatist approach is a method of inquiry for practical-minded researchers (Creswell & Plano, 2011), considering inquiry as effective only if desired outcomes, such as self-determination, are achieved (Hothersall, 2019). The research consequences are the areas of focus rather than the utilised methods (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). Bricolage [and pragmatism] accepts the complexity of the meaning-making process, welcoming contextual contingencies dictating data-gathering and analytical methods suitable to meet the task at hand (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Even though bricolage and pragmatism have positive attributes, they fail to satisfy the Indigenous strengths-based theme of this research. First, they do not elevate Indigenous epistemology and ontology; Second, bricolage and pragmatism lack the cultural sensitivity that Indigenous approaches have, which comes with a deep understanding of positionality and power differentials. With this in mind, and after much discussion with my supervisors, bricolage and pragmatism were superseded for an Indigenous approach to combining research methodologies.

This research prioritises Indigenous world views and therefore required an Indigenous approach to weave together the methods that were utilised in the research process. To reconcile an appropriate methodological approach to this research, the metaphors of raranga (the process) and whāriki (the outcome) were applied. Timu-Parata (2010) says that:

Raranga was a significant symbol of well-being for whānau, hapū and iwi. Local hapū attached great importance to their pu harakeke (flax cultivations) for use within the family unit. This fundamental resource enabled the continued provision of clothing, shelter and housing materials for successive generations...The traditional Māori world was typified by a robust culture of creative skill and practical expertise in weaving many types of kete (basket ware), everyday kākahu (clothing) and fine korowai (cloaks)...The weaver adheres to specific and coherent practices based on tikanga Māori (custom, method) to identify, gather and process the resource before the weaving takes place...The concept of whāriki embraces the kaupapa (the reason for weaving a particular whāriki). Whāriki is complex. It tells a story and, as such, breathes the character and the philosophy of the weaver. Māori say that weaving changes the mauri (life force) of the harakeke by interacting with the life force of the weaver... to becoming a taonga (something that is sacred and special). (p. 50)

Raranga, then, exemplifies a well-planned and thought-out process with the desired outcome in mind (Lentfer, 2015). Weaving methodologies also reflect Indigenous world views to be intuitive and responsive to participants' needs as well as to the needs of the researcher. Raranga has been interpreted in research variously: as a way of undertaking a literature review (Timu-Parata, 2010); as a framework for analysing the functions of the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Court (Thom & Black, 2018); as a form of narrative inquiry (Ruwhiu & Cone, 2013); as a method for knowledge perpetuation (Shaw, 2021); and as a model for Māori and Indigenous research student supervision (Rangiwai et al., 2019). The process of raranga was deemed appropriate to consider because of my accountabilities to multiple world views in the

research. Erueti and Palmer (2014), who utilised a raranga approach to their research as a method for Māori athletes to make meaning of their ethno-cultural identity explain that:

In traditional Māori raranga, master weavers attest that each of the strands must be skilfully interwoven to serve its purpose. In this sense, the manner of the strands and the way in which they intersect play a vital role in maintaining the integrity of the whāriki and its shape. (p. 1066)

The decolonisation of research methodologies includes research agendas focused on reclaiming, reframing and renaming what research is in Indigenous contexts (Martin, 2003; Steinhauer, 2002). Using raranga to build a whāriki is decolonising methodology in action versus using bricolage or pragmatism which is rooted in Western research philosophy. In this research, strands of kaupapa Māori, Indigenous standpoint, interpretative phenomenological approaches such as semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis are woven together to achieve the purpose of creating a platform or whāriki at the research interface, to assist in understanding Indigenous entrepreneur experiences. The research interface is where knowledge systems intertwine in equal standing (Durie, 2005). Innovation, additional new knowledge, and methods emerge to improve understanding of knowledge systems involved (Durie, 2004b). The weaving analogy is expressed in other Indigenous approaches. Examples include tui kakala in Pacific research contexts (Fua, 2014; Thaman, 1988). Kakala is a Tongan practice of flower and leaf weaving for special occasions. Tui kakala consists of three steps toli, tui and luva. Toli involves selecting and picking the different flowers and leaves for making the kakala. Toli symbolises the stages of problem identification, choosing participants, data collection and analysis. Tui is the process of making or weaving the kakala. Tui symbolises the integration, synthesis and weaving of knowledge made available by the stories. Luva is the gifting of the kakala to the weaver. Luva symbolises when the research is given for the benefit

of the community (Fa'avae, 2018; Vaioleti, 2006). In another example, Ryder et al. (2020) describe a process of weaving research methodologies at the interface of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and Western methodologies. Using weaving, a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tradition, Ryder et al. (2020) metaphorises a weaving of research methodologies in reconciling quantitative research approaches with Indigenous research methods.

To design a culturally appropriate research project the tiaki (mentor) and the empowering outcomes models (Smith, 1992) were applied to this study. The tiaki model suggests having authoritative Māori and Aboriginal guides and mentors in the research process (Simpson & Ake, 2010; Smith, 1992). Accordingly, for this research Māori supervisors and Aboriginal scholars were enlisted to help navigate the research process in a culturally respectful fashion. The empowering outcomes model suggests that research should respond to Indigenous issues and the results should bring positive outcomes for the Indigenous communities involved (Simpson & Ake, 2010; Smith, 1992). The Māori economy has grown 60% in the years 2013-2018, from \$42.6b to \$68.7b and is projected to reach \$100b before 2030 (Nana et al., 2018), and Aboriginal businesses have experienced a growth rate of 74% between 2006 and 2018 (Evans et al., 2021). There is increased interest in Indigenous aspirations for self-determined economic development (Bodle et al., 2018; Mika, Dell, Newth, et al., 2022; Smith et al., 2015). The outcomes of this research aspire to enhance the self-determination goals in both Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurship, providing useful knowledge in entrepreneurial practice. I endeavoured to ensure that the approach to this research was ethical from an Indigenous perspective by engaging in my institutions ethics approval process and supplementing it with a team of Māori and Aboriginal scholars to give advice on how to conduct the research.

### 3.5 Ethics

A full research ethics application was submitted to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee to help me address my own biases and ensure research is conducted in an ethical way intended to keep the researcher, participants, and Massey safe. Members of Indigenous communities have historically been exposed to the negative consequences of research (Louis, 2007; Smith, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2021), and university ethics processes aim to minimise this but are insufficient on their own because the ethics codes are mostly generic. The application was considered and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee on the condition that the code of ethical conduct for research, teaching and evaluations provided by Massey University was followed during the research (refer to Appendix A). The code has provisions for informed consent from potential participants, harm reduction and protection, confidentiality, protection of vulnerable groups and expectations of professional conduct. The ethics process refers to the Treaty of Waitangi principles of partnership, participation, and protection to ensure that Māori aspirations of tino rangatiranga are realised in the research process. The ethics process encourages issues of relevance to Māori be pursued in the research with ongoing support and guidance from Māori. This research meets these criteria, ensuring that Māori supervisors are involved in all aspects of the research process. The practical elements of ethics in the research processes are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2 illustrates the practical elements of ethically and culturally responsible research. The principles were not only applicable in Aotearoa New Zealand but in Australia as well. The research involved Māori participants and therefore Māori supervisors were included in an advisory capacity to ensure the research design, methods, analysis, and interpretation were appropriate and culturally responsible. Similarly, due to the research involving Aboriginal

people from Australia, four Aboriginal Australian scholars were asked for advice regarding an appropriate ethics approval process for Aboriginal participants. The most experienced scholar in the Aboriginal advisory panel advised that the Massey University ethics approval process was appropriate and adequate, therefore no additional institutional ethics process was required in Australia. Massey University's ethics application process includes the research demonstrating cultural considerations for cultures other than Māori are catered for in the research. The process requires evidence of prior consultation with advisors adept in the cultural and research practices of the participant Indigenous people. These requirements were met and evidence of consulting with Aboriginal scholars was supplied. In accordance with the ethics approval requirements, participants were given a research information sheet (refer to Appendix B).

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Application</b>
Whakapapa (relationships)	The recruitment of participants in both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand was facilitated through relationships.
Tika (purposefulness)	The research had a defined purpose that was explained to participants. The research topic is relevant to Māori and Aboriginal aspirations of self-determination.
Manaakitanga (cultural and social responsibility)	The research has mechanism to ensure output is not harmful to participant communities. These mechanisms include reflexivity and supervision from Indigenous scholars.
Mana (justice and equity)	The participants were partners in the research process and not research subjects.
Aroha ki te tangata (respect for people)	The research acknowledges the communities of the participants in the thesis and journal articles.
He kanohi kitea (meet face to face)	The interviews were face to face. Other methods such as phone interviews tend to be impersonal.
titiro, whakarongo, korero (look, listen and speak)	The interviews were a conversation. Reasonable eye contact was made to communicate that the speaker had my full attention. Listening intently shows respect; and allows for learning and understanding. Speaking was done at appropriate times to ensure the speaker is not being cut-off.
kia tupato (be cautious)	Care was taken to ensure that the participant felt comfortable in the interview process. E.g., with the line of questioning.
kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (don't trample on the mana or dignity of a person/people),	Participants were treated with respect to ensure their mana stayed intact.
kaua e mahaki (don't flaunt your knowledge)	The interviews were a learning opportunity for me, and participants were thanked for sharing their knowledge.

**Table 2 Ethical elements in the research process**

The information sheet was sent to potential participants prior to being recruited to get an understanding of the research before agreeing to participate. The document details the contact details of the researcher and supervisory team. Also included were an outline of what the study is about, characteristics of intended participants, details on the type of interview (face to face), duration, and the rights of the participants. Participants were informed of their right to refuse to answer any questions, cancel the interview and withdraw from the research at any

stage in the research. Participant names were anonymised in the research and in associated publications to ensure confidentiality is preserved. After agreeing to participate in the research, a verbal presentation of the research purpose was presented before consent was formalised through signing the consent form (refer to Appendix C).

Principles of Indigenous data sovereignty were observed in the research. According to Walter and Suina (2019, p. 237), Indigenous data sovereignty can be defined as “the right of Indigenous peoples to determine the means of collection, access, analysis, interpretation, management, dissemination and reuse of data pertaining to the Indigenous peoples from whom it has been derived, or to whom it relates.” Indigenous data sovereignty manifests at the group level, whether iwi or tribe (Lovett et al., 2019). The practice of self-reflexivity exercises, the inclusion of Māori and Aboriginal scholars as guides ensured that Indigenous priorities, culture, values and world views (Kukutai & Taylor, 2016; Walter & Suina, 2019) were respected. Permission was sought to utilise participant stories in the thesis and subsequent publications for the collective benefit of their respective Indigenous communities.

### **3.6 Story gathering**

The following section describes how interviews for the research were conducted in New Zealand and Australia. Face to face in person interviews were chosen because of their ability to provide rich and deep descriptions (Alsaawi, 2014). In kaupapa Māori research, pūrākau are defined as Māori oral traditions passed down through generations to nurture, sustain and flourish the people (Amopiu, 2020; Lee, 2005). Pūrākau is employed as a methodology for knowledge distribution and holds legitimacy in pedagogy (Lee, 2005). Pūrākau share stories of ancestry, cultural background, life experiences, interests, and seeks to communicate meaning in Indigenous voices (Hapeta, 2018; Lee, 2009). Being neither Māori nor Aboriginal,

I articulated my positionality utilising pūrākau, to situate myself before the research process began (Chapter 4). This step allowed a self-examination in relation to the research and influenced how the research was going to be carried out (Bourke, 2014). In the spirit of adopting a relational approach to this research, finding commonalities, and understanding to foster trust with research participants (Moffat, 2016), I authored a reflexive autoethnography paper communicating who I am, my background, what my intentions were and how I was connected to the Indigenous communities involved in the research (Manganda, 2021).

The reflexive process mirrors an African concept known as Ubuntu, and in Shona known as Hunhu, which I am familiar with. Hunhu is the essence of humanness (Samkange & Samkange, 1980). The philosophy has three guiding maxims, (1) Respectful human relations are established when one realises that to be human is to affirm their humanity by recognising the humanity of others—“I am because we are and because we are, therefore I am” (Mbiti, 1990, p. 106). This maxim communicates the importance of relationships and their crucial bearing on human successes (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020). This research amounts to nothing without relationships with allies, supervisors, advisors, and participants. They all have an impact on research conception, ethics, and outcomes; (2) When faced with a choice between wealth and the preservation of human life, then one should opt for the preservation of life (Samkange & Samkange, 1980). This maxim outlines the importance of preserving not only human life, but things that make us human. In the Māori world view, the concept of mana is deep, but in this research, is taken to mean a sense of honour and cultural pride (Webber & Macfarlane, 2020), is especially important due to its connection to social standing. This research must ensure the mana or honour of the participants is not trampled upon; and (3) The king owes his status, to the will of the people he reigns over. This maxim is embedded in African political philosophy (Samkange & Samkange, 1980), and may communicate that systems are enabled by those who

operate under them. Indigenous research is a political activity, balancing the scrutiny of Western establishments (validity, robustness) and the fulfilment of Indigenous criteria (usefulness, Indigenous friendliness) (Smith, 1999). This research works at the interface of Indigenous and Western research approaches seeking to innovate novel ways of presenting Indigenous knowledge which challenge methodological boundaries that we “are trained to conform to” (Smith, 1999, p. 160).

As part of the relationship building phase and interviews, koha (gifting) was shared to show appreciation for the participant’s contribution to the research. Andrew (2020) describes koha as a contribution, whether gift or donation to maintain social relationships. In the ritual of giving koha, the gift is not passed into the hands of the receiver but in front of them for consideration. The reception of the koha is up to the receiver and the right to refuse koha affords the intended recipient control over the process and enhances their mana in the interaction (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). The act of gifting is not intended to incentivise participation, but rather as a medium of reciprocity and appreciation, of an exchange between two people. The acts of giving koha were well received by participants in both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Reciprocity should be an important part of Indigenous research (Hoffman, 2013; Jones et al., 2010). Acts of reciprocity present in many ways including giving material gifts, time, sharing of knowledge and a public acknowledgement of someone’s help (Hoffman, 2013). In terms of research, ensuring the results of research are meaningful to the communities involved and outsiders also reflects the principle of reciprocity (Haig-Brown & Archibald, 1996; Smith, 1999).

Interviews were first conducted in Perth, Australia then in the Tairāwhiti (East Coast) region of New Zealand. Kōrerorero (Māori) and yarning (Aboriginal) were utilised as

preambles to the more formal semi-structured interviews. Kōrerorero can be described as conversing or chatting (Moorfield, 2005) and yarning as sharing and exchange of information between two or more people (Bessarab & Ng'Andu, 2010). Kōrerorero and yarning were mediums to build rapport through sharing of culture, interests, humour, life experiences, and are relatively less threatening than engaging in semi-structured interviews. After establishing familiarity and rapport, semi-structured interviews were chosen because they tend to keep the discussion meandering around the research topic (Adams, 2015). Semi-structured interviews were a methodological choice because the purposefulness of the conversation can give specificity to participant insights on the subject matter (Carruthers, 1990).

### *3.6.1 Yarning in Australia*

According to Brunger and Wall (2016) researchers who are unknown to a community should not approach the community without an introduction from a community member. Taking the cold-call approach will often lead to mistrust and failure. The participants from Perth were found initially through a cold call to an intermediary, an Indigenous business advisor who is now a friend. According to Valentine (2013), cold calling can be intrusive and yields a high refusal rate, therefore, the initial call was made to see if a relationship could be developed and nurtured. The intermediary's social media profile showed the same interests as I and we connected on that level. We exchanged regular calls, texts, and emails during and after the interviews were conducted. This relationship developed and eventually led to in-person and over-the-phone introductions to participants for this research (Table 3) and also helped with facilitation of the interviews. He extended hospitality for the length of my stay and expressed excitement with the focus of the research.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Industry type</b>	<b>Staffing levels</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Gender of owner/s</b>
A	Textiles	1-10	Small	Male
B	Facilities Service	51-199	Medium	Male
C	Staffing & Recruitment	11-50	Medium	Female
D	Business Consultancy	1-10	Small	Male
E	Manufacturing	1-10	Small	Male
F	Information Technology	1-10	Small	Male
G	Environmental Services	1-10	Small	Female
H	Tourism	1-10	Small	Female
I	Agriculture	1-10	Small	Female
J	Textiles	1-10	Small	Female

**Table 3 Aboriginal participants**

Note. Business size classification is in accordance with Australian Bureau of Statistics definitions (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2002)

The interviews were held at a place and time convenient to the participants and were between 45 to 60 minutes in duration. The interview locations tended to be quiet cafes where the participants offered to meet. Fortunately, the meetings were usually before or after lunch when the cafes were relatively quiet. A voice recorder was used to record the interviews, with a mobile phone as a backup. The mobile phone ended up being more reliable than the voice recorder and offered high quality audio with minimal background noise. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, two of the scheduled interviewees cancelled and were unavailable in the week of my stay in Perth when I was hoping to complete face to face interviews. I was

intending to complete 10 interviews and decided to take a pragmatic approach and delayed my departure by two days to conduct the last two interviews. The reasoning behind conducting 10 interviews was that in relatively homogenous groups, at 16 or fewer interviews, data is expected to reach saturation (Francis et al., 2010; Guest et al., 2006). Saturation in this research meant having reached a point where no new information was coming from the participant narratives and there was enough information to draw conclusions. The participants in Perth shared relatively similar characteristics amongst them, being Aboriginal entrepreneurs in the same local area and in the same business networks. The participants in Tairāwhiti shared relatively similar characteristics amongst themselves as well. Having a combined 20 interviews of both Aboriginal and Māori participants facilitated through intermediaries, is adequate to reach saturation for cross-cultural meta themes (Hagaman & Wutich, 2017).

The participants who cancelled were very helpful in suggesting who to approach for interviews and they encouraged me to mention their names to the potential participants. The cancellations were because interviews coincided with National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week and participants had decided to travel out of state to attend events. NAIDOC week celebrates the culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Brien, 2015). I called the suggested names and was able to secure two interviews. Whilst cold calling is generally frowned upon (Brunger & Wall, 2016), I believe in this case I was ‘introduced by proxy’ by being given the names to call and the permission to mention that I was referred by someone they had a relationship with. Relationships reflect a relational approach to research. The introductions that I received to potential participants by the intermediary and by the participants who could not do the interviews themselves, was reflective of an Indigenous way of doing research that is based on whanaungatanga (kinship) and relationships.

### 3.6.2 Kōrerorero in Aotearoa New Zealand

Aotearoa New Zealand data collection was also facilitated through an intermediary, a Māori development official with an existing relationship with two of my research supervisors. The Māori development official took the role of kaitakawaenga (facilitator) to assist in recruiting participants (Table 4) and organising the interview schedule.

Participant	Industry	Staffing levels	Size	Gender of owner/s
A	Pharmaceuticals	13	Small	Male x2
B	Information Technology	2	Small	Female
C	Primary Industry	*35	Medium	Male
D	Primary Industry	*6	Small	Male
E	Media	8	Small	Female
F	Hospitality	2	Small	Male
G	Business Development	2	Small	Female & Male
H	Land Trust	*2	Small	Male x2
I	Food	*2	Small	Female
J	Event Planning	*2	Small	Female

**Table 4 Māori participants**

Note. 1. Business size classification is in accordance with IRD definitions (Ministry of Small Business Innovation and Employment [MBIE], 2022). 2. \* Employee numbers fluctuate seasonally.

The interviews were conducted at a place and time convenient to the participants and lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. The interview locations were mainly in the office boardroom of the kaitakawaenga but also included meeting participants at their place of business. The kaitakawaenga was at all the interviews, facilitating the tikanga of Ngāti Porou, extending

manaakitanga (hospitality), tautoko (support) and encouraging the mahi (work). The mahi was encouraged and supported because the kaitakawaenga was involved in Māori economic development, and the research would contribute to understanding how Māori entrepreneurs can be better supported. Standard qualitative research methods tend to discourage the presence of non-participants in interview processes (Fowler Jr & Mangione, 1990). Third parties in the interview process can negatively affect data quality, giving rise to issues such as the participant giving socially desirable responses (Cantillon & Newman, 2005; Quetulio-Navarra et al., 2015). The strength of the relationship between the kaitakawaenga and the participant and the important intermediary function this person performed outweighed the risks. From a kaupapa Māori perspective, whakawhanaungatanga (relationship building) is strengthened through the presence of a kaitakawaenga who is from the same hapū as participants. The kaitakawaenga acts as a bridge to build connections between the researcher and participants (Wearmouth & Berryman, 2012).

### **3.6 Analysis**

Thematic analysis is a common approach in Indigenous qualitative research and can be consistent with an Indigenous conceptual framing (Kovach, 2021). When the research is based on Indigenous theorising, the thematic analysis can adopt a decolonising theoretical lens to ensure consistency with Indigenous epistemology (Kovach, 2010). Thematic analysis of collected data was utilised to identify themes based on context and to systematically arrange lived experiences (Souto-Manning, 2014). Because the Indigenous entrepreneur was the unit of analysis employed to address the research question (Tetnowski, 2015), their responses were analysed and aggregated to explain group behaviours (Kumar, 2018). The inductive approach allows for findings to emerge from themes in the data (Liu, 2016; Thomas, 2006) and links

between objectives, findings and typologies of observations can be developed (Gilgun, 2011; Thomas, 2006). The deductive approach on the other hand, begins with a theory that will be tested (Gregory & Muntermann, 2011). The researcher is expected to get a sense of the data by rereading the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006), describing, analysing, interpreting participant stories throughout the entirety of the research process (Ely et al., 1997; Kovach, 2021).

After engaging with participants, transcripts of semi-structured interviews were produced by a transcription service and checked for accuracy, which I then analysed for shared and diverse experiences of the participants. The transcription service is contracted to the business school that I attend and operates under a standing confidentiality agreement. NVivo 11 Pro was utilised as the data management tool to examine relationships between participant responses and to help categorise experiences into themes. The next step was to start coding the data, highlighting potentially relevant material, and then grouping it using a systematic process. With the grouped codes, patterns were observable, and themes began to emerge. Categorisation of clusters within participant responses produced subthemes which were further consolidated to produce general themes and main themes (Crowe et al., 2015). These themes were then defined, named, and examined in relation to other themes to draw a narrative (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Crowe et al., 2015). Research supervisors were able to simultaneously review a selection of the transcripts, code and arrange themes. Findings from the supervisors were compared to my transcripts to ensure consistency in analysis, and in some cases required more discussion, further analysis, and review. Collective narratives can interpret aspects of social reality through the lens of values and beliefs in the narratives; and highlight group behaviours in specific social contexts (Bliuc & Chidley, 2022). In line with Braun and Clarke's (2006) emphasis on data familiarity, data was revisited several times to ensure consistency and contextual accuracy.

Member checking is a technique for confirming credibility of results (Lavallée, 2009). Member checking involves asking one or more participants in the study to confirm the accuracy of accounts (Candela, 2019). Member checking was utilised not only to confirm credibility, but to also meet Indigenous data sovereignty principles. Indigenous data sovereignty principles of reflecting Indigenous priorities, culture, values and world views (Kukutai & Taylor, 2016; Walter & Suina, 2019) were observed in the triangulation of access between myself, and my Māori supervisors. Additionally, a member check was conducted with an Aboriginal participant to review a summary of findings in the analysis stage and a review of an Aboriginal focused journal article before submitting to a journal (Chapter 6). The participant is an expert in Aboriginal entrepreneurship and is involved in Indigenous start-up incubation and acceleration initiatives.

The dissemination of results of the study includes reporting back to the participants. This is especially important as Indigenous people have historically had researchers come into their communities, collect data, and disappear (Cochran et al., 2008; Guillemin et al., 2016; Peltier, 2018). It was important to show my respect for participants and what they had done for me. Some of the ways I did this was being a guest on Ngāti Porou radio segment where I shared preliminary research findings, aspirations, and fielded questions from the radio host. Another way was sharing preliminary findings in the member check process. Sharing results is a costless act, but it is significant in that it maintains the relationships. I intend to produce a more condensed report to the researched communities after the PhD examination process. COVID-19, lockdowns and travel restrictions disrupted sharing the preliminary findings and *kanohi ki kanohi* or face to face part of the research, but I was fortunate to conduct face to face interviews in Perth and Tairāwhiti in 2019.

### **3.7 Bias, viability and reliability**

Norris (1997) asserts that all researchers are fallible and prone to error. Bias impacts the validity and reliability of findings. Validity refers to the integrity, application of methods and accurate representation of data, while reliability is concerned with consistency within the analytical processes (Smith & Noble, 2014). Bias cannot be eliminated from the research process but can be minimised through accounting for prejudices, personal philosophies, lived experiences and ideas (Morse et al., 2002; Norris, 1997; Smith & Noble, 2014). In this research, bias was present due to my affiliation with Ngāti Porou through marriage and how my personal experiences shaped my research philosophy (Manganda, 2021).

While in the positivist paradigm objectivity is imperative, Indigenous research must represent Indigenous truth with authenticity (Gair, 2012; Smith, 1999). Heshusius (1994) asserts that to be free from objectivity people need to turn toward a participatory mode of consciousness. A participatory mode of consciousness is an epistemological reality where the act of knowing is a shared activity rather than having distinctions between the researcher and the researched (Heshusius, 1994; Said, 2018). A participatory mode of consciousness minimises power imbalances, fosters empathy, sincerity and gives the researcher a peek into participant experiences.

Applying a participatory mode of consciousness in the research aligned with including a kaitakawaenga (intermediary) to strengthen relationship building and minimise power imbalances (Said, 2018). A kaitakawaenga facilitates whakawhānaungatanga (relationship building) by levelling or smoothing out the hierarchical structures of research settings (Esim, 1997). This levelling function changes the engagement from being ‘the researcher interviewing a participant’ to ‘new acquaintances having a korero or yarn.’ For example, in Australia the

intermediary introduced me to participants as a friend and in New Zealand the kaitakawaenga introduced me as whānau (family) due to my connection to Ngāti Porou. The way I was introduced was significant in quickly establishing commonalities or foundations on which a relationship can be built. Conventional wisdom says that when relationships are too close, they can sway people's views but in the Indigenous world view, relationships are important and having a kaitakawaenga or intermediary present helps to bring about trust, which cultivates truth. On top of consulting with my supervisors and personal reflections, I reconciled to leverage collaborative social processes to keep the research honest and fair (Norris, 1997). This included getting advice from whānau and friends to ensure appropriateness of my approaches to the research and ensure the research topic is of relevance.

## **CHAPTER 4 POSITIONALITY: FROM ZIMBABWE TO AOTEAROA**

### **4.1 Researcher positionality as self-reflexivity in Indigenous entrepreneurship research**

#### **- from Zimbabwe to Aotearoa.**

This chapter articulates my positionality in the research process. I am a Zimbabwean-born Kiwi researching Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs. This chapter serves as a reflexive exercise and acknowledgement of how my positionality influences the research. Reflexivity allows people to examine ourselves, our experiences, thoughts, feelings and actions to illuminate the foundations of our interpretations as we engage with the research process (Corlett & Mavin, 2018). The chapter examines and narrates my life story and how my experiences have led to this research. In telling my story, I contextualise the methodological choices and approaches to this thesis. This chapter expands on the methodological approaches to the research discussed in Chapter 3. Readers will encounter overlap between Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 in respect of the methods.

#### **4.2 Abstract**

The paper is intended as a provocation for researchers to reflect on their cultures, life stories, and how this can engender cultural empathy through shared intergenerational experiences as Indigenous peoples, despite not originating from the community at the heart of a given study. I explore how an Indigenous researcher's life story, from a childhood in the African continent to adulthood and parenthood in Aotearoa, influenced his research direction and design toward Indigenous entrepreneurship as an emancipatory and empowering endeavour. It challenges the dominance of objectivity, balancing it with the subjectivity of researcher positionality in Indigenous entrepreneurship research. First, I narrate my life story to demonstrate how my

experiences shape my research philosophy. Second, I discuss the research that I am involved in, exploring issues of my reflexive process and positionality as it relates to the research. I invite other Indigenous researchers to reflect on how their life stories influence their research.

### **4.3 Introduction**

Positionality in Indigenous research has been explored by scholars who examined the complexity of Indigenous contexts as they relate to researcher positioning (Blix, 2015; Brayboy et al., 2012; Kwame, 2017; Moffat, 2016; Zilber et al., 2008). Moffat (2016) emphasised opening up to the researched community in the spirit of finding commonalities and understanding to foster trust, proposing a relational approach to research. Brayboy et al. (2012) emphasised the importance of incorporating reflexive exercises concerning positioning and its effect on research decisions and processes. Zilber et al. (2008) argued that life stories, social fields influencing lived experiences and meta-narratives give contextual meaning, which can aid in articulating participant narratives devoid of researcher influences.

This paper is an exercise in self-reflexivity to illustrate its relevance for research efficacy in Indigenous contexts. Reflexivity includes a self-appraisal process in which the gaze is turned onto the researcher to assess situatedness within the research and their effect on the research process (Berger, 2015). Self-reflexivity, then, is an intentional introspection of the self to better understand how one connects with others who have different cultural origins and life stories. Self-reflexivity in this case contemplates the interconnections between my world view, lived experience and interactions with Indigenous entrepreneurs who belong to cultures other than my own. This paper shows the importance of articulating researcher positionality and its antecedents in relation to theoretical and methodological choices in Indigenous research. I

consider how my childhood experiences in Zimbabwe and teenage experiences in Aotearoa shaped my world view and research intentions, priorities, and processes. This involves a self-reflective examination of my lived experience and an evaluation of my positionality as it relates to research. Including this step in Indigenous entrepreneurship research leads to being adequately prepared in the mind, heart, and hand to conduct research in ways consistent with the values, ethics, and expectations of Indigenous peoples with whom and for whom one is researching. Rather than taking a “you have to be of the same Indigenous community to do research with them” approach, I present my case by highlighting that it is possible to do research with empathy and understanding of another culture without being part of that culture through whakapapa. I will now refer to my whakapapa and the moments that relate to my research journey.

#### **4.4 Growing up a Karanga child in independent Zimbabwe**

I am of the Karanga tribe, which is a Shona subtribe, and my tribe makes up approximately 37.5% of the 12 million Shona people of Zimbabwe. I hail from Chief Nemauzhe’s tribal land, and my totem is Moyo VaRozvi. I was born in Seke, Zimbabwe, in 1985 just after the independence of my people and was able to experience a starkly easier life than what my parents and grandparents had experienced during the time of British colonisation and the Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

Zimbabwe was colonised by the British Crown in the 1880s under the sponsorship of Cecil John Rhodes. Rhodes (1877) had the following to say about his mission to colonise lands on behalf of the Crown:

I contend that we [the English] are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race. Just fancy those parts that are at present inhabited by the most despicable specimens of human beings what an alteration there would be if they were brought under Anglo-Saxon influence, look again at the extra employment a new country added to our dominions gives. (p. 248)

It is with the views of European superiority such as those exhibited by Rhodes that parts of the African continent were colonised. The white minority held executive, judicial, legislative and social power over the black majority and enacted racist policies such as the 1923 Constitution of Rhodesia (Barber, 1966), which technically gave all citizens the right to vote, but excluded the Indigenous population by stipulating requirements for an income of £100 per annum, occupation of a dwelling worth at least £150 pounds or owning a mining claim. These requirements could not be met by the Indigenous population, who averaged a salary of £3 a month (Mutiti, 1974).

At the conclusion of the Second World War, the British monarch started the process of “decolonising” its colonies with a democratic policy of handing over power to the Indigenous populations (Pearce, 1984; Tamarkin, 2012). The white minority in Rhodesia campaigned against this process and through political measures crafted a proclamation document known as the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), to officially declare independence from Britain. This completed secession from the British monarchy and further deprived the black majority of having the same rights as the white citizens (Coggins, 2006).

The UDI created the rebel state of Rhodesia, which was in power from 1965 to 1979. Rhodesia did not receive official recognition internationally and did not have any diplomatic relationships with any country other than the apartheid state of South Africa (Stephenson,

1975). To fight against the repressive and racist policies of the Rhodesian government, the Indigenous population waged a protracted guerrilla war from 1969 to 1979 known as the Rhodesian Bush War (Hove, 2011). A ceasefire was reached in late 1979 to allow a process of negotiation at Lancaster House in London with representatives of all sides of the conflict (Soames, 1980). The Lancaster House Agreement (LHA) was signed by representatives of the British government, the Patriotic Front, and the Rhodesian government, and it stipulated how a democratic election was to be held, the issue of land redistribution was to be reconciled and many other issues of disagreement were to be handled.

“Zimbabwe shall never be a colony again”—Robert Mugabe [Former President of Zimbabwe] (Willems, 2013, p. 27)

At the onset of independence, in April 1980, the new black-led government of Zimbabwe embarked on an indigenisation drive of industry to empower the Indigenous population through land redistribution and social reform. Based on the principles of the LHA, land redistribution was intended to be a logical and ordered process; in practice, however, it turned out to be a chaotic, corrupt and violent process with mixed results (Nyawo, 2014). The new people in power practised elitism, disproportionately benefiting from the post-independence distribution of land and other economic resources. Productive farms were given to the upper echelons of the ruling political party and the masses saw no material benefit apart from basic rights that should be a given (Palmer, 1990). Disgruntled war veterans embarked on a deadly rampage seizing white-owned commercial farms for the resettlement of subsistence farmers. With government endorsement, this process preceded economic devastation and instability in Zimbabwe (Mutanda, 2013).

During the early post-independence period, there were opportunities for more Indigenous people to enter entrepreneurship and be in control of their own destiny. My grandfather, for instance, was able to open and operate a convenience store, which would have been an unimaginable achievement for him pre-independence. Later in the post-independence period, Zimbabwe was teetering on economic collapse, and entrepreneurship became symbolic of the struggle to survive. With high unemployment and record inflation, everyone became entrepreneurs. People began an informal market for currency exchange and traded in basic commodities and services to feed their families. I can recall my grandfather having to use stock from his shop to feed his family, which is one of the reasons why the business eventually failed. My early ideation of entrepreneurship was a romanticised exercise of opportunity to move up the socioeconomic ladder; however, with the proliferation of gritty necessity entrepreneurship, I began to see how entrepreneurship can also become a vehicle for survival.

#### **4.5 Self-limiting beliefs and entrepreneurship**

“This kind of stuff is for the white people. Why don’t you just get an education and find yourself a good job?”—My father

An incident that has been ingrained in my psyche occurred when at around age 13 I excitedly uttered my desire to be an entrepreneur. I remember yearning for the feeling of building something that I could be proud of—something that would satisfy the question of my purpose in life. My father responded by saying that these kinds of pursuits were not for the black man; our role was to get an education, secure a job and leave this business stuff to the white man. In his experience, education was a proven path to better living conditions, and at that time, entrepreneurial pursuits were an exercise in futility.

Like many other Indigenous Shona people of Zimbabwe, my father grew up in the native trust lands, which were in typically dry and arid regions. He would tell us stories of when he was a young man, and his family would retreat to the mountains for days in fear of harassment by the Rhodesian army patrols. My grandfather ensured that he would be educated at Christian mission schools. At that time, a black person was limited in terms of career aspirations. My father had a hard upbringing, but strove to get an education, ultimately becoming an engineer in post-independent Zimbabwe. Albert Memmi's theory of colonisation as explained by Mungazi (1986) states that colonisation initially assimilates the colonised to an education system that legitimises it. The system produces a more productive and compliant servant and preserves the privileged position of the coloniser. However, education eventually leads to an awareness of inequality and injustices in the colonised, and results in a nationalistic conscience on the path to self-liberation. My father had limited access to education growing up under oppression, and in a black majority rule Zimbabwe, it made sense for his children to exploit the educational resource that he did not have growing up. Sports and other pursuits such as entrepreneurship were secondary to our education.

We were a blue-collar middle-class family living comfortably, but I had always felt that there was more to life. As children we had expectations placed on us by our parents to excel at school. The pursuit of excellence was evident in my parents' lives, with my father, as an engineer, and my mother, a receptionist at that time (now a nurse), setting the example. I wanted to excel beyond being an employee and be the employer. Consequently, having limits imposed on me negatively affected my self-confidence, and often crippling doubts and fears would arise at the thought of going beyond my comfort zones. A self-limiting belief was

instilled in me with a strong narrative that as a black man, business was not for me. I thought maybe my father was right because I had my grandfathers' entrepreneurial failures to refer to.

The desire to follow the entrepreneur path never left me, but over time the self-regulating narrative reminded me that I was black and, consequently, should not bother with business. It was through deep reflection catalysed by becoming a father, that I learned to acknowledge the past, begin to reinvent myself and focus on pursuing my dreams. I thought a lot about why I was the way I was and how I could change the narrative for my children. There had always been a discomfort with how my entrepreneurship desires contradicted my behaviour and thought processes. Festinger (1962) described this misalignment of beliefs and behaviours as cognitive dissonance, and now being a father, it further increased the discomfort. This discomfort was due to the realisation that holding on to these emotions would be a liability to success and prove to be a tragedy if I were to project the same injunctions onto my children. It was important that I defy these boundaries, not only for my sake, but for my children and father as well. So, in studying entrepreneurship I have two goals. The first is to satisfy my passion for entrepreneurship research, and the second is to study at the pinnacle of education as an ode to my father. My experiences are apparent in the research that I am engaged in. I have moments of doubt in my capability to carry the weight of responsibility of telling the participants' stories. They have opened up and entrusted me with them.

Becoming a father helped me empathise with my own father's desires for his children. He was a product of his upbringing, which was punctuated by state-sanctioned racism that succeeded in physically and mentally repressing his generation and those before and after him. Ultimately, I had to assume control of my life's course. His experience was that although his father—my grandfather—operated a convenience store, it brought no significant increase in

his standard of living, and success seemed to be reserved for the whites. Writing this, I reflect on how colonisation can manifest complicated and perplexing intergenerational effects in varying degrees.

#### **4.6 Aotearoa: The big move**

“Here in New Zealand, there are people called the Māori. They are just like us except for the fairer skin.”—My father

The search for better standards of living led my family to immigrate to Aotearoa in the early 2000s. The simplicity of the visa process at the time and Aotearoa’s reputation as multicultural made it an obvious choice. The move made it possible for me to have quality education and health care and the freedom to pursue my ambitions. My first exposure to the Māori culture was in Gisborne, the first Aotearoa town in which we settled. My father described Māori people as “just like us”. I could immediately identify some similarities in their views on hospitality and the importance of family, as shown in such practices as inviting people for dinner after just meeting them and the concept of *whāngai*, which is common in our culture.

It was a challenging time being new to the country, adjusting to my surroundings and realising my brother and I were the only two black people in the school we attended. People were curious about us, and we were asked all sorts of questions, some bordering on the ridiculous and racist. While I put it down to curiosity, these instances sometimes made me feel like a spectacle and an outsider. On the other hand, I was fascinated by the haka and some of the waiata on display during assembly, and asked questions about their significance. It was this exposure to the Māori culture that opened my being to the realisation that the Indigenous experience has some universal similarities in cultural practices: reverence of sacred sites,

respect for elders, funeral rites, and importance of familial relationships irrespective of context, among other things. I also found similarities, in the desire for self-determination and advancement. I empathised with the socioeconomic and political arguments Māori made for redress, such as through the Waitangi Tribunal, which sought to investigate and make recommendations for Māori claims against breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi to the Crown (Stokes, 1992). Having come from and witnessed violent forms of redress for historical wrongs, I was impressed with the orderly judicial process in Aotearoa.

#### **4.7 Fathering Afro-Māori children**

“Is Africa dry like they show on the Red Cross adverts?”—My wife

I met my wife at church in Hamilton, and despite her lack of knowledge about Africa, and Zimbabwe in particular, we instantly developed an affinity because we had Gisborne in common. She is of Te Arawa and Ngāti Porou descent and was born in Ruatoria, East Coast. I consider Gisborne my home because of the love I have for the region. It was the first place in which I settled and planted my roots in Aotearoa. The climate is reminiscent of a Zimbabwean summer and the friendliness of the people was welcoming. She had questions regarding my culture, and I had some regarding Māori culture. Several years later, we married and had our first child. We made sure to gift our daughter both Māori and Shona names. We made a decision to expose her to both her cultures from an early age so that she would find pride in her blended identity. Fathering an Afro-Māori child places me in a unique position. There is a need to be conscious of the mana of my tamāhine and to take a participatory role in shaping her understanding of the world. I observe her light up and become transfixed by television coverage of Te Matatini and try to dance and emulate Shona nziyo on YouTube. There is an immediate

connection to what she is seeing and hearing, as if her wairua/hunhu is conscious of who she is. As a father, it is my duty to nurture those interests in her.

I believe the onus is on mātua/vabereki to mould a child into a well-adjusted individual with strong cultural roots. Researching Māori entrepreneurship allows this father to pave a way for his daughter and others to have the option of pursuing entrepreneurship and, by doing so, forge an evolving living application of entrepreneurship to their Indigenous contexts. E iti noa ana nā te aroha: though small in the scheme of things, love motivates the contribution that I make to the kete of Indigenous entrepreneurship knowledge. In the next section, I explain why the research included Aboriginal people.

#### **4.8 Australian connections**

“Why are you researching Māori and Aboriginal people?”—Almost everyone asks this when I tell them about my research topic.

My father relocated to Perth, Australia, in 2011 because he had secured a job in the mining industry. I had the opportunity to visit him and was able to meet some of his Aboriginal acquaintances. It was interesting to finally meet and have conversations with Indigenous Australians about their views on Australian society. It was sobering to hear about their history and struggles, which they still deal with today—that is, the stigma and discrimination that is perpetuated towards Indigenous people in some sectors of Australian society.

I could identify with some of the issues we discussed. We looked similar and I felt a deep connection with the struggle for self-determination for a people who were so rich in history. It was also interesting to find similarity in our framing of belonging to our respective lands, as Shona, Māori and Aboriginal. Māori refer to themselves as tangata whenua, which is

similar to the Shona term *vana vevhu*, and according to Aboriginal researcher Foley, as cited in Duff et al. (2020), “land is the mother and we are of the land” (p. 45). These parallels of a deep connection to land, experience of colonisation, racism, and discrimination at both the state and the personal level, and desire for self-determination through various means, including entrepreneurial endeavours, are why I chose to include both Māori and Aboriginal people in my research journey. I felt a connection to their respective struggles and aspirations.

It was also interesting to hear from Indigenous people about the steps the governments of Aotearoa and Australia have taken to assist Indigenous people into business, such as the establishment of Te Puni Kōkiri and Supply Nation, an Australian agency for procurement of goods and services from Indigenous enterprises, respectively. I saw an opportunity to pose questions on the impact of such initiatives in practice for Indigenous people as part of my research. Having my own account of how Indigenous entrepreneurship was influenced by government policies and initiatives in Zimbabwe such as the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy of 2008 (Gochero & Kadir, 2015), I was intrigued as to how Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship given their history as Indigenous people who have experienced colonisation. How could I engage in research that was respectful of Indigenous people from Aotearoa and Australia and acknowledged our commonalities and differences in a way that identified how commercial and cultural imperatives were considered, as well as how the state (government) influenced Indigenous entrepreneurial endeavours?

#### **4.9 The research**

Māori and Aboriginal ethnic groups have historically been misrepresented, exposed to the hubris of Western science and the legacy of cultural arrogance, as well as being subjected to unequal power relations (Crothers, 2015; Groenfeldt, 2003; Smith, 1999; United Nations, 2009). Thus, this research must be culturally sensitive, benefit both the researcher and the researched, and acknowledge the legitimacy of the participants' Indigenous beliefs and practices (Baba et al., 2004; Bishop, 1999; Spiller, Erakovic, et al., 2011). Since the research involves participants from Indigenous communities, it requires an approach that best represents their world views while being aware of the world view of the researcher. My intention is to affirm similarities and differences across our cultures, draw lessons from contextual differences and avoid the traps of insinuating power of one over the other, or of the researcher over the researched. There are universal and parallel struggles across all Indigenous groups (Smith, 1999); however, my experiences are not theirs and theirs are not mine. Zimbabwean, Māori, and Aboriginal entrepreneurship are dissimilar and set against different political, economic, and societal realities. For example, Māori and Aborigine are still in the struggle for self-determination, whereas I have come from a black majority ruled country. Self-reflection is a key part of the entire research process and starts with understanding my motives and implicit assumptions for pursuing this research path. All efforts will be made to ensure my research decisions and processes are not based solely on my world view and experiences, and are continually reflected on and assessed, to allow Māori and Aboriginal voices in the research to be heard.

The main research objective is to explore the experiences of Indigenous entrepreneurs in determining the balance of Indigenous business imperatives and non-Indigenous business

imperatives. The idea is not to contrast the two but to investigate the resolution process Indigenous entrepreneurs share. It is hoped this will identify barriers and enablers Indigenous entrepreneurs face in integrating their culture into business and vice versa, as well as offer insights into how non-Indigenous persons or entities such as government agencies can offer appropriate assistance, and that the knowledge gained from this research process may serve to provide information to policymakers and Indigenous entrepreneurs.

#### **4.10 How my positionality influenced the research process**

##### *4.10.1 Positioning myself in the research process*

Even though I had decided to research Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs, I was not sure where I fit in the research process. My research naivety initially led me to believe the process was going to be free from ambiguity and subjectivity; however, a reflexive process was triggered when I realised, I had interpreted my interactions with people from these Indigenous cultures through my own frame of reference. As an ally of the Māori and Aboriginal participants, I had to continually learn and develop skills in listening deeply to a different world view and report Indigenous voices accurately (Brophey & Raptis, 2016), as well as revisit my research decisions. Thinking about how we think helps to understand the self and our motivations (Johnson & Duberley, 2003; Weick, 1999). It was easy enough to define what I wanted to do; however, articulating where I fit in took continued effort to clarify. I feared that the analogous experiences of my people and the research participants as the formerly colonised would stir up empathetic responses in me that threatened to personalise their experiences as mine. Emotional reflexivity is critical to interpreting interactions (Shesterinina, 2019) and helps to self-locate by offering opportunities to review relational placing with participants as

well as understand how we affect and are affected by the research process (Kwame, 2017). As an Indigenous person, I felt that I was part of the research inseparable from the participants, and as Kovach (2009) suggested Indigenous researchers should do, was committed to relational accountability to the participants. However, it was later apparent during the interviews that my positioning was not static but fluid.

Smith (1999) suggested that positioning is determined by participants, and it is often difficult to assume a single position. In my conversations with participants during the interview process, I noticed a continual repositioning of my status as an outsider and an insider. For example, a Māori participant would reference a tribal-related issue, which would place me as an outsider, and then immediately bring me to the insider position by discussing the issue as an Indigenous issue that we all face. In a conversation with an Aboriginal participant, social stigma towards the Aboriginal community was discussed, placing me in the outsider position, but then the issue of skin colour was brought up by the participant, gesturing to point to us together as blackfellas. Positioning is negotiable depending on context (Kwame, 2017; Smith, 1999), and the researcher is more of a co-participant (Kelly, 2014). The shifts in positioning would affect my emotional state in a way that seemed irrational. As an outsider, I remember having empathy for the struggles being conveyed by participants and being able to digest the information as their experiences. However, in the insider position, I had an emotional response, often with waves of anger at the injustices narrated by the participants. Yes, it was their story but drawing from my experiences and the experiences of my people, I felt a part of that story.

#### *4.10.2 Acts of reciprocal exchange*

During the data collection phase, I engaged in what Matairea (2019) referred to as talk story, which enables the researcher and participants to engage on equal terms. This engagement

humanises the interview process through the sharing of stories of ancestry, cultural background, life experiences and interests. It is facilitated by showings of gratefulness, such as bringing gifts or food to share. Gifting is not to incentivise participation, but rather acts as a medium of appreciation, of a reciprocal exchange between two people(s). It places power in the recipient to accept or decline the gift, thereby acknowledging the value of their mana (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). The concept of gifting, however, may differ according to cultural contexts. It was my understanding that as the researcher, I would initiate the gift-giving process and lead the conversations. However, I remember being befuddled when some of the interview participants would present food on the table and initiate conversation. In my head, I was thinking this was the wrong order of proceedings. I was supposed to organise the food and lead the conversation, but here I was being hosted as a guest and made to feel comfortable. I resolved to leave the koha presentation until after the interview had finished because I feared I would frame their hospitality as a transaction if I did so earlier in the proceedings. With regard to my positionality, in Zimbabwe, it is common for hosts to ask if you have brought a gift for them and that has familiarised me with passing on a gift earlier in the process. This was a cultural shift on my part, with the aim of avoiding offending my hosts.

Another act of reciprocal exchange is the dissemination of results back to the participants. This is especially important because Indigenous people have historically had researchers come into their communities, collect data, and disappear (Cochran et al., 2008; Guillemin et al., 2016; Peltier, 2018). It is imperative, then, to report back to the participants to show respect and maintain good relationships that may endure beyond the research (Lowan-Trudeau, 2012). Reporting back goes beyond showing a copy of the thesis. For example, I have been asked to archive some audio files of the interviews for future generations, share

preliminary findings on an iwi radio station and meet with aspiring local entrepreneurs in a small community, and I am poised to write a report separate to my thesis for the communities involved in the research. Including participants in this way allows Māori and Aboriginal people to have legitimacy as research partners, to share their truths and see the results of their contribution to the research process and outcomes on their own terms (Borell et al., 2019).

#### *4.10.3 Toward a culturally appropriate methodology*

Researchers have presented kaupapa Māori research as for Māori by Māori (Eketone, 2008; Irwin, 1994; Smith, 1999; Walker et al., 2006), and in this type of research, Māori have control of the research process, from designing, gathering and analysis to dissemination. Because I am a non-Māori researcher, this notion places me in a precarious position. How do I approach this research without invalidating the process and outcome in the eyes of Māori? I am aware that I am tauiwi, and thus have reservations about applying kaupapa Māori precepts in their entirety. Additionally, a kaupapa Māori perspective may not be appropriate when conducting research with other Indigenous people and communities, such as Aboriginal people of Australia.

On the surface, I may indulge in kaupapa Māori literature, but my world view is a social construct of the African savanna with surface exposure to the Māori way through my spouse and her whānau. I cannot see the world the same way my Māori and Aboriginal peers do. I can empathise, relate, and parallel our lived experiences, but the essence of our paradigms is not the same. To deal with this constraint, I mulled over the option of actively collaborating with my Māori supervisors, wife and whānau to navigate issues of protocol and sensitivities, but upon further reflection, this proposition posed some challenges. The main issue was that this approach may not be enough to satisfy the rigour of exemplary kaupapa Māori research. I had issues reconciling the control aspect of tino rangatiratanga with how I am placed in the research

process in relation to the participants. Another issue was that, while it may work to explain the Māori experience, I was not sure I would be able to (or should) analyse, interpret, and present the Aboriginal experience through a kaupapa Māori lens. Upon discussion with my supervisors, a decision was made to have both Māori and Aboriginal research collaborators to consult throughout the research process.

Indigenous Dreaming in the Aboriginal world view informs the logic and rationale for their knowledge systems (Rigney, 2001). It would be a disservice to the Aboriginal world views for me to try to explain Dreamtime precepts and meaning from within a kaupapa Māori framework. According to Dean (1996), scholars have fallen into the misconception of trying to interpret Dreamtime by referencing, imposing order and logical cohesion or using Western concepts as a reference. He goes on to postulate that world views are full of ambiguity, obscurities, and contradictions, and those who seek to bring order to them, in fact mythicise and misrepresent ideational reality. Reality is subjective, and in the context of academic inquiry, Indigenous intellectual tradition needs to break out of the restrictions of Westernised discourse (Warrior, 1999), and set fertile grounds for rich Indigenous narratives. How can I tell both Māori and Aboriginal stories of Indigenous entrepreneurship in a way that acknowledges the ambiguities, obscurities, and contradictions?

As outlined in my origin story, my people pursued self-determination through armed conflict, and Māori and Aboriginal people did it through various types of activism. We all had different historical interactions with our former colonisers. Although all former colonies of the British Empire, we approached decolonisation in vastly different ways. These differences contextualised the lived experiences of the research participants markedly and added a level of complexity to how I would approach the data collection phase. I believe that narratives are

what ties us together, despite our distinctiveness in world views. Culturally, the stories of old transmitted through oral traditions serve to guide, and perpetuate knowledge and wisdom (Henry et al., 2018). Instead of using methods such as surveys, case studies and the like, I chose semi-structured interviews as my research practice because it allowed for discussions that brought an understanding of contextual phenomena. For example, in my culture people identify with their lineage, tribal chiefdom and totem, so when connection to country was mentioned by Aboriginal participants and the pepeha was recited by Māori participants, I quickly grasped the significances of these concepts of belongingness because they had similarities to how I communicate my identity. There is a synergistic relationship of people, spirits and nature in our paradigms (Keelan & Woods, 2006), which brings a level of understanding to our differing lived experiences.

The idea of having to account for personal biases (Morse et al., 2002), which may be present because of my positioning and the aim to be poly-political and non-ideological (Roulston & Shelton, 2015), was considered because the dominant idea of research was to use objectivity as a measure of legitimacy. I thought about how as an Indigenous person, I intuitively gravitate towards empathising with participants. I am aware of the injustices of colonisation, the intergenerational disadvantaging of Indigenous people through systemic racism and my own experiences of covertly racist experiences. Thus, is neutrality something to aspire to as a researcher? In the positivist paradigm, neutrality might ring true. However, feedback from other scholars and my own reflections indicate that for Indigenous research to have accuracy and legitimacy as representations of Indigenous truth, empathy and sincerity are essential (Gair, 2012; Singh & Major, 2017; Smith, 1999).

This sincerity is neither insider research nor kaupapa Māori research, but centres on giving voice to Indigenous entrepreneurs' narratives in a respectful and genuine manner. According to Heshusius (1994), to be free from objectivity people need to change their understanding of the relation between self and others as well as reality and turn toward a participatory mode of consciousness. Henry (2017) stressed the need to understand the cultural context of the Indigenous people who are part of the study. I concur with a participatory mode of consciousness that minimises power distances between the parties involved, especially given the difficulty I have disassociating with Indigenous peoples' struggles whose experiences parallel my own. It is fair, then, to acknowledge my biases not as a limitation but as an advantage in presenting phenomena from a participatory and conscious lens.

My position is that Indigenous research needs to have the active participation of all parties involved, benefit both the researcher and the researched, represent without caricaturing, acknowledge as well as define Indigenous aspirations for research, and accept Māori and Aboriginal culture, knowledge, values, beliefs and language as legitimate (Bishop, 1999; Smith, 1999). It is also important to acknowledge that there is no universal Indigenous world view, but rather a diverse range of experiences, meanings and ambiguities needing representation to avoid a caricature of Indigenous approaches to entrepreneurship.

#### **4.11 Conclusion**

In this paper, I set out to discuss the positionality of Indigenous researchers who research Indigenous entrepreneurs from cultures other than their own. This composition explores how an Indigenous researcher's life experience spanning childhood to adulthood and intergenerational narratives ultimately play a role in research. Positionality has been a central consideration in the philosophy for the present research on Indigenous entrepreneurship in

Australia and Aotearoa. Indigenous entrepreneurship research is evolving to integrate and legitimise Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies, and narratives as a standalone discipline. This is important because research on Indigenous populations has historically been subject to the hubris of Western epistemologies, Indigenous populations were researched as objects rather than participants, and positivist approaches were used with no specific benefit to the researched. This created Indigenous distrust of researchers and produced paternalistic and negative interpretations of Indigenous ways of being and knowing. Not only were Indigenous people classified as primitive and to be “civilised” through colonisation, but Indigenous knowledge, practices and wisdom were dismissed.

My research contributes to the field of Indigenous entrepreneurship research by bringing my personal experience as an Indigenous Shona of Zimbabwe with Māori whānau researching two distinct Indigenous peoples (Māori and Aboriginal) for the purpose of understanding the interaction of business and cultural imperatives for Indigenous people from two lands. I note the importance of trust, respect, empathy, and acknowledgement of Indigenous methodologies without appropriating them or impinging on the rights and aspirations of Indigenous people. Through narrating my “origin story”, I demonstrate how my experience has shaped my philosophy on research. By doing so, I challenge other Indigenous researchers to acknowledge their positionality, and include self-reflexive moments in the research process.

## **CHAPTER 5 MĀORI ENTREPRENEURS**

### **5.1 How Indigenous entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives:**

#### **Insights from Aotearoa New Zealand.**

This chapter reports on the finding of the interviews conducted with Māori entrepreneurs in Tairāwhiti, the East Coast region of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand using the methods discussed in Chapter 3. The chapter details how Māori entrepreneurs address the research question of how Indigenous entrepreneurs balance cultural and commercial imperatives. The study discusses how the concepts of an Indigenous identity and tikanga are of importance to Māori entrepreneurs and will be of influence in the negotiation of imperatives. A conceptual model is proposed to illustrate the negotiation process in Māori entrepreneurship.

#### **5.2 Abstract**

This paper explores how Māori entrepreneurs in Aotearoa New Zealand negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice. Culture is integral to Indigenous entrepreneurship, an example being tikanga Māori (Māori cultural values) and Māori entrepreneurship. We discuss the tensions and synergies inherent in the negotiation of seemingly conflicting imperatives both theoretically and practically. We report on a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews involving 10 Māori enterprises of the Ngāti Porou tribe on the east coast of Aotearoa New Zealand. We find that depending on their contextual and cultural orientation, Māori entrepreneurs use tikanga to help negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives. The contingency of entrepreneurial situations and the heterogeneity of Māori perspectives on whether (and in what way) tikanga influences entrepreneurial practice appear influential. We propose a typology of Māori entrepreneurs' approaches to explain the

negotiation of cultural and commercial imperatives comprising: (1) the ‘culturally engaged Māori entrepreneur’; (2) the ‘culturally responsive Māori entrepreneur’; and (3) the ‘culturally ambivalent Māori entrepreneur’. We propose a typology of Indigenous entrepreneurs’ entrepreneurial practice to explain their negotiation of cultural and commercial imperatives.

### **5.3 Introduction to the paper**

Indigenous scholars are contributing to the legitimacy of Indigenous entrepreneurship (Colbourne, 2021; Mika, 2020b). For instance, Indigenous scholars empirically demonstrate the benefits to Indigenous firms and individuals of attending to both cultural and commercial imperatives in business (Haar et al., 2021; Harmsworth, 2005; Henry et al., 2018; Henry et al., 2020; Mika et al., 2020; Peredo, 2001; Tinirau, 2017). Some of these benefits include higher employee satisfaction when their indigeneity is recognised (Haar et al., 2021), added value from Indigenous branding (Harmsworth, 2005), the efficacy of integrating cultural values into the design of business support (Peredo, 2001), and the practice of traditional values in modern Māori enterprise (Tinirau, 2017). Yet, little is known about how Indigenous entrepreneurs employ Indigenous culture to help them deal satisfactorily with balancing cultural and commercial imperatives. By cultural imperatives we mean adherence to Indigenous values, while commercial imperatives relate to enterprise profitability, productivity, value, and growth. Commercial and cultural imperatives are not dichotomous, but are part of a continuum with sets of complementary and conflicting elements (Mika, Dell, Newth, et al., 2022; Redpath & Nielsen, 1997).

This paper contributes to the knowledge of Indigenous entrepreneurial practice by seeking to answer this research question: how do Māori entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice? This study advances understanding

of internal factors of Māori enterprise (Haar et al., 2021; Reihana et al., 2007) through empirical evidence of cultural practice in Indigenous entrepreneurship. This research extends the literature on cultural preservation in a globalised economy (Dana, 1999; Peredo et al., 2004), culture's effect on entrepreneurial and market orientation, and firm performance (Todorovic & Ma, 2008), Māori identity and economic choices (Greaves et al., 2015), Māori entrepreneurial orientation (Mrabure et al., 2018). The paper primarily contributes to the paucity of literature on Indigenous entrepreneurship processes (Croce, 2017; Mika et al., 2017). The aspiration is to avail these learnings to mainstream business (Ratima, 2008; Ratima et al., 2019; Sumner, 2008) where the shortcomings of capitalist-driven frameworks have been exposed by events such as Covid-19 (Makengo, 2021; Mazzucato, 2020), climate change (Beall & Brocklesby, 2017; Nursey-Bray et al., 2019), and poverty (Altman, 2007).

We proceed with a review of relevant literature on Indigenous entrepreneurship and the relationship between cultural and commercial imperatives in this context. Second, we outline the use of social constructionism, semi-structured interviews, and intermediaries, which we relied on to collect and analyse data. Third, we present findings of how Māori values influence Māori entrepreneurs in their negotiation of cultural and commercial imperatives. Fourth, we discuss the role of tikanga in Māori entrepreneurial practice and propose a typology to explain this. We conclude with suggestions for further research.

## **5.4 Literature review**

### *5.4.1 Indigenous entrepreneurship*

The term Indigenous as it relates to people is subject to various interpretations. Definitions include the description of an original connection to land (Foley, 2003a; Peredo et al., 2004;

Salmond, 2012), self-identification (Gausset et al., 2011; Hindle & Lansdowne, 2005), and precolonial occupancy of ancestral lands (Dana, 2006). In Indigenous societies, economic and business activity is deeply embedded within social and cultural elements of their societies (Cahn, 2008; Morrison, 2006). Embeddedness means that entrepreneurial activity is affected by a range of contextual factors (Vlasov et al., 2018) and becomes part of the local structure (Jack & Anderson, 2002). For instance, Scheyvens et al. (2020) found that social embeddedness, which they define as ties between business, land, and society, supports the socioeconomic needs of Indigenous people in the Pacific.

Indigenous entrepreneurship has been defined as involving “the creation, management and development of new ventures by Indigenous people for the benefit of Indigenous people” (Hindle & Lansdowne, 2005, p. 132). Anderson and Peredo (2006), Cahn (2008), and Henry et al. (2018), see Indigenous entrepreneurship as a vehicle to overcome disadvantage and promote development. Foley (2000, p. 11) describes the Indigenous Australian entrepreneur as “alter[ing] traditional patterns of behaviour, by utilising their resources in the pursuit of self-determination and economic sustainability.” Self-determination plays an important role in how Indigenous entrepreneurship is enacted in that it is considered a collectivist pursuit (Anderson & Peredo, 2006; Lindsay, 2005). Self-determination assumes group agency where the group determines outcomes as an agent, and not individual members of the group acting alone (Buchanan, 2016).

Dana (2015) finds that Indigenous entrepreneurs hold different views toward entrepreneurship than mainstream entrepreneurs. Differences include a broader definition of success inclusive of economic and non-economic value, collective resource ownership with use rights allocated through group consensus, and an inherent bias toward alleviating

community need (Morrison, 2006; Peredo et al., 2004). Hindle and Lansdowne (2005) suggest that Indigenous ventures where heritage and culture do not feature prominently may not fall within their view of Indigenous entrepreneurship—even if there is Indigenous ownership and involvement of the firm. A contrary view suggests that a person who identifies as Indigenous and establishes an enterprise can be termed an Indigenous entrepreneur even though he or she is not doing so pursuant to their Indigenous heritage and values (Weaver, 2001). Whilst heritage and values are important to Indigenous peoples, contemporary circumstances mean that indigeneity—Indigenous world views, knowledges, cultures, and practices—is multifaceted (McCormack, 2011), constantly changing, sometimes in conflicting ways (Weaver, 2001) and should not be confined to non-material features like spirituality, but inclusive of them (Mika & Scheyvens, 2021). This is evident in urbanised Indigenous peoples who may have lost touch with their traditional lands and social ties (Barcham, 1998). Indigenous entrepreneurship varies with cultural contexts as culture shapes entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviour (Dana, 1995; Lindsay, 2005).

#### *5.4.2 Māori entrepreneurship*

Māori are the Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand representing approximately 875,000 people equating to 17.1 percent of the total population (Stats NZ, 2022). Māori trace their history to a 3,000 year old Polynesian diaspora, and were the first people to inhabit Aotearoa New Zealand (Henry et al., 2018). Māori entrepreneurship is a form of Indigenous entrepreneurship found in Aotearoa New Zealand (Mika, Felzensztein, et al., 2022). Māori entrepreneurship has been defined as “the process by which a Māori person (or people) operating within a Māori world view generates value by identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets for economic, social and cultural purposes of benefit to

themselves, their whānau (family), hapū (clan), iwi (tribe) and wider community” (Awatere et al., 2017, p. 81). Accordingly, Māori businesses take various forms, including whānau trusts, rūnanga (tribal councils), limited liability companies and privately-owned businesses (Harmsworth, 2009).

Māori entrepreneurship is reforming amid dynamic political, economic, and social contexts. These contexts include Māori aspirations for tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) now finding support in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Mika, 2018) and treaty settlements for Crown breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi of 1840 (Wheen & Hayward, 2012). Kaupapa Māori (Māori philosophy) has increasingly been accepted as the basis for Māori defined approaches to development in research and education (Smith, 2000a), health (McIntosh et al., 2021), and social and economic spheres (Coleman et al., 2005). In Māori entrepreneurship, economic rationality is embedded in cultural elements, where cultural context and values influence economic decisions (Cain & Spoonley, 2013; Henry & Dana, 2019; Houkamau & Sibley, 2019). Māori values and Māori enterprise ownership are the defining characteristics of Māori business (Mika et al., 2019) and Māori economic activity (Spiller, Pio, et al., 2011; Tapsell & Woods, 2008). Contemporary Māori entrepreneurial activity, therefore, consists of a mix of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and a Western world view (Warren et al., 2017). Mead (2016) suggests an associative relationship between mātauranga Māori and tikanga Māori, where mātauranga is the knowledge and tikanga is the practice of that knowledge. In this way, kaupapa Māori, mātauranga Māori and tikanga Māori are the basis for the survival of Māori as an Indigenous people and the continuation of their knowledge systems and, as such, inform Māori approaches to entrepreneurship and innovation (Winiata et al., 2008).

### *5.4.3 The role of culture in entrepreneurship*

Western notions of entrepreneurship have traditionally excluded culture, whether non-Indigenous or otherwise, in the framing of enterprising activity (Woods et al., 2022) because it is argued that entrepreneurship is culture-*less*; innovation is what matters (Davidsson, 2008), in which ethnicity ought to play no part (Devlin, 2007). Renewed sensitivity toward the role of culture as shared human values in entrepreneurship (Urban, 2010) and the exclusionary tactics of dominant non-Indigenous entrepreneurs (Shirodkar, 2021) have emerged as a counternarrative (Garry et al., 2017), affording an opportunity for Indigenous world views to influence business theory and practice (Fabeil et al., 2020). In this perspective, enterprises operate as socially embedded and culturally situated institutions (Croce, 2017) requiring community support and some measure of congruence with the culture of their communities to function (Amoamo et al., 2018). Some scholars argue that hybridity in both the enterprise (Colbourne, 2018) and the economy (Altman, 2007) are necessary for Indigenous enterprise success. Culturally responsive enterprises founded on Indigenous values, able to navigate state, market, and customary boundaries through, for example, frame-switching (Tretiakov et al., 2020), are more likely to mediate cultural and commercial imperatives.

Indigenous entrepreneurs, whether Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, iTaukei in Fiji, Aboriginal in Australia, or Native American in North America, aspire to entrepreneurial success defined on their terms (Colbourne, 2018; Mika et al., 2017). In the Pacific, research suggests enterprise success and indigeneity are not incompatible, on the contrary, one begets the other (Scheyvens et al., 2017). With Aboriginal enterprise, research indicates cultural and commercial imperatives can have both enabling and constraining effects on Indigenous entrepreneurship in Australia (Collins et al., 2017). In Aotearoa New Zealand, similar findings

suggest tikanga Māori or Māori culture is important in both Māori enterprise success and the support they receive (Haar et al., 2021; Ruwhiu et al., 2021).

Tikanga Māori are enduring Māori values, customs and norms woven into the fabric of Māori society, affecting human and non-human relationships, collaboration and decision making (Harmsworth, 2005; Kothari, 1968; Mead, 2016). Mead (2016) argues that tikanga can evolve and adapt in response to changing attitudes and realities. Those who strongly identify as Māori are inherently bound to uphold tikanga (Greaves et al., 2015). Tikanga as a philosophy of Māori ethics can mediate social conduct, relationships and identities (Henare, 2001; Houkamau et al., 2019), including in business (Bargh, 2012). Mead (2016) expands on the meaning of tikanga, explaining that tika means to be right and, therefore, informs moral judgement. In addition to guiding moral behaviour, tikanga prescribes restitutive principles for actions judged morally wrong. For example, if offense is caused, then a process called muru (ritual compensation) would be enacted to restore balance and order between the parties.

Typologies and taxonomies are ways of classifying concepts and data into distinct categories for analytical and theoretical purposes. Typologies tend to separate and group items according to dimensions which are conceptual in nature, whereas taxonomies tend to order items according to empirical and measurable characteristics (Smith, 2002). Both approaches are evident in Māori business and economic research. Houkamau (2006) and Greaves et al. (2015), for instance, produce a categorisation of Māori identity that began as a typology of postulated associations with Māori culture, which have subsequently become a taxonomy as the categories were proven in a large-scale empirical study (Houkamau et al., 2019). The six categories of Māori identity in their research are: (1) disassociated; (2) spiritually oriented; (3) high moderates; (4) traditional inclusives; (5) low moderates; and (6) traditional essentialists.

In a study of entrepreneurial orientation among Māori entrepreneurs, Mrabure et al. (2018) produce a typology of Indigenous entrepreneurial orientation comprising three distinct categories: (1) kaupapa Māori—Māori entrepreneurs emphasise Māori values, beliefs and preferences, including collectivism and collaboration; (2) Western—Māori entrepreneurs emphasise commercial values such as individualism and competition; and (3) hybrid—combinations of both Māori and Western values and beliefs. These studies suggest that a typology of Māori perspectives on the role of tikanga in Māori entrepreneurship may be possible and worthwhile as an analytical framework.

We suspect that tikanga Māori has an important role to play in helping Māori entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives and seek to understand the perspective and classify the practice as a contribution to Indigenous entrepreneurship. We define cultural imperatives as values, principles and practices associated with an entrepreneur's identity as Māori, expressed as tikanga Māori. Some of these tikanga include manaakitanga (generosity), whanaungatanga (relationships), kaitiakitanga (stewardship), and rangatiratanga (leadership), kotahitanga (unity), and wairuatanga (spirituality) (Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Spiller et al., 2019; Wolfgramm et al., 2019). We define commercial imperatives as values, principles and practices of business, which generally encompass profit orientation, market-based exchange, productivity, growth, private property, and wealth accumulation (Behrman, 1988).

## **5.5 Methods**

This research is an inductive phenomenological study of Māori entrepreneurship. The inductive approach allows for findings to emerge from themes in the data (Liu, 2016; Thomas, 2006) and links between objectives, findings and typologies of observations to be developed (Gilgun,

2011; Thomas, 2006). Our research is interpretive, guided by an enquiry to answer the research question—how do Māori entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice?

We adopt a social constructionist lens to examine the practices people engage in and how knowledge is constructed and understood. Social constructionism views reality as socially constructed, in which meaning is based on how people see the world from interactions with their social groups (Andrews, 2012; Dana & Dana, 2005). In the Māori world view, social interaction can be exemplified through a weaving analogy, where strands overlap. Known as *rāranga*, the Māori weaving process is such that it is well planned and thought out, with the outcome symbolised in the finished product, the skill of the weaver, and the material used in the process (Eruera, 2005). All of these considerations exemplify a process that can be allegorised to illustrate a methodical and deliberative research approach.

Data were collected through ten semi-structured interviews of Māori entrepreneurs who live in the Tairāwhiti—the east coast of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand from Tūranga-nui-a-Kiwa (Gisborne), northward to Ruatoria. All participants identify as Ngāti Porou, one of the largest iwi (tribes) that occupies the East Cape-Gisborne region. Ngāti Porou has approximately 72,000 members comprising 58 hapū (sub-tribe) and 48 marae (sacred meeting place) in an area covering 400,000 hectares (Reedy, 2005). Ngāti Pōrou take the name of their ancestor Porourangi, who, according to Māori narrative, is credited with fishing up Te Ika-a-Māui (the North Island) from his canoe named Nukutaimemeha. It is believed that his canoe rested on to the top of Hikurangi mountain which is sacred to Ngāti Porou (Matheson & Matheson, 2017; Reedy, 2005). In the Gisborne region, one in five businesses are Māori owned, one in four are significant employers of Māori, and Gisborne has the highest proportion

of Māori-owned businesses at 23% across all regions (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2020). The participants operate enterprises in the primary, manufacturing, business development, media, and information technology industries.

The first co-author was introduced to a Māori development official by another co-author. The official's work involved supporting Māori entrepreneurs in the Tairāwhiti (East Coast) region as a kaitakawaenga (facilitator). The first co-author who is tauīwi (non-Māori) but affiliated to the main tribe by marriage, was well supported by all three co-authors, two of whom identify as Māori. It was through these relationships that we were able to meet the Māori entrepreneurs whose testimony formed the data for this research. The official was instrumental in enabling the data collection process. The official was at all the interviews, facilitating the tikanga of Ngāti Porou, extending manaaki (hospitality), tautoko (support) and encouraging the mahi (work). Standard qualitative research methods tend to discourage the presence of non-participants in interview processes in case participant responses are skewed. This risk is considered minimal and outweighed by the strength of the relationship between the official and the participant and the important intermediary function this person performed.

The face-to-face semi structured interviews were 45-60 minutes in duration at a time and place convenient to the participants. The participants comprised eight men and five women, some in a business partnership, representing 10 Māori businesses. The interview schedule focuses on the Māori entrepreneurs' expressions of identity, how cultural values are woven into their businesses, and the challenges, benefits, and importance of applying Māori cultural values in their entrepreneurial practice (refer to Appendix D). Whilst interviews were in English, Māori language terms and descriptions particular to and understood by the

participants were also used. The interviews were recorded after verbal consent was given in addition to written consent.

We use alphabetical labels for participants to protect their identities. The individual Indigenous entrepreneur was the unit of analysis consistent with the research question (Tetnowski, 2015). Interview transcripts were thematically analysed using Nvivo software in a sorting process to identify emerging themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The first co-author analysed all transcripts, and two co-authors reviewed a selection of transcripts. After clarifying themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006), a debriefing process of robust discussion and analysis of emerging themes was conducted (Barber & Walczak, 2009; Scharp & Sanders, 2019) to reach a consensus. This step was to establish the validity of the research through a process of investigator triangulation (Lemon & Hayes, 2020). Themes were linked to the research question and literature.

## **5.6 Findings**

We outline here the interview findings focusing on how Māori entrepreneurs implement Māori values in their entrepreneurial practice. Quotes illustrate the value application process, and in doing so, we explore how Māori entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives. Table 5 outlines the values that emerged from the thematic analysis. Participants identified these values as the basis for their negotiating of cultural and commercial imperatives.

<b>Māori value</b>	<b>English equivalent</b>	<b>Verbatim quote</b>	<b>Contextual meaning</b>
Whakawhanaungatanga	Family relationships	<i>So, tikanga for us ... we hire our whānau for example, our family (sic).</i>	Kinship ties are strengthened when family are employed.
Taonga tuku iho	Treasures handed down	<i>We have decided that our son will pick up the contract and will act as a support role; so, we have handed the contract to him to roll out, and we will surround him... I guess very much tikanga... what we're doing is succession planning.</i>	Generational transfers of power and authority to ensure the longevity of the firm.
Mahi tahi	Working together	<i>You can see a pattern of how we're into collaboration and cooperation, and the collegial collaboration will be fine with like-minded land blocks; so that we have collective strength for collective benefit</i>	Collaboration yields collective benefit.
Kotahitanga	Oneness	<i>Our policy here is we want to employ a hundred percent Ngāti Porou. ...when I have a vacancy, I look for Ngāti Porou people.</i>	Providing for the tribe through employment opportunities.
Whakaute	Respect	<i>We know how to respect tikanga. We go in there fully empowered with who we are, and at the same time that allows us to acknowledge their tikanga and to work in their spaces.</i>	Negotiations are imbued with respect for the cultural values of others.
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship	<i>... we would not put the land at risk, that we are but just guardians of the land in our own lifetime, and that we should not leave the land in a worse position as we have inherited it.</i>	The importance of sustainability and resource management.

**Table 5 Tikanga Māori and their interpretation**

Equivalent English terms were sourced from Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori dictionary (Moorfield, 2005) and the contextual interpretations represent our understanding of what the participants were conveying.

### 5.6.1 Tikanga—Māori values

Tikanga Māori are the values and practices of Māori people in contemporary Māori society. Tikanga specific to Ngāti Porou was a common theme among participants, informing their organisational objectives and entrepreneurial practice. We found evidence of the innateness of tikanga in participants' enterprise planning, which manifested as a blending of traditional and modern practice:

*Tikanga straddles everything. It doesn't matter [if] you're like... a millionaire, or ones on a benefit. If you have tikanga it goes across everything. That's why it's so important (Participant H).*

*We try to use that as practice as a set of values for our business, but also with inside of our day-to-day life as well (Participant J).*

Tikanga was important in formulating strategy, for instance the business mission, objectives, and social and cultural accountability to the community:

*All of our statements... are focused around our tikanga, and who we are. That's very important... it is at the top of our strategy currently... We get reminded every day when we are not using our tikanga (Participant H).*

### 5.6.2 Whakawhanaungatanga—family relationships

Whanaungatanga denotes kinship relationships. In Māori, adding the prefix whaka, changes nouns to verbs. So when ‘whaka’ is paired with whanaungatanga, whakawhanaungatanga refers to the process of establishing relationships, reaffirming kinship ties, and nurturing ongoing relationships (Rata & Al-Asaad, 2019). Participants enacted whanaungatanga, both through employment policies, and as a source of social capital to draw from. Employment of whānau (extended family) members was perceived as a matter of cultural integrity, enabling them to stay true to tikanga and to honour family obligations. Employing whānau meant that opportunities for economic betterment were shared and is part of nurturing relationships:

*Tikanga for us... we hire our whānau for example, our family (Participant E).*

Whanaungatanga was used to strengthen kinship ties and share economic opportunities with kin and enabled sociocultural accountability to the tribal community. It also benefited the enterprise through enhanced goodwill:

*We closed the [business] down. We were in a bit of debt, and we had staff that we had laid off...My parents came in, my sister and her husband, my nieces and nephews and cousins; they all came in when they could, when they had time, to give us a hand... So, I have to say family support was right up the top there during a lot of our hard times (Participant D).*

However, employing whānau was not without challenges. Familial relationships added complexity to hierarchical relationships at work:

*All of my staff are related to me... That can be difficult sometimes, particularly when you have to discipline people... you're trying to deal with your relation, who might be your aunty, or niece or nephew (Participant H).*

Cultural complexities presented by the value of whanaungatanga went beyond the work environment where work hierarchies were superseded by cultural hierarchies:

*I can wear all the nice suits, but as soon as I go to a marae you get the old tea towel flicked at you, and "Get in the kitchen boy," and those sorts of things (Participant H).*

Support from whānau and the tribal community was a key factor of success for socially embedded Māori enterprise, which appeared in the form of goodwill and material support and is an important aspect of relationship building:

*In Australia when you are in those situations it's all professional, the language, the sharing. Everything is driven by what's in front of them on the table, the paperwork, which is kei te pai [all good]. But, [in New Zealand]... whanaungatanga comes first and the relationship is more important—defining all of that. Then you talk about the business and the kaupapa [subject matter] (Participant E).*

The relational aspect was the baseline upon which formalities, meetings, negotiations, and agreements were built. Once established, these relationships set the tone of discussions and negotiations:

*In terms of... understanding of what... we need to do with our stakeholders, and how successful the product will become, [it] is heavily dependent on our engagement and our relationship with those marae [tribal meeting grounds]. We had to come back to that... I feel that the difference is that when you talk kaupapa [philosophy]... with our people at home, there's still a softness in there. We're still Māori first and foremost (Participant E).*

Participant E refers to a softness, which may be interpreted as an articulation of the distinction between business engagements (commercial imperatives) being perceived as *hard* and familial relationships and identity (cultural imperatives) as Māori as being *soft*. In other words, relationships were not conditional on what one could do for the business, but on a shared identity and understanding as Māori and as whānau.

### *5.6.3 Taonga tuku iho—treasures handed down*

We found evidence of succession planning and legacy building, expressed in the tikanga of taonga tuku iho, or treasures handed down from one generation to the next:

*We have decided that our son will pick up the contract and we will act as a support role; so, we have handed the contract to him to roll out, and we will surround him... I guess very much tikanga, and the whānau will come in and help with the mahi... What we're doing is succession planning (Participant E).*

The enterprise's strategy was also framed around this intergenerational outlook. Taonga tuku iho went beyond the whānau sphere and encompassed the tribal collective's future:

*I do a job I absolutely love, because it's not just for me, it's for my tribe, it's for my mokopuna [grandchildren]. I know I'm developing resources that my great grandchildren are going to appreciate when I'm not around. We're... putting in place a whole lot of learning and mātauranga o Ngāti Porou, making it accessible to our people. That's worth more than what we're paid for (Participant C).*

#### 5.6.4 Mahi tahi—working together

Participants emphasised the benefits from collaboration as Māori enterprises, which was expressed in the tikanga of mahi tahi (working as one) and its use as a strategic business tool. The benefits of collaboration were recognised in collective socioeconomic terms and the potential to further such gains by applying mahi tahi on a grand scale:

*We're into collaboration and cooperation ... so that we have collective strength for collective benefit. We're into ... working collaboratively with other land blocks and other businesses like us, so that out of the collective strength we get collective leverage, so then we can get collective benefit (Participant G).*

*If Māori and iwi [tribes] are working together, then it's not just fish. If you're talking food, there's fish, meat, festivals, fruit, wine, oysters—the full basket... I see a big part of us in the future working in collectives with other Māori and taking that globally to the world (Participant H).*

*The way that we can do that successfully is via working together, using our skills and resources. So, in terms of that cultural side, it is only natural; it is instinctive in us. It's from the marae... So, in terms of the cultural side, I say it's just instinctive (Participant F).*

#### 5.6.5 Kotahitanga—oneness

Similar to mahi tahi, kotahitanga is the state of being united whilst mahi tahi is collective action taken to achieve an objective (Barton, 2014). Participants accentuated kotahitanga as part of manaakitanga (generosity) at the individual, firm and tribal level. The businesses of these Ngāti Porou entrepreneurs are embedded in the tribal community, and as part of that community, they aspire to achieve a common purpose of favourable outcomes for members:

*We want to see a business that is sustainable; that is providing employment for the local community. We want to continue to be respectful to the culture (Participant B).*

*Our policy... is we want to employ a hundred percent Ngāti Porou. You hear the term, 'the best person for the job,' and the question is, "Okay, well, why can't the best people be Ngāti Porou people?" We do have a programme that upskills people in those sorts of things, but when I have a vacancy, I look for Ngāti Porou people (Participant G).*

*We have the commercial focus, and yes, we're making lots of money over here, but we have these other activities that don't make a lot of money. For me, it's kind of similar to hauora [health provider]. Hauora shouldn't make*

*money; it should just be there. We give it money and it operates and provides a service. The pressure shouldn't be on them to make money (Participant H)*

#### 5.6.6 Whakaute—respect

Respect was a prominent feature in how business relationships were formed, and commercial and cultural tensions negotiated. Being confident in one's mana (status, power, authority, and influence) came as a precursor to establishing business interactions with fair access to opportunity, including those involving tauwiwi (non-Māori). It meant that interacting with tauwiwi did not mean putting one's Māoriness aside, but instead, confidently applying tikanga Māori while acknowledging and respecting non-Māori customs:

*We know how to respect tikanga. We go in there fully empowered with who we are, and at the same time that allows us to acknowledge their tikanga and to work in their spaces (Participant G).*

In this way Māori entrepreneurs forge business relationships on a foundation of respect that is grounded in their own sense of self.

#### 5.6.7 Kaitiakitanga—guardianship

Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) was a recurrent theme that participants had to navigate and informed their sustainability strategies. Of note was the risk aversion to activity that might have negative consequences for the land:

*Those are indicators and examples of what drives us in our modern-day enterprises; that we would not put the land at risk, that we are but just*

*guardians of the land in our own lifetime, and that we should not leave the land in a worse position [than] we have inherited it (Participant I).*

Participant H emphasised differences in view about kaitiakitanga between Māori and government officials:

*[The government official's] view... in the fishing sense is no fishing. That's [their] view of kaitiakitanga. But kaitiakitanga in my view, in my humble opinion, is conservation for use. So, that's a different focus. You manage it rather than just take it away (Participant H).*

Additionally, participants reported some conflict at the whānau, hapū and iwi levels on how resources should be protected. Perceptions of kaitiakitanga ranged from protecting natural resources from any form of disturbance to responsible use and management. Participant A articulated this tension in relation to the commercial use of land:

*That's very powerful that whakapapa [genealogy] and your roots to that whenua [land], but as [someone] said, there are barriers, even within your own family when it comes to environmental issues. Some are quite dogmatic about it, and they haven't had anything to do with the business..., but they try and disrupt it because of what we're doing.*

Though there was mutual agreement on the need to protect the environment among the entrepreneurs in this study, a potential problem lay in how whānau, hapū, iwi and the state interpreted and enacted kaitiakitanga.

## 5.7 Discussion

At the heart of this research is how Indigenous entrepreneurs stay ‘true’ to their identity as an Indigenous person on the one hand (the cultural imperative), while operating a viable enterprise on the other (the commercial imperative). Cultural and commercial imperatives can be enabling and confounding as they involve seemingly competing ideologies necessitating a trade-off between cultural integrity and enterprise survival (Mika, 2021; Reid, 2021). While the literature on Indigenous entrepreneurial practice—what Indigenous entrepreneurs do in business and how they do business—is expanding (Henry & Dana, 2019), there is limited insight into how they are able to meet their cultural obligations for community wellbeing and development and at the same time sustain a viable enterprise over the long term. We discuss five sites of tension between cultural and commercial imperatives for Māori entrepreneurs: (1) honouring cultural obligations; (2) embeddedness and accountability; (3) self-determination and legacy; (4) enterprise success and failure; and (5) kaitiakitanga in business.

### *5.7.1 Honouring cultural obligations to family and tribe*

We find that the enabling effects of culture are the fulfilment of social obligations while the constraining effects are the complexities of navigating the interactions of culture and business. For example, employing whānau fulfils a cultural imperative of whanaungatanga and a commercial imperative of firm performance. In applying this principle, the entrepreneur is able to provide extended family with work, and materially uplift their tribal community while satisfying the necessity of the enterprise to function to market expectations. The management of employees who are also family can present entrepreneurs with challenges (Haar et al., 2020). For example, Participants D and H expressed how difficult it was to invoke a disciplinary process on a subordinate who was socially and culturally senior to them in age and status. On

the marae, the aunty has greater authority, but in the workplace the level and type of authority differs. Yet, the same respect that is accorded one's elders is expected outside of community settings. The disciplinary process must be carefully navigated to preserve the relationship with and the mana (dignity and integrity) of the employee, and if not done in a tika (correct) way, such actions have social implications beyond the workplace.

For Māori entrepreneurs, there is a sense of communal responsibility about how their business decisions impact people. Participant H expressed how the marae levels the status of members of a hapū. For instance, a hapū member who is also an executive will help wash the dishes when an aunt asks because of their respect for the aunt and as a member of the hapū. While whanaungatanga is an important cultural imperative in Māori business, its effect on firm performance is understudied (Haar & Delaney, 2009; Haar et al., 2021).

#### *5.7.2 The embeddedness of Māori enterprise*

Māori enterprise exhibits high embeddedness in the Māori community. Kinship ties mean the tribe's wellbeing matters, reflected in entrepreneurs' contributions to tribal health, sport, and recreation (Mika, 2021). This embeddedness is evident in expressions of socioeconomic accountability to the tribal community through, for example, employing tribal members and the funding and formation of social, education and health services. This corroborates reports that a high degree of sociocultural embeddedness provides Indigenous entrepreneurs with various forms of social and economic capital (Scheyvens et al., 2020). Participants demonstrate a commercial focus, but also an investment in community that generates non-material returns. This orientation and behaviour is defined in Māori terms as *mana*-enhancing in which the object of entrepreneurial practice is to maximise the wellbeing of the other rather than the self (Dell et al., 2018). Participant H went so far as to be prepared to sacrifice short term profits

and give priority to mana-enhancing practices that benefit the iwi, but do not return profits for the business. This aligns with Scheyvens et al. (2020) who suggest that Indigenous entrepreneurs strengthen relationships between enterprise and their community, fostering goodwill, which the enterprise or the community may be drawn upon during difficult periods.

### *5.7.3 Self-determination as legacy building and succession*

We contend that in Māori enterprise, tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) and a cultural renaissance of whānau empowerment through centralised and decentralised resource control (Barr & Reid, 2014), is predicated on succession planning and legacy building. We found that involving (adult) children in the intricacies of running a business prepares them for assuming control of the business, as was the case of Participant E. Taonga tuku iho (treasures handed down) aligns with the concept of entrepreneurial legacy (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015), where family firms engage in nurturing transgenerational entrepreneurial activity among family members. Chang et al. (2020, p. 2) describe entrepreneurial legacy as “symbolic narratives and stories of the struggles and hardships of the previous generations that inspire the next generation into continuing and taking forward their forefathers’ legacy.” Research on legacy planning in Indigenous entrepreneurship is sparse (Chang et al., 2020), but there are some parallels. Legacy building extends enterprise beyond the whānau to encompass the tribe. Together with other principles such as kaitiakitanga, legacy building in Māori entrepreneurship is reinforced not only for individual but collective benefit, particularly in land and language as taonga of which Māori are kaitiaki (guardians) (Meade, 2019). Conflict (Chang et al., 2020) and cultural factors (Ogundele et al., 2012) as complexities of Indigenous entrepreneurial legacy need exploring.

#### *5.7.4 Negotiating tensions of enterprise collaboration and firm failure*

Mahi tahi (collaboration) is an important element in Māori enterprise development (Mika et al., 2021), with relationships built on trust, open communication, tikanga, and power symmetry underpinning it (Joseph et al., 2016). Mahi tahi is inextricably linked with kotahitanga (oneness) as both principles point to a unity of purpose. In the research, Participant H commented on Māori economic potential if all iwi were to work together to supply the world with what they termed a full basket of produce. They emphasised the advantage of cultural precepts which foster Māori collaboration.

Not all collaborations are, however, successful. Business partnerships fail, which may damage the relationship between partners, possibly leading to business failure (McQuaid, 2000). In the context of Māori enterprise, questions remain on how the breakdown of a business relationship affects tikanga. For example, what might muru (ritual compensation) or utu (recompense) look like when a Māori enterprise fails. In the spirit of kotahitanga, Participant G explained the motivation to employ and train tribal members. Culturally, this is commendable but the economic rationale weighs on the opportunity cost of employing and training only tribal members (Palmer & Raftery, 1999). These costs could include loss of diverse perspectives, a smaller talent pool, and time and money lost in training the wrong people. Māori entrepreneurs must take into account these considerations in their commitment to kotahitanga and mahi tahi.

#### *5.7.5 Kaitiakitanga and its meaning in business*

The meaning of kaitiakitanga was contentious at the whānau, hapū, iwi and government levels. Kaitiakitanga is premised upon whakapapa connections to nature and the mana whenua

(customary authority over ancestral lands) rights associated with being kaitiaki (Kawharu, 2000). Participants generally consider kaitiakitanga important, but its application is problematic with marked differences in its interpretation between officials and participants. The holistic nature of kaitiakitanga and its variation among iwi makes it a complex subject. Depending on the particular iwi, interpretations of kaitiakitanga range from conservationist to responsible management. Governments generally interpret kaitiakitanga as conservation, while for some tribes it also encompasses responsible use. These are complexities that participants had to navigate when applying kaitiakitanga in business. For instance, Participant A identified serious differences between management and shareholders about kaitiakitanga.

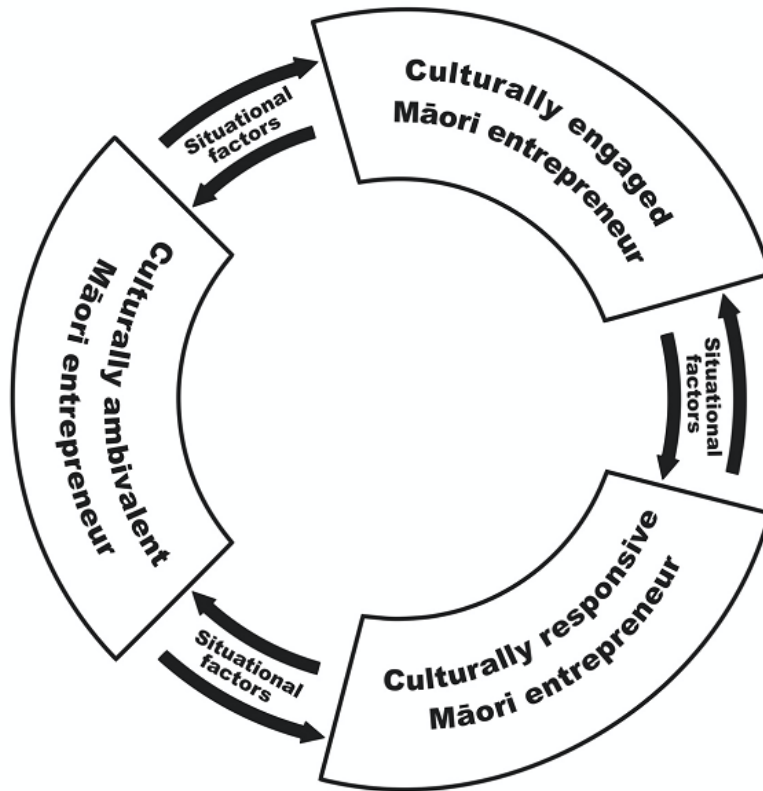
In summary, Māori entrepreneurs use tikanga to help negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives, but the significance of tikanga varies (Warriner, 2007) depending on the context and the orientation of the individual (Houkamau & Sibley, 2019). This alludes to the contingency of entrepreneurial situations and the heterogeneity of Māori perspectives on whether and how tikanga influence Māori entrepreneurial practice (Awatere et al., 2017; Mika, Felzensztein, et al., 2022).

## **5.8 Theoretical contribution**

### *5.8.1 A typology of Māori entrepreneurs' perspectives*

All Māori entrepreneurs in this study refer to the importance of tikanga as part of their being Ngāti Porou, whose principles exist as tacit knowledge that is enacted subconsciously—the land and culture are in them. It is, therefore, possible to discern a typology on the use of tikanga in negotiating cultural and commercial imperatives characterised as three distinct perspectives, which constitute a framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice (see Figure 1). The

characterisations in our framework are: (1) the ‘culturally engaged Māori entrepreneur’; (2) the ‘culturally responsive Māori entrepreneur’; and (3) the ‘culturally ambivalent Māori entrepreneur.’ For the engaged Māori entrepreneur, tikanga Māori—cultural values and protocols—take precedence over other imperatives (commercial, economic, political) that may influence entrepreneurial practice. In commercial decisions, the engaged Māori entrepreneur has a proclivity to cultural imperatives as a default while the responsive Māori entrepreneur is more willing to compromise on the extent to which tikanga influences business decisions. In this perspective, the entrepreneur keeps an open mind, and assesses cultural and commercial imperatives given prevailing circumstances. The ambivalent Māori entrepreneur perceives cultural precepts as constraining rather than enabling business and is unlikely to apply tikanga where an unfavourable commercial end is predicted. Whilst the ambivalent Māori entrepreneur maybe concerned about cultural issues, commercial viability is prioritised.



**Figure 1 Framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice**

Simplification of the framework to three perspectives minimises complexity, providing theoretical value because each view is reducible to specific observations (Yaniv, 2011). Additionally, complexity in abstractions may lead to characterisations becoming synonyms. With clarity, parsimony and generality (Suddaby, 2010), the framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice may allow for its application more generally within Indigenous entrepreneurship research and in larger studies.

### **5.9 Conclusion**

This paper set out to explore how Māori entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice using a qualitative study of 10 enterprises of the

Ngāti Porou tribe from the Tairāwhiti region of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. We found that Māori entrepreneurs emphasise culture while operating in a commercial setting. Māori entrepreneurial practice illustrates the blending of cultural and commercial imperatives not as constraints, but as strengths in business. While several sites of tension in these imperatives were identified, Māori entrepreneurs attribute their ability to fulfil cultural obligations while meeting commercial imperatives to the inclusion of tikanga Māori in business. These findings are consistent with earlier research on tikanga in Māori entrepreneurship and culture in Indigenous entrepreneurship. A range of Māori values or tikanga Māori are apparent in the rationale for entrepreneurs engaging in business, often articulated as legacy-building, meeting intergenerational obligations for the collective wellbeing of whānau (family), the land and other treasures. Māori values were viewed as integral to business and entrepreneurial practice, but they come with complexity, and an expectation of high ethical standards characterised as honouring one's identity as a member of one's tribe and the wellbeing of the whole.

Following the work of other scholars who have unpacked the heterogeneity of Māori identity and economic practice, we characterise Māori perspectives in terms of the extent to which Māori entrepreneurs in our study apply tikanga in negotiating cultural and commercial imperatives in entrepreneurial practice. As presented in Figure 1, the culturally *engaged* Māori entrepreneur prioritises culture over other considerations; the culturally *responsive* Māori entrepreneur evaluates cultural and commercial considerations to determine the most appropriate course; and the culturally *ambivalent* Māori entrepreneur prioritises commercial over cultural imperatives. Our framework is a useful analytical tool to assess how Māori entrepreneurs rationalise cultural and commercial imperatives by adopting situationally

dependant perspectives. Additionally, Māori entrepreneurs can use the tool to evaluate and situate their own practice.

We contribute to knowledge by advancing the literature on the process of Indigenous entrepreneurship, how Indigenous entrepreneurs rationalise economic decisions in diverse cultural contexts, and how resolution of tensions in values and business practice occurs. Finally, we recommend further research with a larger pool of Māori and Indigenous entrepreneurs to evaluate and evolve the framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice.

## **CHAPTER 6 ABORIGINAL ENTREPRENEURS**

### **6.1 'I flip switch': Aboriginal entrepreneurs' navigation of entrepreneurial imperatives**

This chapter reports on findings of interviews conducted with Aboriginal entrepreneurs in Perth, Western Australia using methods discussed in Chapter 3. The chapter details how Aboriginal entrepreneurs balance cultural and commercial imperatives. The study discusses how Aboriginal entrepreneurs have to navigate a relatively racist and discriminatory environment to realise their cultural and commercial imperatives. A conceptual model is proposed to illustrate the navigation process in Aboriginal entrepreneurship.

### **6.2 Abstract**

Culture is integral to Indigenous entrepreneurship (IE) but how culture manifests in entrepreneurial endeavours is understudied. This paper explores how Aboriginal entrepreneurs in Perth, Australia navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice. This study uses an interpretive lens to explore how ten Aboriginal businesses based in Perth, Western Australia, managed commercially viable enterprises while aiming to meet their cultural obligations and aspirations. A thematic analysis of the Aboriginal entrepreneurs' experiences using the hybrid economy model found that in Westernised business environments, racism and marginalisation were navigated using strategies grounded in their own Indigenous contexts. We propose a framework of Indigenous entrepreneurial imperatives to further contribute to Indigenous entrepreneurial theory and practice and draw attention to strategies Indigenous entrepreneurs use successfully to navigate cultural and commercial imperatives.

### 6.3 Introduction

Research into how Indigenous people navigate non-Indigenous values and expectations in business is scarce, especially with respect to Australian Aboriginal entrepreneurs (Foley, 2008). This paper, therefore, explores how a group of Aboriginal entrepreneurs in the Perth locality navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their business. We define cultural imperatives as adherence to Indigenous values, which exhibit high level commonalities across Indigenous peoples (Gladstone, 2018; Harris & Wasilewski, 2004) and unique variations at the Indigenous nation and subnation levels (Mika, Dell, Newth, et al., 2022). For instance, cultural practices, which encompass familial relationships and connections to ancestral lands are an integral part of Indigenous wellbeing (Awatere & Harcourt, 2021; Dockery, 2010, 2012; Gorman et al., 2020). We define commercial imperatives as values, concepts, and expectations of business such as profitability, productivity, value and growth, that are applicable to market-based enterprise (Behrman, 1988; Deakins & Scott, 2020).

Aboriginal Australians have a rich history on the Australian continent estimated to be 51,000 to 71,000 years old (Charles, 2020). Concerted efforts from 1788 to colonise, annihilate, assimilate, and integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people resulted in the prevailing discourse of a single Australian community, with Western values and perspectives (Lino, 2017). Against a backdrop of institutional racism, ancient Indigenous wisdom and practices are considered by some to be incongruent with contemporary assumptions that Australian society is homogenous and progressive (Barnett, 2018). Thus, assimilation resulted in Aboriginal perspectives being ‘othered’—marginalised, delegitimised, and excluded from the mainstream (Dornan, 2020; Porter, 2018).

Indigenous peoples actively resist assimilation through an Indigenous economy, business networks and code switching (Kukutai & Webber, 2017). For instance, code switching, or ‘situational switching,’ is where minority ethnic groups “feel compelled to adopt a double set of behaviours, dialects, and rhetorical styles—one to maintain cultural belonging within the Black community and one to gain acceptance into the White dominant group” (Myers, 2020, p. 113). Similarly, Indigenous peoples have been described as “true cosmopolitans who may adopt an Indigenous cultural frame... when interacting with family or tribal members, and switch to a mainstream cultural frame when interacting with the State or with mainstream businesses.” (Tretiakov et al., 2020, p. 195) .

Despite experiencing disproportionate socioeconomic disadvantage and marginalisation, a strengths-based view of Indigenous entrepreneurship (IE) as a means of economic empowerment and wellbeing has been developed (Collins & Norman, 2018; Croce, 2017; Evans et al., 2009; Foley, 2003a). Moreover, moving away from a neoliberal framing Indigenous economic activity within the State and market economies (Buchanan, 2014), Altman (2009) proposed an alternate hybrid economy model (HEM) which acknowledges the customary economy. The customary economy includes Indigenous economic activity often unrecognised in assessments of the mainstream economy (Wesley & Litster, 2015). We use the HEM to identify cultural and commercial imperatives in the context of customary, market and State economies to explore how Indigenous entrepreneurs navigate these various economies.

## 6.4 Literature review

### 6.4.1 Indigenous entrepreneurship

Definitions of the term ‘Indigenous’ include an original connection to the land (Foley, 2003a); self-identification criteria (Hindle & Lansdowne, 2005); and precolonial ownership and control of ancestral lands (Dana, 2006; Paradies, 2005). In the Australian context these characteristics of indigeneity are particularly poignant given James Cook’s declaration of the newfound land as *terra nullius* to justify British colonisation, thereby rendering Indigenous Australians ‘invisible’ in their own lands (Banner, 2005). Today only a third of Australian land remains in Indigenous hands (Sloane et al., 2019), reflecting how colonisation fractured Indigenous Australians’ connections to land (Barta, 1987; Porter, 2017) which is closely tied to their conceptualisations of status, power, identity, and belonging (Archibald, 2006; Kingston, 2015).

Indigenous entrepreneurship takes place when Indigenous people create, manage, and develop new ventures for the benefit of Indigenous people (Croce, 2017; Hindle & Lansdowne, 2005). It can act as a vehicle for empowering communities through economic sovereignty—the idea of having control over economic bases (Lewis, 2018). Indigenous entrepreneurship goes hand in hand with self-determination (Foley, 2000; Peredo et al., 2004; Warren et al., 2017). Foley (2000, p. 11), suggests IE is “the pursuit of self-determination and economic sustainability through self-employment and opportunity pursuit beyond cultural norms of resource utilisation.” Moreover, Indigenous self-determination through entrepreneurship is enabled when enterprise support is controlled and administered by Indigenous peoples (who implicitly understand Indigenous values) (Warren et al., 2017). Finally, entrepreneurship’s role in empowering Indigenous people in a globalised economy is conceptualised in a contingency

theory of entrepreneurship and economy, where communities adapt to localised aspirations, capabilities and needs (Peredo et al., 2004).

In IE, success often combines commercial and cultural measures. Compared to mainstream entrepreneurship, IE considers factors such as the collective benefit of resource ownership where group consensus is an important aspect of decision-making (Anderson & Peredo, 2006; Lindsay, 2005). Since culture shapes Indigenous entrepreneurs' attitudes, values and behaviours (Lindsay, 2005), IE is thus a complex phenomenon, consisting of social, cultural, and economic dimensions (Collins et al., 2017). Finally, we acknowledge that Indigenous peoples are diverse within national and regional contexts, with important nuances in terms of cultural beliefs and practices (Skille, 2021), on whom the effects of socioeconomic disadvantage manifest differently, and this study is conducted in Australia.

#### *6.4.2 Aboriginal entrepreneurship*

In Australia, Aboriginal entrepreneurship is a localised expression of IE that existed as inter-tribal trade long before Europeans arrived (Bodle et al., 2018; Foley, 2004). Although international trade in boomerang, sea cucumber, shell ornaments and ochre between Aboriginal entrepreneurs and the Makassan, Malay and Javanese took place in the mid-1700s (Akbar & Hallak, 2019; Fleming, 2015), systematic and institutional repression through colonisation hindered Aboriginal engagement in entrepreneurial activity (Shirodkar & Hunter, 2019; Shirodkar et al., 2018). Consequently, racism and discrimination feature prominently in Aboriginal entrepreneurship (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017), manifesting in difficulties in obtaining finance due to inflexible criteria (Foley, 2006b), with the chances of loan approval increasing if the applicant has a non-Indigenous spouse (Foley, 2000).

Aboriginal entrepreneurship occurs in many legal forms including partnerships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal corporations, Aboriginal-owned enterprises, and Aboriginal social enterprises and co-operatives (Collins et al., 2017). Difficulties in accounting for ownership, culture and social factors, means accurately quantifying Indigenous enterprises is problematic (Shirodkar et al., 2018). As Table 6 shows, the growth rate of Aboriginal enterprises between 2011 and 2016 was 30%.

<b>Data Source</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Growth Rate %</b>
Shirodkar et al. (2018)	13,700	17,900	30.0
PwC Indigenous Consulting (2018)	8,891	11,538	29.8

**Table 6 Estimates of Aboriginal enterprises in Australia**

The highest concentration of registered Indigenous corporations was in the Northern Territory (33 percent), Western Australia (25.4 percent) and Queensland (19 percent) (PwC Indigenous Consulting, 2018). The relatively low number of Aboriginal entrepreneurs is due to lack of capital and to an economic tradition that struggles with capitalist tenets (Frederick & Foley, 2006). Recently, a significant increase in the number of Aboriginal enterprises is possibly due to wider census coverage, better response rates (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2018a) and to more people identifying as Indigenous (Galperin et al., 2021), where the number of ATSI increased by 19 percent between 2011 and 2016 (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2018b).

Successive Australian governments have attempted to acknowledge Aboriginality, in terms of Indigenous social contributions, respect for culture, and addressing inequality (Paradies & Cunningham, 2009; Wyn & Harris, 2004), as outlined in Table 7. While these efforts have yielded improvement in Aboriginal health and education outcomes

(Commonwealth of Australia, 2020), successful Aboriginal entrepreneurial outcomes are still challenged due to barriers such as lack of access to finance, discrimination and exclusion from networks (Wood & Davidson, 2011).

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976	Legal recognition of ATSI system of land ownership through making law inalienable free hold title in the Northern Territory (Galperin et al., 2021; Gorman & Vemuri, 2017).
Mabo vs Queensland ruling (1988)	Judicial ruling recognised pre-colonial property rights for Aboriginal people and set precedence for Native title claims (Porter, 2017).
Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) (1990)	Channel for government provision of funding and assistance to Indigenous Australians for housing, venture creation and investing (Maritz & Foley, 2018).
Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) (2015)	Prioritises Indigenous business as preferred suppliers of goods and services for State construction projects (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017).

**Table 7 Mechanisms for redress of Aboriginal disadvantage**

Nonetheless IE emboldens Indigenous people as economic actors and has the potential to reduce economic disadvantage by creating employment opportunities (Collins et al., 2017; Hunter, 2015) through culturally appropriate means of acquiring wealth without treading upon Indigenous knowledge, practices and representations (Bodle et al., 2018; Hindle & Moroz, 2010).

#### *6.4.3 Cultural practices in Indigenous entrepreneurship*

Culture can be an enabler of IE through exploiting social capital (Foley & O'Connor, 2013) but can also be a constraint where cultural values may affect Indigenous entrepreneurial strategy

(Collins et al., 2017; Tretiakov et al., 2020). Culture, however, is not static, it adapts to societal change including technological and economic innovations (Foley, 2006a; Mead, 2016; Mika, 2014). Aboriginal entrepreneurs merge Western values with their Aboriginal values, and add to the complexity of their identity through, for example, multicultural family lineages, while remaining grounded in Aboriginal knowledge systems (Collins et al., 2017; Foley, 2006a). As Aboriginal entrepreneurship grows (Shirodkar et al., 2018; Shirodkar et al., 2020), it is important to explore how Aboriginal entrepreneurs can thrive in a culturally sustainable environment (Galperin et al., 2021), which is cognisant and respectful of Indigenous culture. Next, we explore how Aboriginal knowledge can be applied in modern entrepreneurial contexts.

#### *6.4.4 Aboriginal knowledge systems*

The world view that underpins Aboriginal knowledge systems, known as the Dreaming, is expressed through art, custom, music, and oral tradition (Rigney, 2001). It ranges from complex spiritual belief systems such as the period before creation where time did not exist to the transmitting of skills and knowledge on hunting, relating to nature, and origin stories of Aboriginal nations (Barber, 2001; Irwin et al., 1997). In the context of entrepreneurship, Aboriginal people are embedded in the Dreaming holistic view of the world (Cecil, 2014) and, therefore, operate through a convergence of cultural elements and entrepreneurial practice. Dreaming grounds Aboriginal entrepreneurs in their own world view but contact with mainstream business requires understanding of mainstream values and expectations. This intersection of cultural and mainstream can be explained with the concept of n-Culturals (Pekerti & Thomas, 2016), where Indigenous entrepreneurs reconcile their guiding cultural precepts with mainstream values that influence commercial enterprise. This reconciling is

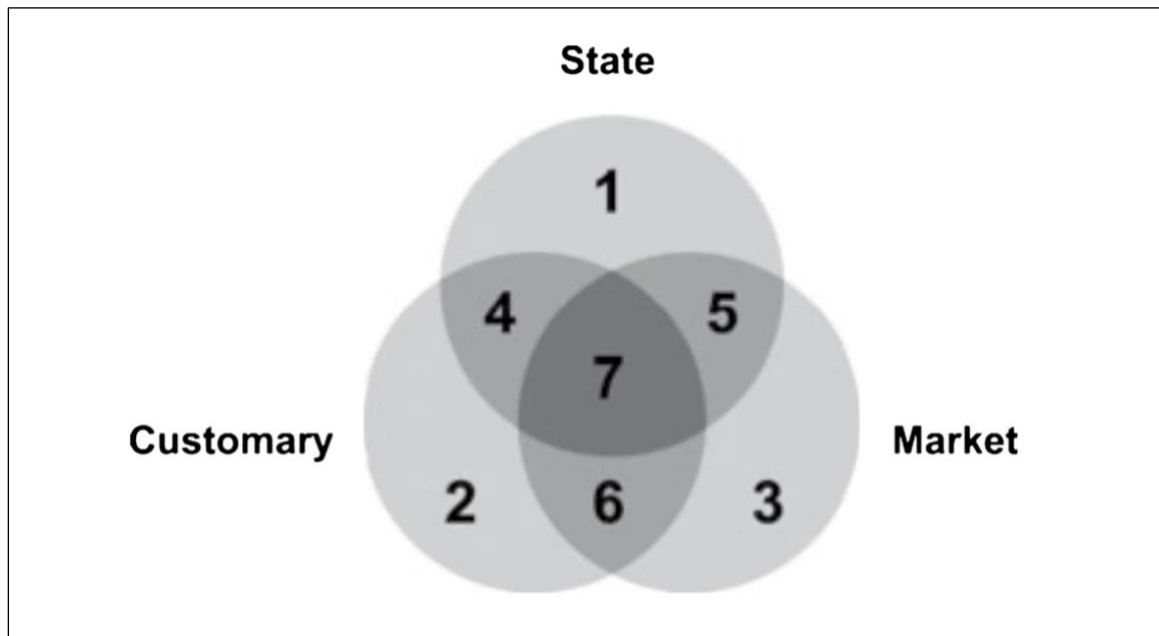
achieved through applying mainstream cultural values at the enterprise level and applying Indigenous cultural values within the enterprise, family and Indigenous community (Tretiakov et al., 2020). For example, Aboriginal Australians have cultural requirements to attend to rituals aligned with ‘sorry business’ (death) that have no definitive time periods whilst having to consider commercial imperatives such as deadlines and operational continuity (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017). How Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate or negotiate these imperatives is still not widely explored.

#### *6.4.5 Hybrid economy model*

Neoliberal economic policies rose to prominence in the 1970s as a critique of State welfare interventions (Di Giminiani, 2018). Presently, neoliberal thinking still influences Indigenous development and promotes notions of personal autonomy, individualism, and self-realisation in the free market economy, with little consideration for customary Indigenous activities (Altman, 2007; Dawson et al., 2021). The goal is to reduce welfare dependence and assimilate Indigenous people into mainstream economies with minimal State interference, by linking personal responsibility to opportunity, and thus create wealth and jobs (Dornan, 2020). This approach to Indigenous development is criticised for the commodification of natural and cultural resources for self-interest (Horowitz, 2021); an emphasis on trickle down-economics (Boluk et al., 2019), and; for the exacerbation of power imbalances and social inequalities (Scheyvens et al., 2016). Boluk et al. (2019) call for a critical examination of established approaches to development for more informed Indigenous needs based analyses (Altman, 2007).

Altman (2009) proposed the hybrid economy model (HEM) as an alternative model to Indigenous economic development with an emphasis on customary economic activity

(Curchin, 2013). The HEM is a tool to understand the linkages between the customary, market and State components of Indigenous economies (see Figure 2) grounded in Altman's (2009) observations of economic activity in remote Australian regions.



**Figure 2 Altman's Hybrid economy model (Altman, 2009, p. 322)**

The HEM illustrates that the customary economy (2) encompasses productive activities of cultural progression which may have non-financial benefits such as Aboriginal smoking ceremonies, art and hunting. The market economy (3) consists of the productive and consumptive sectors including the roles of entrepreneurs, buyers, sellers, and industry (Altman, 2001). The State (1) acts in many capacities in relation to citizens and has the mandate to function as a legislative entity with regulative, enforcement and economic arms amongst other functions. Altman (2018) posits that these conceptual sectors are invariably linked and interdependent (see 4, 5, 6, and 7 in Figure 2).

Because the HEM acknowledges the customary sector as a credible location of Indigenous economic activity it has been used in research on Indigenous regional economic

development (Buchanan, 2014; Kwan et al., 2006; Muecke & Dibley, 2016; Wesley & Litster, 2015). By acknowledging the customary sector the HEM offers an alternative to the two sector economy (State and market) that forms the backbone of neoliberal ideology. This acknowledgement makes the HEM a suitable tool for this study to analyse how Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in the hybrid economy. An example of the mutually supportive relationship between the market and customary economies is the monetisation of cultural dance (customary) in the tourism sector (market) where the State intervenes through regulation and funding to address market failures (Altman, 2004; Curchin, 2013).

Curchin (2013) critiques the HEM stating that the cost of understated competitive tensions exist between the customary and market economies is unexplored. For example, the opportunity cost of labour time in customary activities instead of market activities (customary-market linkage), the impact of State regulation on customary activities such as fishing (State-customary linkage) and increasing tax obligations (State-market linkage) are not easily accounted for (Curchin, 2013). Meanwhile, for Gregory (2016), Altman's (2001) conceptualisation of the hybrid economy is inspired of earlier works and not original as presented in Altman (2009). These works include Yang's (2000) theory of economic hybridity which in turn was built on earlier thinking such as Antonio Gramsci's articulation theory (DeLuca, 1999), the tribal economy and political economy. Additionally, Gregory (2016) points to a missing analysis of a category in the bounded white space outside of the Venn diagram (see Figure 2). Reproductions of the HEM have sectors numbered from 1 to 7 and Gregory (2016) argues there are in fact 8 sectors, where the latter represents those who do not receive any income from any of the sectors such as young children, the homeless and destitute.

Whilst the critiques are valid, the HEM's errors are non-fatal logical errors that do not diminish the theory (Gregory, 2016).

## **6.5 Methods**

As a non-Aboriginal research team, we understand that research positionality needs to be acknowledged and can impact on research outcomes thus requiring awareness of power imbalances (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). Being non-Aboriginal and based out of Australia (a Zimbabwean-born doctoral candidate, two Māori and a New Zealand-Colombian co-author) we acknowledge our limited knowledge of the Aboriginal world view and research practices although collectively we have experience in researching Indigenous business and entrepreneurship and are cognisant of sensitivities around researching Indigenous peoples. We sought the advice of Aboriginal business scholars, undertook our institution's human ethics approval process which includes consideration of ethical issues when researching Indigenous peoples, and were mindful throughout the research process to recognise and represent Aboriginal people involved in this interpretive study in a respectful manner. In order to explore how Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their business endeavours we applied a social constructionist lens, where knowledge is considered a construct of contextualised interactions between people (i.e., Aboriginal entrepreneurs) and their interactions with the world (Burr, 2015) including the Indigenous world, the business world and the State. Altman's (2009) HEM was utilised as a tool to analyse participant responses when navigating these worlds, as it is an "analytical construct for the assessment of the particularities of any one situation and the linkages between the market, the State and the customary components of the economy" (Altman, 2004, p. 4). The HEM acknowledges the customary, market and State components of the Indigenous economy; and provides a structure

to order and analyse participant responses. We sought to understand lived experiences with rich descriptions rather than specific observations (Neubauer et al., 2019; Thomas, 2006). An inductive approach allows findings to emerge from significant themes in data (Liu, 2016; Thomas, 2006), and links between research objectives and findings can be established and typologies developed (Gilgun, 2011; Thomas, 2006).

### *6.5.1 Research process*

The first author had familial connections in Perth, and following initial contact with an Aboriginal entrepreneur via social media, participants from the Noongar (made of the Goreng, Minang, Ballardong and Whadjuk peoples), the Wanghkatha and the Gumbaynggir nations, were recruited using the snowball method (Handcock & Gile, 2011). The snowball method has previously been applied in Indigenous research in the Māori context where access to participants and the development of networks are facilitated through relationship building (Gillies, 2006a). Following the initial contact via social media, we were introduced to networks of Aboriginal entrepreneurs in the Perth area of Western Australia where ATSI account for 1.6% of the Greater Perth population (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2016). Aboriginal owner-managers who were the key decision makers of Aboriginal-owned and operated businesses were approached to participate in the study. The criteria for participant selection follows Foley (2000) and Lewis' (2018) notion of self-determination, ownership and control. Face to face interviews were undertaken with ten IEs by the first author. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] (2022) business size classification system, eight of the Aboriginal owned businesses were small businesses (5-19 employees) and two were medium-sized (20-199 employees). Alphabetical labels were given to maintain anonymity (see Table 8).

Participant	Industry type	Staffing levels	Size	Gender of owner/s
A	Textiles	1-10	Small	Male
B	Facilities Service	51-199	Medium	Male
C	Staffing & Recruitment	11-50	Medium	Female
D	Business Consultancy	1-10	Small	Male
E	Manufacturing	1-10	Small	Male
F	Information Technology	1-10	Small	Male
G	Environmental Services	1-10	Small	Female
H	Tourism	1-10	Small	Female
I	Agriculture	1-10	Small	Female
J	Textiles	1-10	Small	Female

**Table 8 Summary characteristics of the companies in the study**

Participants were fully informed of their rights and consented to interviews conducted in English, interspersed with native language terms. The interviews were conducted at a time and place convenient to participants and lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. They focused on Aboriginal entrepreneurs' expressions of cultural identity and values in their ventures, to reveal the challenges, benefits, and significance of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives. Interviews were recorded and transcribed through a transcription service for the authors to conduct a thematic analysis.

### *6.5.2 Thematic Analysis*

Emerging themes were linked back to the research question of how Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives, and the Indigenous entrepreneur was the unit of analysis (Tetnowski, 2015). After defining and clarifying the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006) through an inductive approach (Alhojailan, 2012; Kiger & Varpio, 2020), a peer debriefing process was conducted with the co-authors to improve the credibility of the findings (Barber & Walczak, 2009; Scharp & Sanders, 2019). The first co-author analysed all transcripts, two

co-authors reviewed a selection of transcripts, and consensus was reached through triangulation and analysis of emerging themes. Verbatim excerpts of participants are presented in the findings to ensure the experiences and world views of Indigenous people were communicated as authentically as possible (Nielsen & Wilson, 2012).

## **6.6 Findings**

Four main themes emerged from the analysis that relate to the research question: (1) Aboriginal cultural identity and branding is integral; (2) benefits of integrating cultural practices into commercial ventures; (3) integrating cultural practices in commercial ventures is challenging, and (4) State support needs to be attuned to the realities of IE's experiences. Participant quotes are coded, for example, Participant A quote 1 will appear as (A: 1).

### *6.6.1 Aboriginal cultural identity and branding is integral*

Most participants strongly identified with their Aboriginality, and Aboriginal culture, therefore, was integral to their business. Participants used adjectives like innate and intrinsic to explain how culture was built into their business practice as a default because of their identity. Participant A says:

*(A: 1) My culture is very important in terms of my businesses... we incorporate that in the business... as part of the culture and what's intrinsic to us... our spirituality... is very important on how we conduct and operate ourselves.*

Participant C, however, was the exception, prioritising her identity as a businesswoman, who just ‘happens to be an Aboriginal person’.

Aboriginal branding was a way of signalling enterprise connections to Aboriginal culture. Eight of the ten businesses utilised Aboriginal art, logos and murals to brand business cards and offices. For example, Participant D purposefully branded their business Aboriginal to align with their community and generate positive social outcomes:

*(D: 1) Our logo is Aboriginal colours... We definitely show our association with being an Indigenous business, and our association... culturally.*

In some instances, cultural practices had a place in strategic planning. Participant A applied ancient cultural philosophies to their business, proud of its 60,000 year legacy:

*(A: 2) The cultural values are very intrinsic to the way the business operates, in terms of we operate under six seasons philosophy of Noongar culture.*

Cultural considerations also impacted business decisions. Participant G, for instance, discounted their fee to ensure that an Aboriginal business executed contract work on a culturally significant site:

*(G: 1) I had to drop my budget down even further...to make sure that we won that contract. Economically, it probably wasn't the best thing to do, but culturally it was really important.*

Cultural protocols with regards to gender were also considered in the execution of this project:

*(G: 2) Males in our community...said, "No, this location is not a location for women" ...So...I made allowances...*

For Participant B cultural practices took precedence over the venture's growth strategy due to effect growth could have on where employees end up being compromised culturally:

*(B: 1) We wanted to be corporate at one stage... but we also want that value to be strong... because those small little foundations get lost... and people get lost within lots of policies... but we just want people to be who they are... without having to code switch because 'I've got to go to work.'*

#### *6.6.2 Benefits of integrating cultural practices into commercial ventures*

The majority of participants had no issues implementing cultural practices because most firms started out as Aboriginal enterprises. Participant B however, purchased an existing mainstream company and restructured it to bring to the fore its Aboriginal identity:

*(B: 2) ... it was important to recognise and identify that we are an Aboriginal company...not just a neutral company that's not Indigenous, or Aboriginal. It was very important ... to have its status, and...be recognised within different directories [such as] Supply Nation [a non-profit organisation that certifies Indigenous businesses]; so that people know that [this] is an Aboriginal business and it stands on its own.*

As a result, the restructure required educating non-Aboriginal employees on Aboriginal cultural protocols, dealing with implications of bringing in Aboriginal staff, and the initial hesitancy to the changes this generated. The key to this restructure was relationships:

*(B: 3) My biggest challenges were having people understand that they've also got an Aboriginal boss now, and that was an unknown to what that was going to be like... There has to be an education session around 'this is how we have to operate'... I wanted it to incorporate all these values that we wanted to have. [But we also] have a business to run... We had those challenges, but we were able to ...implement ways of how to get those processes in place... [It] comes back to...relationship building with our employees.*

Participant B considered their Aboriginal identity fundamental for their business ethos, and an advantage to access a niche market where cultural practices could be applied:

*(B: 4) [In] most contracts...we have an upper hand in regard to...Aboriginal issues. We're...the only Aboriginal business, in the [industry], that have processes, and employees that are Aboriginal that can also code switch...from [official job title] to an Aboriginal liaison officer... We have that key to the door in our community...we can support better outcomes for those people because of who we are, as an Aboriginal business.*

Participant C highlighted moderating the extent that their Aboriginal identity was on display and their ability to operate with mainstream businesses:

*(C: 1) I try to balance it, because if you go too cultural...the corporate client will think... we won't know how to deal with them'... There's got to be a balance where they can subtly see that we're an Aboriginal business, but at the same time we have to show that we're professional to deliver the service.*

Some participants actively implemented cultural practices in their business through employing Aboriginal people and educating non-Aboriginal employees on Aboriginal culture. For both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees, training and education were part of a dynamic process of grounding employees in their cultural identity as a business to create common ground:

*(J: 1) We [employ] Aboriginal people only through our business. For people to get employment with us they'll need to do their certs in leadership, cover[ring] Aboriginal cultural awareness*

*(B: 5) We want non-Aboriginal people to learn off our Aboriginal people...*

*(F: 1) I think I found integrating, intertwining culture within the organisation...is critical to educate the organisation... and [to] understand and create that empathy and compassion*

Growing mainstream interest and understanding about Aboriginal culture played an important part in building relationships:

*(B: 6) People are now looking at that culture as the longest living culture in the world... That's a key to us as Aboriginal people, [to] building relationships with our non-Aboriginal partners, and really sharing that culture because that's everyone's culture.*

### *6.6.3 Integrating cultural practices in commercial ventures is challenging*

Enacting Aboriginal business practices was perceived as risky due to stereotyping and mainstream businesses doubting its effectiveness:

*(A: 3) Looking at potential clients there's always an element of risk that they see in terms of how we do our business... is it in accordance with what's standard and practice, in terms of business?*

*(C: 2) It doesn't matter how successful we are, there's still a lot of corporate companies, for various reasons, that find Indigenous business to be highly risky.*

*(E: 1) We've got to work twice as hard, but we've known that from when we were kids. My dad used to say, "... the first thing they'll do is look at the colour of your skin, and they'll work out where you're from, and then you've got to try and impress them"*

Significant cultural events such as sorry/sorrow business challenged participants (and their communities) when commercial pressures were prioritised:

(A: 4) *I couldn't attend a particular funeral one time... my dad and my sisters and adult children attended [and] represented the family... thank goodness that it didn't cause any issues.*

(D: 2) *Funeral business is...the biggest one, where you're expected to go and spend time with the family. Sometimes there's a grieving process as well; so, it might take a week, or plus, that you're expected to be out on country.*

(E: 2) *When it comes down to sorrow business with family, is probably the only time I get forced to make a decision about choosing one over the other [otherwise] you can shuffle things around to accommodate...When it comes to family, I'm very torn...but at the same time I know my business has to go on.*

Another challenge was the appropriation of cultural facades through superficial business partnerships to gain lucrative government tenders which tend to dissolve if the tender is successful. This behaviour is characterised as tokenism:

(C: 3) *Most corporations [treat] Indigenous businesses differently to how they...treat a mainstream business... they go and find one Aboriginal person and go into a joint venture... He's there as the token black fella, and he's*

*probably on a wage, but that joint venture will probably get a two hundred-million-dollar contract.*

*(E: 3) They say, "These are all the Aboriginal businesses we have on our books. They will be engaged once you give us this tender." They're given the tender but then they chuck that [commitment] in the bin.*

Some participants were challenged with assumptions about their business acumen due to their Aboriginal identity:

*(G: 3) There's an attitude sometimes amongst all levels of business... If I was a non-Aboriginal person, I probably would have been where I am today at the end of the third or fourth year. Yet with us it takes twice as long to actually provide that confidence across the industry and the market that we can actually competitively be engaged, complete a project to budget, and against the scope, on time.*

*(C: 4) Sometimes I've even said it would actually be more beneficial if I took off all the Aboriginal branding, and didn't have my name on Supply Nation, because if I went and did a mainstream contract, I would do that until the cows come home, and I would win the contract because I'm going down the mainstream path.*

Dealing with mainstream business could be alienating, and called for relationship building and self-belief:

(A: 5) *It can be very intimidating and overwhelming when you walk into a room where there's no Aboriginal people in business...you've got to find a common ground to interact with them.*

(J: 2) *I'm going into spaces where I feel like a foreigner...it's really different going into an entrepreneurial space with non-Indigenous entrepreneurs. I feel like a fish out of water...It is daunting.*

(C: 5) *I know how that game plays, and one thing you can't do is attack the mainstream world, because...then you're seen...like a protestor, or a bit of a vigilante... If you can articulate what the issue is, without attacking or blaming... There's better buy-in.*

Code switching played an important role in engaging with the mainstream, and entailed Aboriginal entrepreneurs adapting to suit their audience (whether mainstream or Indigenous), while remaining true to their Aboriginal culture:

(J: 3) *I often refer to myself as a cultural code switcher. I am firmly rooted in my Indigenous origins...but I'm also adept in the European construct... it's a very different kind of conversation we have amongst ourselves, to the one we have with the non-Indigenous players. It's in that space that I flip the switch. I go into this world where I have to think differently, speak differently, and navigate differently; and I'm also very mindful of the kinds of barriers*

*and inhibitors that will automatically be there, without anyone saying that they exist.*

#### *6.6.4 State support needs to be attuned to the realities of IE's experiences*

Participants identified a need for improvement in State support, particularly, in terms of promoting business endeavours and providing support among Aboriginal people. For instance, procurement policies were recognised as fostering Aboriginal start-ups:

*(A: 6) We're seeing a real big uptake of start-ups...in the Aboriginal business sector, because the Commonwealth and the State governments are developing procurement policies that provide a framework for us to be able to win contracts.*

*(B: 7) Now that we have a State government that's more focussed on Aboriginal economy and values...that has now boosted opportunities. It's actually broken down a lot of barriers for Aboriginal people.*

However, some State promises were unfulfilled:

*(B: 8) The expectation that governments will make Aboriginal people strong in their own right...that's got to be more of an action thing than just a word thing... that's probably the biggest thing is that government...sticking true to what they're saying.*

‘Black cladding’, where a non-Aboriginal corporation forms an unequal partnership with an Aboriginal business to exploit procurement contracts not accessible to the mainstream, was repeatedly mentioned as an unintended consequence of the Indigenous Procurement Policy (2015) to support Aboriginal businesses. Aboriginal unemployment policies were also found to be ineffective:

*(C: 6) Despite the millions of dollars...how is it that Aboriginal unemployment is actually getting worse, and...you’re saying that all these Aboriginal people are being employed? So, your own figures, federal government, [do] not stack up, and yet there’s no-one that’s calling them out.*

The discontinuation of an impactful Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) community business workshop was also mentioned:

*(H: 1) IBA was doing some workshops within the Aboriginal community... I think they just need to be ongoing as well, because [IBA] pulled out, and then we didn’t hear from them.*

## **6.7 Discussion**

Aboriginal entrepreneurs iteratively assess the complementarity of cultural and commercial imperatives. The application of Aboriginal culture and identity could be a rewarding experience for employees when it was recognised as integral to the business. The implementation of cultural practice and resultant pride in identity is linked to positive outcomes (Awatere & Harcourt, 2021; Dockery, 2010, 2012; Gorman et al., 2020) which in this study

included branding, access to niche markets, better relationships, and an enhanced sense of wellbeing. These findings align with Dana's (2015) conclusions that measures of success for Aboriginal entrepreneurs include profit and cultural stewardship. For Aboriginal entrepreneurs cultural stewardship is to do with unquantifiable cultural elements such as practices, language, values, and the wellbeing of the community.

Participants however, found it was more challenging to implement cultural imperatives in dealings with non-Aboriginal stakeholders due to stereotyping, tokenism, and the phenomenon of exploitation (e.g., black cladding). To try and understand the nuances of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives for Indigenous Entrepreneurs in the various economies (customary, market, State), we considered linkages using Altman's (2009) HEM.

#### *6.7.1 Customary-Market Linkage*

Participants highlighted structural discrimination such as stereotyping and exploitative Aboriginal engagement, (e.g., 'black cladding') during customary-market linkages. Charles (2017) suggests that as social pressures relating to Aboriginal engagement increase, the risk of Aboriginal businesses tokenism increases as mainstream organisations try to display a good corporate image. Interactions with mainstream non-Aboriginal entities were reported as intimidating and challenging, which could be due to historical and ongoing implicit and explicit racial biases against Aboriginal people (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017; Foley, 2003a; Paradies, 2005; Ruhanen & Whitford, 2018). To navigate these mainstream interactions, mechanisms such as impression management, code switching and measured approaches to communicating issues or grievances were employed to attain mainstream legitimacy.

However, when leveraging their cultural practices to serve niche markets the customary-market linkage was positive, as was the case for Participant B who appeared to be an outlier in this regard. Aboriginality served as social, economic, and cultural capital in the context of the niche market they served. First, normative and structural ties to the Aboriginal community (Foley, 2017) allowed some participants effective engagement compared to mainstream companies in their particular industry; and second, their cultural capital served to guide their interactions with the Aboriginal community (for example, drawing on respect for elders to counsel disruptive youth). Further, Participant B attributed the increased interest in Aboriginal culture as a factor in improving the quality of the engagement with mainstream partners.

#### *6.7.2 State-Customary Linkage*

The State-customary linkage is where the State is linked to and supports customary activities (Altman, 2018). All participants benefited directly and indirectly from State intervention such as the IPP. However, as mentioned earlier ‘black cladding’ enabled well-resourced mainstream firms to exploit procurement contracts at the expense of legitimate Aboriginal businesses. Participants were positive about public policies to support Aboriginal entrepreneurship, but there was room for improvement in education and business support systems and follow up. The need for greater government support of Aboriginal entrepreneurship was alluded to through comments regarding high Aboriginal unemployment figures.

#### *6.7.3 State-Market Linkage*

This involves the State intervening in the market through mechanisms such as regulation and taxation to address market failures, protectionism and incentivisation (Aikins, 2009). Altman

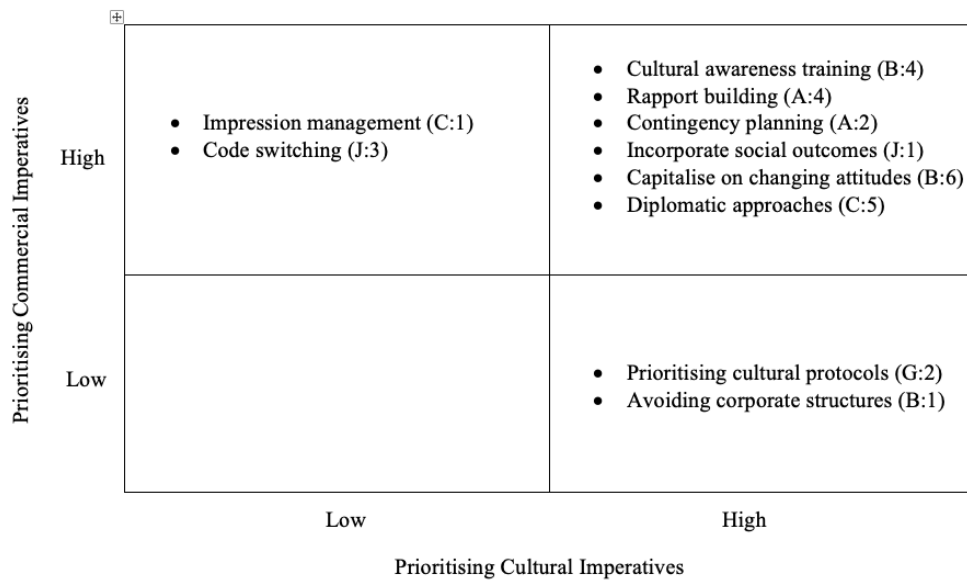
(2004) highlights the Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) as an example of a State-market linkage. The CDEP was an Australian Government's project to provide basic income support and employment for ATSI people. Participants called for the State to address economic disadvantage, notably Aboriginal unemployment.

Although Altman's (2009) HEM was helpful in analysing participant responses the need for a more nuanced understanding of how IEs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives remained. While the HEM gave us an understanding of how participants were operating in the scope of the three overlapping economies, critiques included an incompleteness in development (Gregory, 2016) and understated competitive tensions between economic sectors (Curchin, 2013). Additionally, we were not able to understand how or why Indigenous entrepreneurs navigated the intersection of cultural and commercial imperatives in these overlaps. Participant E for instance, explained this complexity when they shared that "when it comes to family [sorrow business] I'm very torn, but at the same time I know my business has to go on." After further analysis, a set of strategies in the navigation process emerged.

## **6.8 Navigation strategies**

Strategies used by Aboriginal entrepreneurs to satisfy commercial and cultural imperatives were either skewed towards a commercial imperative bias (e.g., code switching), a cultural imperative bias (e.g., adherence to cultural protocols) or in-between (e.g. cultural awareness training). These findings expand on the concept of n-Culturals reconciling cultural precepts with commercial focused mainstream values (Pekerti & Thomas, 2016; Tretiakov et al., 2020). Participants we interviewed also adapted their strategy to the context. Whilst acknowledging

that Aboriginal culture is not homogenous, we illustrate the range of strategies participants used in navigating cultural and commercial imperatives through a framework of Indigenous Entrepreneurial Imperatives (Figure 3).



**Figure 3 Framework of Indigenous entrepreneurial imperatives**

Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of strategies Aboriginal entrepreneurs used according to whether they were considered culturally and/or commercially aligned. Strategies such as impression management and code-switching fit in the quadrant that prioritises commercial over cultural imperatives (low cultural/high commercial) and was demonstrated when Aboriginal entrepreneurs minimised aspects of their cultural identity to avoid perceived bias from others. The quadrant that prioritises cultural over commercial imperatives (high cultural/low commercial) is illustrated by cultural stewardship strategies adopted that are not often considered commercially beneficial (e.g., keeping the business small to ensure community connection). There were a significant number of strategies that prioritised both

cultural and commercial imperatives (high cultural/high commercial quadrant) such as taking advantage of the wave of interest in Indigenous culture to enhance commercial outcomes. There were no examples of strategies that did not prioritise cultural or commercial imperatives (low cultural/low commercial quadrant). This may be due to participants being selected through the snowballing technique.

We note that these strategies are contextual and cannot be generalised to all Aboriginal Entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, the IPM helps to illustrate how IEs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their decision-making and actions, allows IEs to consider how strategic decisions and actions align with cultural and commercial imperatives, and is a useful tool for Indigenous Entrepreneurship scholarship and practice.

## **6.9 Conclusion**

This study explored how Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in business. Aboriginality was inextricably integrated within their enterprise and Indigenous entrepreneurs made decisions to align their cultural and commercial imperatives at a strategic and operational level. This alignment occurs in a context that is often discriminatory toward Indigenous identity, values, and practices. Altman's (2009) HEM was a useful tool for analysing how Aboriginal entrepreneurs interact with cultural and commercial imperatives but was not nuanced enough to capture the process of navigating them, and missed an analysis of the white space outside of the Venn diagram. We proposed a framework of Indigenous entrepreneurial imperatives to illustrate the process of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives for scholarly and practitioner insight and application in the future.

At the practical level, the nuanced navigation strategies Indigenous entrepreneurs utilise in Westernised contexts illustrate opportunities to transform their employees, sector, and communities. Cultural education and shifting biases toward Indigenous approaches is crucial to achieving economic sovereignty and self-determination. By demonstrating the feasibility of implementing both cultural and commercial imperatives symbiotically, this transformation can occur. These findings support previous research that called for Indigenous control of the entrepreneurial process (Foley, 2000; Peredo et al., 2004; Warren et al., 2017) as adeptness in the navigation process facilitates Indigenous self-determination.

As a contribution to scholarship, we expand on the concept of n-Culturals (Pekerti & Thomas, 2016; Tretiakov et al., 2020) through a nuanced look at the process of reconciling mainstream values with cultural precepts. The study also contributed to cultural sustainability (Galperin et al., 2021), empowering communities (Lewis, 2018), self-determination (Foley, 2000), localised aspirations, capabilities and needs (Peredo et al., 2004). However, this study involved one cohort of Indigenous entrepreneurs in a specific region at a specific point in time. More longitudinal studies are needed to determine how these strategies may evolve over time and whether they do in fact lead to self-determination.

At the policy level, the unintended consequences of interventions such as the IPP were revealed, such as 'black cladding' which prevent legitimate Aboriginal businesses from accessing contracts. Whilst State programmes have been implemented to assist Aboriginal entrepreneurs in the community, better follow up processes are needed to ensure that assistance and guidance is ongoing. Contrary to the neoliberal ideology of Indigenous development and minimal State interventions (Dornan, 2020), the State played a prominent role in supporting Aboriginal entrepreneurship in this study. Policies could address legislation, (e.g. sorrow

business leave), structural failures (e.g. ‘black cladding’), support Aboriginal-led initiatives (e.g. Indigenous business networks), foster cultural safety and long-term engagement. The State also plays a key role in educating the wider business sector on the value of Aboriginal and Indigenous culture to entrepreneurial endeavours.

Although it is acknowledged that it may be hard for Aboriginal entrepreneurs to interact in non-Aboriginal business contexts due to bias, stereotyping and discrimination, this strengths-based research illustrated effective strategies used to avoid, minimise or overcome such obstacles. Further research on the process of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives is needed in other Indigenous contexts to determine when and how Indigenous businesses can thrive by embracing their cultural identity and world view.

## **CHAPTER 7 DISCUSSION**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the findings of this thesis in relation to the research question and the literature. Using the Māori weaving process (rāranga) analogy, where strands overlap to create a well-planned and thought out product, this chapter integrates and discusses the findings from Chapter 4 (positionality paper), Chapter 5 (Māori entrepreneurship paper) and Chapter 6 (Aboriginal entrepreneurship paper) to answer the research question of how Indigenous entrepreneurs balance cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial endeavours.

The purpose of this research is to explore how Indigenous entrepreneurs balance cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice. Indigenous entrepreneurs operate in mainstream environments which exert mimetic pressures to conform to mainstream standards. In these mainstream environments, Indigenous cultural imperatives interact with commercial imperatives. This research is motivated by two reasons; firstly, to fulfil a childhood ambition for entrepreneurship and education that has taken the form of this doctoral study (as explained in Chapter 4); and secondly, to unpack and make meaningful interpretations of how Indigenous entrepreneurs negotiate or navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice. In understanding this process of balancing imperatives, Indigenous entrepreneurs can thrive in non-Indigenous communities, sectors, and societies whilst maintaining their cultural identity and world views. The focus on Māori (Ngāti Porou) and Aboriginal (Noongar, Wangkhatha, Gumbaynggir) entrepreneurs is because they share similarities to my cultural emphasis on a deep connection to the land, status as former British colonies actively pursuing self-determination and because of my personal relationships with

people from both cultures through marriage and friendships. Additionally, Māori and Aboriginal people share ancient stories of ancestral enterprise before colonisation. Including both Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs allows for an exploration of their commonalities and differences and how best they can be supported to achieve their aspirations. An exploration of Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurship highlights the heterogeneity and the contextuality of Indigenous entrepreneurship, which is important because Indigenous research needs to have specificity in reporting on phenomena for realistic interpretations of how Indigenous entrepreneurship occurs (Padilla-Meléndez et al., 2022).

When researching Indigenous entrepreneurship, the diverse world views, cultures, and practices amongst Indigenous peoples need to be considered (Peredo & McLean, 2010). Macro-level approaches to understanding culture assume cultural homogeneity at the national level. This implies that individuals within those cultures behave similarly. Hofstede (1980) is an early example of this approach. Hofstede (1980) studied how values in the workplace are influenced by culture. His findings led to the Hofstede model of national culture, which comprises six dimensions of national culture (Table 9). These dimensions are:

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Description</b>
Power Distance	related to how society addresses inequality
Individualism versus collectivism	related to the integration of individuals into primary groups (“I” versus “we”)
Masculinity versus femininity	related to the division of emotional roles between women and men (tough versus tender culture)
Uncertainty avoidance	related to the degree to which members of a society handle an unknown future (ambiguity and uncertainty)
Long term orientation versus short term normative orientation	related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past (normative versus pragmatic cultures)
Indulgence versus restraint	related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life.

**Table 9 Hofstede’s six dimensions of culture (Hofstede, 2011)**

Hofstede’s cultural model has been criticised for delineating culture to the nation–state and not considering its heterogeneity and dynamism of culture (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). According to Valliere (2019), there are many ways to interpret beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of social norms because of the subjectivity, nuance and heterogeneity of culture amongst nations subnations, groups and individuals. For example, this research contextualises Māori entrepreneurship around Ngāti Porou entrepreneurs and Aboriginal entrepreneurship around Wanghkatha, Gumbaynggir and Noongar (Goreng, Minang, Ballardong, Whadjuk) entrepreneurs.

Previous research has established the enabling and constraining effects of Indigenous cultural practice in business contexts (Haar et al., 2021; Harmsworth, 2005; Henry et al., 2018; Henry et al., 2020; Mika et al., 2020; Peredo, 2001; Tinirau, 2017). Examples of the enabling effects include Haar et al. (2021) who found that Māori businesses have a high cultural capital, which correlates with stronger organisational performance. The constraining effects include

examples such as cultural priorities reducing profits in some cases (Harmsworth, 2005). The enabling and constraining effects of Indigenous cultural practices in business contexts are understood but the nuances of how they are reconciled with commercial objectives is understudied. This thesis seeks to bring an understanding of how the reconciliation process occurs between cultural and commercial imperatives

## **7.2 Overview of findings**

The research set out to understand how Indigenous entrepreneurs balance cultural and commercial imperatives in their businesses. This question was addressed in three ways in this research. First, the need for culturally sensitive and respectful research required a focus on researcher positionality. Findings on positionality are presented in Chapter 4. A key finding is that respectful, responsible, and culturally appropriate research can be conducted by non-members of Indigenous groups, which challenges the prevailing discourse of essentialism in Indigenous research (van Meijl, 2009; Webber, 2009). Not only did the chapter justify the methodological approach of raranga (weaving) for this thesis, but the paper also clarified my positionality, highlighting that with proper guidance and reflexivity, it is possible to conduct research with Indigenous people that are not of the researcher's people. This research process requires both researcher and participants to be partners, with aligned power relations.

Chapter 5 focused on answering how Māori entrepreneurs in Tairāwhiti, Aotearoa New Zealand negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice. The term 'negotiate' was used because Māori entrepreneurs have the Treaty of Waitangi as a foundation on which to negotiate the value of cultural imperatives and priorities. The chapter discussed how tikanga was applied in the negotiation process, but its application was

contextual. The chapter concluded that Māori entrepreneurs adopt three situation-dependent perspectives when they negotiate imperatives; and that the perspectives are fluid depending on the situational factors. A framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice to reconcile cultural and commercial imperatives was proposed to illustrate how Māori entrepreneurs reconcile cultural and commercial imperatives by adopting situationally dependent perspectives. The perspectives were: (1) the ‘culturally engaged Māori entrepreneur’ who prioritises cultural precepts (tikanga) over commercial factors; (2) the ‘culturally responsive Māori entrepreneur’ who sees cultural and commercial imperatives as important and strives to give commensurate consideration to both; and (3) the ‘culturally ambivalent Māori entrepreneur’ who prioritises commercial over cultural considerations to privilege the viability of the firm. The framework has utility in analysing entrepreneurial practice within the context of how entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives. Being exploratory, the findings from Chapter 5 offer a foundation on which other researchers can build and test Indigenous entrepreneurial practice with a larger group of participants.

Chapter 6 sought to understand how Aboriginal entrepreneurs in Perth, Australia navigate cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice. The term ‘navigate’ was used because Aboriginal people are not yet recognised in the constitution of Australia, which affects how Aboriginal people are viewed in mainstream Australia. The chapter discusses the Westernised business environment in which Aboriginal entrepreneurs conduct business. Altman’s (2009) hybrid economy model (HEM) acknowledges the customary economy in which cultural imperatives are manifest and propagated; and was utilised as a tool to analyse how Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate Indigenous and non-Indigenous contexts (the market, the state and the customary components of the economy). The

hybrid economy model (HEM) was utilised as a tool of analysis only in the study of Aboriginal entrepreneurs to ensure the theme of intercultural research is maintained and the trap of comparing Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs is avoided. Using Altman's (2009) HEM, it was found that racism and marginalisation were navigated in Westernised business environments using strategies grounded in Indigenous contexts. The findings highlight that at the individual and firm level, there is minimal to no resistance from employees to implementing cultural imperatives in the business. Aboriginal entrepreneurs reported that employees embraced cultural imperatives in the business; and in the case of a participant who transitioned a mainstream business into an Aboriginal business, non-Indigenous employees were receptive of the cultural shift in the business. At the market level, Aboriginal entrepreneurs experience both perceived and real resistance from the mainstream business environment and society in general. Examples included discrimination and stereotyping in interactions with mainstream entities because of their culture, leading to some Aboriginal entrepreneurs minimising their Aboriginality to mitigate negative experiences.

The findings illustrate the complexity of the cultural imperatives, commercial imperatives and state interaction nexus within which Aboriginal entrepreneurs operate. However, a framework of Indigenous entrepreneurial imperatives was proposed to highlight a nuanced approach to reconciling cultural and commercial imperatives. The Imperatives Priority Model captures the process of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives by highlighting how strategic decisions and actions align with cultural and commercial imperatives. The strategies are contextual. The conceptual model needs further testing in a larger group, ideally by Aboriginal researchers well versed in the Aboriginal world view and community. The next section discusses the findings.

### 7.3 Indigenous identity

Indigenous identity is of paramount importance to Indigenous entrepreneurs in this thesis. There is debate on precisely what an Indigenous identity is but Weaver (2001) describes a connectedness to a sense of peoplehood inseparably linked with sacred traditions, traditional homelands, and a shared history as Indigenous people. An Indigenous identity can be ascribed various dimensions consisting of a sense of belonging to an Indigenous community and the maintenance of cultural practices (Rey, 2021). Not only are Indigenous entrepreneurs concerned with economic dimensions of their business decisions, social and cultural considerations also play a role (Vunibola & Scobie, 2022). This may be explained in part, by the high community embeddedness of Indigenous entrepreneurs (Henry & Dana, 2019; Houkamau & Sibley, 2019). This embeddedness is evident in participant narratives of socioeconomic accountability to the tribal community through, for example, employing tribal members or sacrificing short term profits to protect cultural integrity. All participants from New Zealand and Australia expressed a strong connection to their Indigenous identity.

Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs strongly identify with their respective cultures. For instance, Aboriginal entrepreneurs introduced themselves through describing their ‘connection to country’. ‘Connection to country’ is important to Aboriginal people because it expresses and reinforces an identity and a sense of belonging (Salmon et al., 2018). When introducing themselves to me, Aboriginal entrepreneurs shared their name, nation, and country (traditional lands). Māori entrepreneurs introduced themselves by reciting their pepeha, which is a tribal saying that one introduces themselves with. Pepeha is important to Māori because it gives an identity and connects one to their land, ancestors, and ancestral values (Raureti & Jackson, 2019). The pepeha details: the natural features of their papakāinga (traditional home place),

such as maunga (mountains) and awa (rivers); the waka (canoe) that their ancestors navigated to Aotearoa New Zealand; and then their marae (communal meeting place) that their whakapapa (genealogy) is connected to (Connor, 2019).

Aboriginal and Māori entrepreneurs have a commercial focus, but also invest in the community even at the expectation of generating non-material returns. Collins et al. (2017) and Hunter (2015) present Indigenous entrepreneurs as economic actors and their entrepreneurship as an avenue to reducing economic disadvantage. Indigenous entrepreneurs strengthen relationships between their enterprise and their community by investing in tribal economic and social wellbeing as a matter of cultural integrity (Mika, 2021). In return, the community extends various forms of social and economic capital (Scheyvens et al., 2020). For example, a Māori entrepreneur shared how community members stepped in to help their business recover from debt obligations through providing unpaid labour. Indigenous entrepreneurs give preferential recruitment to tribal members to support economic prosperity for the tribe. Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs utilise entrepreneurship as a vehicle to sustain cultural imperatives. They understand commercial imperatives such as planning, management, and innovation, but see the outcomes from commercial activity as a means to support cultural imperatives.

#### **7.4 Cultural imperatives**

According to Dockery (2010), the definition of what culture is, varies according to the research discipline; however, the definitions of culture generally classify people into groups based on attributes that differentiate them from other groups (Table 10).

<b>Definition of culture</b>	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Attributes</b>
“The collective programming of the mind that distinguishes one group or category of people from another. This stresses that culture is (a) a collective, not individual, attribute; (b) not directly visible but manifested in behaviours; and (c) common to some but not all people”	(Hofstede & McCrae, 2004, p. 58)	Collective programming Behaviours
“... we define culture as those customary beliefs and values that ethnic, religious, and social groups transmit fairly unchanged from generation to generation.”	(Guiso et al., 2006, p. 2)	Beliefs Values
“Culture is to society what memory is to individuals. It refers to tools and ideas that are shared and transmitted to succeeding generations because they were once practical at some point in time”.	(Triandis, 2000, p. 13)	Cultural tools Ideas

**Table 10 Sample definitions of culture**

Cultural imperatives are unique Indigenous values of paramount importance that define Indigenous nations and subnations (Mika, Dell, Newth, et al., 2022). These values may present as practices or beliefs that are an integral part of Indigenous wellbeing (Awatere & Harcourt, 2021; Dockery, 2010, 2012; Gorman et al., 2020). Cultural imperatives exhibit high-level commonalities across Indigenous nations (Gladstone, 2018; Harris & Wasilewski, 2004) and have an impact on the behaviour and attitudes of Indigenous entrepreneurs (Lindsay, 2005). Examples of these high-level commonalities include collective programming, behaviours, beliefs, values, cultural tools, and ideas (Table 1). Cultural practices are included in Indigenous

entrepreneurship and present as part of mission statements, strategic planning, and operations. Examples include Māori karakia and waiata to lift staff morale (Kuntz et al., 2014) and Aboriginal smoking ceremonies for spiritual health and wellbeing (Gilbey, 2020). Indigenous businesses are socially embedded and culturally situated (Croce, 2017; Vunibola & Scheyvens, 2019). This means to function and be successful, community support and congruence with the local culture is imperative (Amoamo et al., 2018). If an Indigenous business is embedded in a community, it will likely be more successful if it meets the community cultural expectations. The business enjoys community support in the form of goodwill and loyal patronage. For example, a Māori participant explained how they employ members of their community and in return the community offered free labour during a period of financial hardship for the business.

### **7.5 Commercial imperatives**

For this research, commercial imperatives relate to goals that enterprises aim to reach as part of achieving strategic objectives. Examples of commercial imperatives include profitability, productivity, value, and growth that are applicable to market-based enterprise (Behrman, 1988; Deakins & Scott, 2020). Conventional wisdom puts growth and profitability as rational economic decisions (Behrman, 1988) but the Indigenous entrepreneurs in this thesis exhibit behaviours that seem economically irrational. For example, an Aboriginal entrepreneur electing to keep their business small in lieu of opportunities to grow (commercial imperative), so that cultural practices in the business are maintained (cultural imperative). Whilst this decision to keep the business small is seemingly inefficient in a capitalist lens, it makes sense as a principle of cultural stewardship. Commercial and cultural imperatives are in a continuum rather than a dichotomy, complementing and conflicting in their contested spaces (Mika, Dell,

Newth, et al., 2022; Redpath & Nielsen, 1997). This research examines the tensions and synergies in the imperatives navigation process.

### **7.6 Navigation or negotiation of imperatives**

Māori entrepreneurs seem to negotiate, and Aboriginal entrepreneurs seem to navigate cultural and commercial imperatives. The distinction is made because of cultural and contextual differences, which have their roots in colonial and postcolonial infrastructures. Making the distinction is important because it contextualises the approaches taken by the Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs to balancing cultural and commercial imperatives. Negotiation is taken to mean an ongoing interaction to reach an acceptable accommodation of both cultural and commercial imperatives. As an example, Māori operate in a society that is dominated by Pākehā (New Zealanders of European descent) but Māori values and customs have a special status in New Zealand's founding document and are part of a unique national identity (Kirkwood et al., 2005; Matahaere-Atariki, 2017). The Treaty of Waitangi recognises Māori as tangata whenua (people of the land) (Wheen & Hayward, 2012), but the effects of colonisation are still apparent in New Zealand. Māori have relatively lower socioeconomic outcomes compared to Pākehā (Marriott & Alinaghi, 2021). The New Zealand constitution stipulates that the Treaty of Waitangi models an appropriate approach for parties to negotiate and agree with one another (Keith, 1992). According to O'Sullivan et al. (2021) by negotiating the treaty it means that Māori did not surrender their authority, rather assert their intention to live as Māori according to Māori values and customs. This implication is that Māori are able to negotiate how cultural and commercial imperatives can be met in their entrepreneurial practice. In the interviews, Māori entrepreneurs exhibited an awareness of past and ongoing

negotiations between the government and various iwi for conservation and Māori economic development.

Māori negotiate for their cultural imperatives to be met through using Māoritanga (being Māori) and tikanga (doing Māori) to achieve their aspirations. Mainstream acceptance of Māori culture as part of a New Zealand identity does not mean racism and barriers to Māori tino rangatiratanga do not exist but means Māori ways of being are somewhat legitimised. Examples include the ‘Ka Mate’ haka as performed by the All Blacks, which is a symbol of a New Zealand identity (Hapeta et al., 2018), albeit with controversy surrounding intellectual property rights, commercial value and attribution to its rightful custodians, Ngāti Toa (Frankel, 2014). Elers and Jayan (2020) say that despite New Zealand being lauded for its commitment to equal rights for all its citizens, racist attitudes towards Māori are prevalent. Structural discrimination and casual racism toward Māori is recorded in institutions of learning (Houkamau et al., 2017), the justice system (Jackson, 1987), in banking and finance (Houkamau & Sibley, 2015) amongst others. For Māori entrepreneurs, discrimination results in difficulties accessing business financing with low interest rates.

In the case of Aboriginal entrepreneurs, the effects of colonisation such as discrimination, are still prevalent in Australian society (Shirodkar & Hunter, 2019; Shirodkar et al., 2018). The implication is that Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate rather than negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives. The term navigation is used to suggest a process of overcoming barriers to entrepreneurial practice as Aboriginal people. Navigation implies ascertainment of positioning (situational awareness), to map a course of action that achieves a desired outcome (cultural or commercial). Aboriginal entrepreneurs operate in a relatively discriminatory and racist environment (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017; Wood & Davidson,

2011). For example, according to Foley (2006b), Aboriginal entrepreneurs with Aboriginal spouses have difficulties accessing bank financing in the early stages of establishing their business; however, if their spouse is non-Indigenous, they generally have easier access. Aboriginal entrepreneurs are creating their own business networks as alternative sources of finance and business opportunity (Shirodkar et al., 2018).

Indigenous Australian nations are not officially recognised in the constitution of Australia (Hobbs, 2022). The implications have been that Aboriginal cultural imperatives have been of lower priority. For example, unlike the Māori Language Act 2016 which protects the Indigenous language of New Zealand as an official language and taonga (treasure), Aboriginal languages and cultures have relatively been lost in Australia. McConvell and Thieberger (2001) reviewed census data of Indigenous language speakers from New Zealand and Australia to reach a conclusion that Aboriginal people have lost more of their language and culture than Māori people in Aotearoa New Zealand. The idea of constitutional recognition has been considered by successive Commonwealth governments; however, Aboriginal people are sceptical, and see the advocated recognition as symbolic, with no meaningful changes to their relationship with the government (Saunders, 2020). Aboriginal people argue that they are better served with treaties rather than symbolic constitutional recognition (Nelson, 2018). According to Saunders (2020), Victoria and South Australia are two examples of states entering into treaty negotiations with Aboriginal people. In the meantime, Aboriginal entrepreneurs must navigate their way through racist and discriminatory attitudes to give expression to their cultural imperatives in business. For example, in the interviews, some Aboriginal entrepreneurs discussed the practice of code switching, to mitigate stereotypes and discrimination in interactions with mainstream businesses. This research highlights Aboriginal entrepreneurs

face barriers such as bias, exclusion from mainstream business networks and racism, and that they are actively navigating to achieve cultural and commercial imperatives.

### **7.7 Māori entrepreneurship**

Initially, the research adopted a comprehensive definition of Māori entrepreneurship to be “the process by which a Māori person (or people) operating within a Māori world view generates value by identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets for economic, social and cultural purposes of benefit to themselves, their whānau (family), hapū (clan), iwi (tribe) and wider community” (Awatere et al., 2017, p. 81). In this view, the concept of a Māori identity is integral to the definition. Yet, participants dispute having to operate within a Māori world view as fixed criteria for them to be considered Māori entrepreneurs. Depending on the context, some entrepreneurs choose to operate outside the Māori world view if an unfavourable commercial end is predicted. Some Māori entrepreneurs pursue commercial ends if they deem cultural imperatives to be an impediment to their business objectives. The entrepreneurs do not abandon the Māori world view altogether but judge each situation on its merits. This suggests a fluidity, where prioritising cultural or commercial imperatives is aligned with context. For instance, research suggests that some urban Māori lose touch with traditional lands, culture and social ties (Barcham, 1998).

A Māori person may still identify as a Māori entrepreneur even if their actions do not align with cultural expectations. Whilst Greaves et al. (2015) and Houkamau et al. (2019) suggest that those who strongly identify as Māori are inherently bound to uphold tikanga, the reality of being Māori in contemporary New Zealand isn't unambiguous. Rameka (2018) suggests that because of loose connection to traditional tribal lands, urban Māori adopt new forms of social institutions such as clubs or urban marae to create meaning of their life in

modern urban environments. Urban dis-enfranchised Māori with no connection to their whakapapa may find themselves alien to their culture (McIntosh, 2005). But does that make them any less Māori? Homogenous approaches condensing definitions of Māori entrepreneurship to cultural inclination fail to account for individual agency. Group agency is assumed in discourses of Māori and Indigenous entrepreneurship as a vehicle for tino rangatiratanga, but an individual element warrants recognition. The term rangatiranga can be broken down to two parts, ‘raranga’ (weaving) and ‘tira’ (group or communities) (Te One & Clifford, 2021) and from a Māori leadership perspective translates to mean ‘weaving communities together’ (Mikaere, 2010). Te One and Clifford (2021) go on to suggest that tino rangatiratanga is concerned with collective wellbeing of iwi, hapū and whānau.

Whilst there is some debate about whether tino rangatiratanga is an individual right, tino rangatiratanga for individuals is in the context of the collective (Wihongi, 2010). Individuals can exercise their rights availed in collective tino rangatiratanga efforts, but those rights do not necessarily have to be bounded to the characteristics of their culture, iwi, hapū and whānau. Weaver (2001) points out that in Māori entrepreneurship, individuals may not be pursuing their cultural values, but are instead seeking to fulfil commercial objectives. Indigeneity is multifaceted, evolving, and can be inconsistent with cultural practice (McCormack, 2011; Weaver, 2001). Indigenous entrepreneurship is highly contextual and heterogeneous (Vlasov et al., 2018). This thesis has Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs who strongly identify with their cultural identity but in some instances are electing to not implement cultural practices nor identify with their culture to achieve a desired outcome.

## 7.8 Constitutional status of Māori

The Treaty of Waitangi 1840, Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document, has implications for Māori entrepreneurial practice. In principle, the treaty was meant to be a partnership between the British Crown and Māori, guaranteeing Māori ownership and rights to their natural resources; however, in practice, successive governments since the signing have breached these agreements. The Waitangi Tribunal was established in 1975 to hear Māori claims to redress the historical breaches (Buchanan, 2007; Stokes, 1992). The overarching principle of reciprocity guides the Crown's relationship with Māori; and from this overarching principle several other principles are derived, including: the principles of partnership, participation, and protection (Barrett & Connolly-Stone, 1998; Joyce & Forsyth, 2022). The principle of partnership obliges the Crown and Māori to act in good faith, reasonably and honourably (O'Sullivan, 2021). The principle of participation encourages the Crown to consult with Māori when exercising its discretion and powers. The principle of protection relates to Māori interests, including rangatiratanga over tangible or intangible taonga, and mana to protect customs and cultural practices (Barrett & Connolly-Stone, 1998). Durie (1998b) argues that some scholars see the principles as colonial constructs that interpret the treaty based on their own perspectives rather than Māori perspectives, therefore, additional principles have been adopted by the Waitangi tribunal to include fairness, transparency, and restoration of relationships.

The treaty has implications for Māori in economic development and entrepreneurial practice. Contextualised to this thesis, cultural imperatives are officially recognised as part of the Treaty of Waitangi (Houghton, 2021). The Waitangi tribunal endorses a holistic interpretation of the treaty, proposing that Māori interests and taonga (treasures) such as

cultural practices fall under the principles of partnership and protection (Barrett & Connolly-Stone, 1998). As a result, the government in consultation with Māori, makes provisions for legal recognition of Māori interests in contexts other than tangible assets such as land and sea. Examples include the inclusion of a Māori trade and economic cooperation chapter in the free trade agreement with the United Kingdom (UK) (O'Connor, 2022). The Māori trade and economic cooperation chapter makes provisions for intellectual property rights relating to mātauranga Māori and cultural expression. Māori entrepreneurs can access exports markets with protection and consideration of Māori aspirations including economic development and cultural preservation.

In practice, however, complexity surrounds issues of equity, equality, and resource management. The treaty justifies Māori autonomy and tribal sovereignty, however, Māori begrudgingly accept the Crown's dominant role as policy maker and funder (Belgrave, 2014). As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the government interprets the principles of the treaty from their own paradigm and problems arise when service delivery is catered to what the government thinks Māori need versus what Māori know they need. This research finds this complexity in the application of kaitiakitanga within iwi, between iwi and the government. For example, some of the Māori participants in the interviews are involved in land trusts. They discuss that the balancing act of commercialising the land whilst meeting shareholder expectations of being kaitiaki can be contentious. Shareholders expect a fiscal return from activities on the whenua (commercial imperative), but within the shareholders, some believe that being kaitiaki means leaving the land untouched (cultural imperative). The definitional issues of kaitiakitanga are also apparent at the legislative level. The government have a definition of kaitiakitanga under the umbrella of rules regarding conservation whilst Māori see it beyond just a responsible use of resources (Ruru, 2018). The legal definitions of kaitiakitanga fail to consider the kinship

ties, spiritual connections, and intergenerational cultural knowledge that is inherent in cultural understandings of kaitiakitanga (Walker et al., 2019).

Although the treaty has provision for Māori self-determination, the reality is that Māori still work within the confines of legislative boundaries. Definitional issues challenge Māori customary authority over ancestral lands, an authority which is inherent in kaitiakitanga (Kawharu, 2000). New Zealand law is based on English common law, with Māori customary law existing outside (or alongside) the state legal system (Dawson, 2008). Wihongi (2010) points out that even though Māori are engaged in a consultative capacity, the Crown ultimately controls the policy process to achieve its desired outcomes. In response, Corntassel (2012) argues that practicing Indigenous ways of being, regardless of recognition from the Crown are self-determination activities. The implication for this research is that exercises such as engaging in culturally influenced Māori entrepreneurship, are political (Bargh, 2013) and actively promote tino rangatiratanga. In investigating how cultural imperatives can be implemented alongside commercial imperatives, this research promotes Indigenous entrepreneurship as a self-determination activity.

### **7.9 Aboriginal entrepreneurship**

This research adopts Foley's (2000, p. 11) definition of Indigenous Australian entrepreneurship as the "alter[ing] [of] traditional patterns of behaviour, by utilising resources in the pursuit of self-determination and economic sustainability via entry into self-employment, forcing social change in the pursuit of opportunity beyond the cultural norms of initial economic resources." Foley's (2000) definition was adopted because of the comprehensiveness of its scope, including factors such as cultural practice, behaviour change, self-determination, opportunity exploitation and social change. Based on Foley's (2000) definition of Aboriginal

entrepreneurship, Aboriginal participants in the research evidence that entrepreneurship is a part of self-determination and that social change can be brought about through entrepreneurship. Participants discuss the greater degrees of personal and economic freedom that entrepreneurship facilitates, and the difference they make for their respective communities in creating employment opportunities for other Aboriginal people. As a result of entrepreneurship, cultural imperatives of cultural expression are achieved through examples such as branding exercises and culturally informed strategic planning. The resilience of Aboriginal cultural practices is evident. An example is how traditional seasonal planning, the six seasons in Noongar culture, which have been in existence for up to 71,000 years (Charles, 2020) are relevant in modern organisational strategic planning. The six seasons philosophy of Noongar culture is intrinsic to business operations for some participants. The Noongar six seasons calendar dictates resource availability, timing of ceremonies, traditional migratory practices and social practices (Lullfitz et al., 2017).

Aboriginal entrepreneurs merge Western values with Indigenous values, due to reasons such as multicultural family lineages and societies where Western and Indigenous worlds coexist (Massey & Kirk, 2015), while remaining grounded in Aboriginal knowledge systems (Collins et al., 2017; Foley, 2006a). According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022), 82% of Aboriginal population reside in major cities and regional area, and their value systems are practised in urban environments (Foley, 2006a). All the Aboriginal participants in Perth are located in an urban setting and the research questions are framed around their experiences in an urban context. It is evident that their traditional values and knowledge systems are important and practised. For example, all Aboriginal participants recited a connection to country during introductions, which implies a deep cultural link. The entrepreneurs practice their culture in modern contexts, and as a result merge their cultural

practices with contemporary ways of doing things. An example is the Noongar six seasons philosophy as a business strategy. Indigenous culture is dynamic and adapts to societal change (Foley, 2006a; Mead, 2016; Mika, 2014).

### **7.10 Constitutional status of Aboriginal people**

In the interviews, and without prompting, some of the Aboriginal entrepreneurs discussed the implications of *terra nullius* (Banner, 2005). Aboriginal entrepreneurship is fraught with barriers due to a lack of constitutional recognition for Indigenous contributions to an Australian identity. A participant discussed how the lack of a formal treaty between Indigenous Australians and the Crown has implications for Aboriginal people and suggested that if there had been a treaty akin to the Treaty of Waitangi, Aboriginal people would be economically and socially on a par with Māori. Colonisation, racism and systemic discrimination means that Aboriginal entrepreneurs do not enjoy intergenerational advantages and the benefits of a high trust economy (Evans & Polidano, 2022). Colonisation and erasure of rights to resources stifles Aboriginal economic development, which research has proven to have been existing before European arrival on the continent (Akbar & Hallak, 2019; Bodle et al., 2018; Foley, 2004; Regan, 1975). The Crown used *terra nullius* as a justification to seize asset bases on which Aboriginal people could have built intergenerational wealth and capital. Aboriginal entrepreneurs experience discrimination and bias (Shirodkar, 2019), and resultantly are excluded from well-resourced networks which tend to be non-Indigenous (Shirodkar & Hunter, 2019). According to Arrow (1998), racially exclusive networks create social capital amongst the insiders and the benefits of that social capital include exclusive market information, opportunities and financing. This research shows that Aboriginal entrepreneurs are stereotyped

and find it difficult to get the same opportunities as white Australian entrepreneurs, for example, securing low-cost financing.

The Australian government has a prominent role to play in supporting Aboriginal entrepreneurs (Shirodkar et al., 2018). This thesis affirms that neoliberal policies of minimal state interventions (Dornan, 2020) do not account for, and perpetuate Aboriginal disadvantage. Aboriginal participants communicate that policies are enacted but better follow through is needed to ensure intended objectives are achieved and delivered. The Australian government legislatively acknowledges Indigenous Australians and is enacting policies for interventions such as the Indigenous procurement policy (IPP) and Indigenous Business Australia (IBA), to address social and economic disadvantage. The IPP prioritises Indigenous business as preferred suppliers of goods and services for state construction projects (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017) and Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) is the channel with which the Australian government is providing funding, assistance for housing, venture creation, and investments for Indigenous Australians (Maritz & Foley, 2018). Another example is Reconciliation Australia. Whilst Reconciliation Australia is a non-profit and non-governmental organisation, its history can be traced to the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR), which was a result of government policy. Reconciliation Australia is responsible for implementing the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), introduced by the Howard government in 2006. The RAP aims to generate positive outcomes and close the gap in disparities (social, health, education, economic) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (Lloyd, 2018). RAPs are voluntary and not legally mandated (Schepis, 2020).

Aboriginal entrepreneurs in this thesis are, and have, utilised some of the services provisioned by the government in their entrepreneurial journey, namely the IBA and IPP. In

addition to providing business financing, the IBA has business coaching and mentoring services for Indigenous entrepreneurs (Maritz & Foley, 2018), which some of the participants in this thesis have utilised. Although participants acknowledge the government's efforts to encourage Aboriginal participation in entrepreneurship, the interventions are not immune to problems. Participants are saying that the IBA needs better follow-up processes and long-term commitment to the communities they serve. A participant shared their experience of attending IBA mentoring workshops in their community which suddenly ceased to operate. Participants also lamented the practice of 'black-cladding' in the procurement sector. According to some participants, 'black-cladding' is costing legitimate Aboriginal business lucrative contracts. Even though not explicitly stated, the non-binding nature of RAPs in the mainstream are leading to tokenisation of Aboriginal engagement. Some participants describe interacting with mainstream businesses as intimidating, such that they have to minimise aspects of their culture. A genuine commitment to the reconciliation action plan would allow Aboriginal entrepreneurs to be comfortable to express their cultural identity in mainstream settings.

Harper and Leicht (2018, p. 5) define social change as "the significant alteration of social structure and cultural patterns through time." Social change is brought about through promoting positive narratives of Aboriginality to counter stereotypes and biases in mainstream Australian society. Aboriginal entrepreneurs are catalysts for social change, highlighting that Aboriginal enterprises not only go against stereotypes but can compete against mainstream businesses. Participants exemplify proud Aboriginal entrepreneurs overcoming barriers to create successful business ventures. An example of Aboriginal entrepreneurship driving social change is set by one of the participants in this thesis, who takes opportunities to foster cultural understanding. This particular participant has cultural sensitivity training for all employees and pairs Aboriginal employees with non-Aboriginal employees, to learn from each other as they

perform their jobs in the community. Not only does the community get to see Aboriginal people working harmoniously with non-Aboriginal colleagues, the environment created from this exercise may help change negative perceptions and biases, and customers value the service.

## **7.11 Culture as an enabler or constraint to entrepreneurship**

### *7.11.1 Māori entrepreneurs and culture*

Being highly contextual, cultural imperatives can be seen either as constraining or enabling (Collins et al., 2017). Examples of the enabling effect of culture is the fulfilment of social obligations and the constraining effect is the complexity of navigating the interactions of culture and business. In practice it means that if there is an incongruency in cultural and commercial imperatives, Māori entrepreneurs will reconcile to a situationally acceptable position. For example, the management of relationships with family and the tribe in business contexts. Disciplinary processes involving subordinates who happen to be socially and culturally senior in age and status mean that Māori entrepreneurs have to navigate issues sensitively. A subordinate may have culturally consequential authority, whilst in the workplace the employer has an economically consequential authority. If mishandled, disciplinary actions could have social implications beyond the workplace. The embeddedness of Māori enterprise within their tribal community (Scheyvens et al., 2020) means that workplace related issues can escalate to become community issues as a result of socioeconomic accountabilities.

### *7.11.2 Aboriginal entrepreneurs and culture*

An enabling effect of cultural imperatives in business can be the preservation of an Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal entrepreneurs can express their Aboriginality and culture through art in their logos and branding (Coleman, 2017). A connection to culture is linked to Indigenous

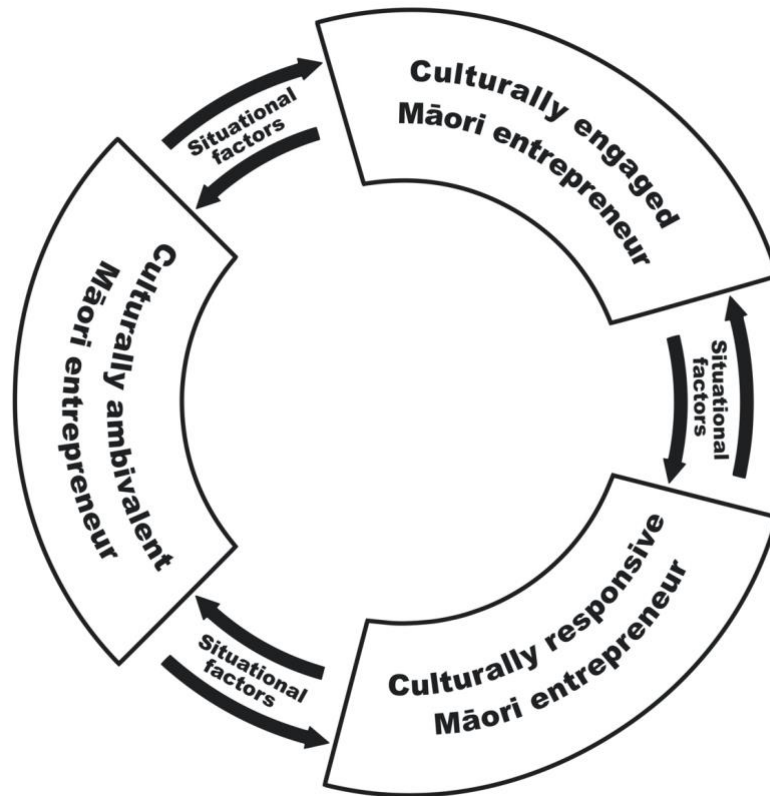
wellbeing (Awatere & Harcourt, 2021; Dockery, 2010, 2012; Gorman et al., 2020) and influences Indigenous entrepreneurs' attitudes, values and behaviours (Lindsay, 2005). Aboriginal entrepreneurs iteratively assess the complementarity of cultural and commercial imperatives as a way of protecting their indigeneity and meeting business objectives.

The navigating of Western and Aboriginal world views signals an engagement in boundary spanning activities (Tushman, 1977; Williams, 2013). Indigenous entrepreneurs apply a range of strategies in their boundary spanning activities to satisfy both business objectives and maintain cultural integrity. Boundary spanners navigate diverse set of interests and agencies (Williams, 2002, 2013). Indigenous entrepreneurs occupy the unique position of 'having a foot' in both their culture and the dominant society; and are simultaneously managing their cultural imperatives and their commercial imperatives. Indigenous entrepreneurs have social expectations to participate in cultural obligations (Klyver & Foley, 2012), and risk losing links to their community and culture if cultural norms are neglected (Foley, 2003a; Klyver & Foley, 2012). As an example, Aboriginal entrepreneurs discussed the constraining effect of the cultural practice of sorry business. Sorry business refers to the cultural practices around death (Carlson & Frazer, 2015). In the business and legislative contexts, guidelines on bereavement leave can have a set number of days, whilst culturally, sorry business can have undefined periods of grief, a cultural expectation which Aboriginal people are expected to meet. Aboriginal entrepreneurs express being torn between fulfilling obligations relating to sorry business and business operational continuity. In order to navigate having both sorry business (cultural imperatives) and business continuity (commercial imperatives), Aboriginal entrepreneurs are using strategies such as having family members represent them at the funerals where possible, plan contingencies to cover absences and attend funerals on a defined timeline.

## **7.12 Indigenous entrepreneurs balancing cultural and commercial imperatives**

### *7.12.1 Aotearoa New Zealand experience*

Māori entrepreneurs utilise tikanga in the negotiation of cultural and commercial imperatives. Tikanga is the application of mātauranga Māori (Mead, 2016), which helps to mediate social conduct, relationships and identities in business (Bargh, 2012). The findings, do however suggest, that significance of tikanga is contextual (Awatere et al., 2017; Mika, Felzensztein, et al., 2022; Warriner, 2007) and is dependant on the orientation of the individual entrepreneur (Houkamau & Sibley, 2019). In analysing the findings, a gradient of cultural values that explains the fluidity of perspectives to cultural inclinations emerges. Māori entrepreneurs are actively reconciling their Indigenous values with mainstream values through fulfilling commercial and cultural imperatives within their enterprises, family and Indigenous community (Tretiakov et al., 2020). This thesis conceptualises a typology illustrating the process of reconciling Indigenous imperatives with commercial imperatives, a framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice (Figure 4).



**Figure 4 Framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice**

The framework classes cultural orientation into three perspectives:

(1) the culturally engaged perspective where cultural values and protocols take precedence over commercial imperatives. Examples include employing tribal members as a first preference for roles whilst taking the opportunity cost of having smaller talent pools and a loss of diverse perspectives (Palmer & Raftery, 1999). The rationale for cultural stewardship and seemingly inefficient cultural decisions may be incompatible with mainstream assumptions (Dana, 2015) of commercial viability. In commercial decisions, the engaged Indigenous entrepreneur has a proclivity to cultural imperatives as a matter of the stewardship principle (Kawharu, 2000). Indigenous entrepreneurs will prioritise cultural imperatives to

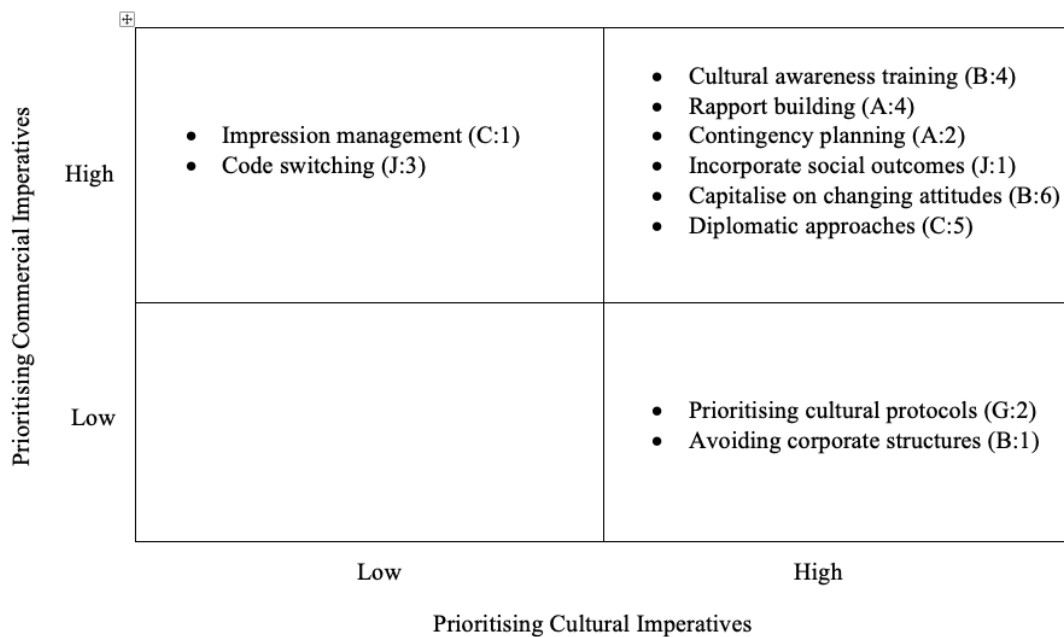
protect their ways of life, be accountable to their communities and extend opportunities for economic empowerment. The value of prioritising cultural imperatives is hard to measure in monetary terms, but Indigenous communities support the businesses with goodwill. Māori entrepreneurs will often have whānau come in and assist the business in times of need as an act of goodwill.

(2) The culturally responsive perspective is a willingness to compromise on the extent to which cultural values influence business decisions. In this perspective, Māori entrepreneurs assess cultural and commercial imperatives based on circumstances and adapt to the prevailing circumstances. Culturally responsive Māori enterprises operate at the mediation point of imperatives and can negotiate the most appropriate course of action.

(3) The culturally ambivalent perspective is where cultural precepts are perceived as constraining and unlikely to be applied if they have a negative impact on commercial objectives. Whilst the ambivalent Māori entrepreneur may be concerned about cultural issues, commercial viability is prioritised. Culturally ambivalent Māori entrepreneurs still identify as Māori, with the level of cultural practice having no bearing on their cultural identity.

### *7.12.2 Australian experience*

The thesis uncovers that Aboriginal entrepreneurs utilise strategies as a method to navigate and overcome sociostructural barriers to enterprise. A framework of Indigenous entrepreneurial imperatives and the navigation strategies used is outlined in Figure 5.



**Figure 5 Framework of Indigenous entrepreneurial imperatives**

These strategies are categorised according to how the level of alignment with prioritising either cultural or commercial imperatives. First, the low culture/high commercial category prioritises commercial over cultural imperatives. Aboriginal entrepreneurs consider this environment hostile, and these strategies minimise aspects of cultural identity to avoid perceived bias. This category of strategies is utilised in Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal interactions, where the power balance is tipped in the non-Aboriginal entity’s favour. Examples include financial institutions and well-established corporate partners. In the low culture/high commercial category, an Aboriginal identity is minimised through strategies such as code switching and impression management. The entrepreneur is able to control how they are perceived in the interactions and in doing so, have some control of the entrepreneurial process (Foley, 2000; Peredo et al., 2004; Warren et al., 2017). The thesis seeks not to endorse code switching as a method of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives but highlights it as a pragmatic strategy that is applied by

the participants in the study. Code switching is a term prominent in sociolinguistics which explains the process of bilingual individuals alternating between languages (Heller, 2010). Molinsky (2007) introduced the concept of cross-cultural code switching, which focused on the modification of behaviours to fit the different cultural norms of what is considered appropriate behaviour and create a desired social impression. Whilst short-term gains from code switching in business settings may be realized, such as being legitimized by the mainstream, the strategy has been associated with mental and psychological toll (McCluney et al., 2021; Molinsky, 2007; K. Smith, 2021). Code switching is a conscious effort, which may at times require Indigenous people “override dominant and culturally ingrained response[s]” (Molinsky, 2007, p. 623), which at times may conflict with their cultural values and practices.

Second, the high cultural/low commercial category prioritises cultural over commercial imperatives and comprises cultural stewardship strategies that may not be commercially beneficial. In some cases, however, prioritising cultural imperatives may yield commercial returns, for example, ensuring Indigenous employees are free to express their cultural identity in the workplace may lead to increased productivity. Cultural identity and practice are linked to Indigenous wellbeing; and a happy worker is a productive worker (Fisher, 2010). Whilst prioritising cultural imperatives over commercial imperatives may not be immediately understood from a capitalist lens (Dana, 2015), Aboriginal entrepreneurs use entrepreneurship as medium to realise aspirations for self-determination. Individual self-determination can represent the idea that an Indigenous person has the liberty to be an entrepreneur if they so choose (Weaver, 2001).

Aboriginal entrepreneurs favour employing Aboriginal community members as they seek to break through the constraints created from the influences and outcomes of colonisation.

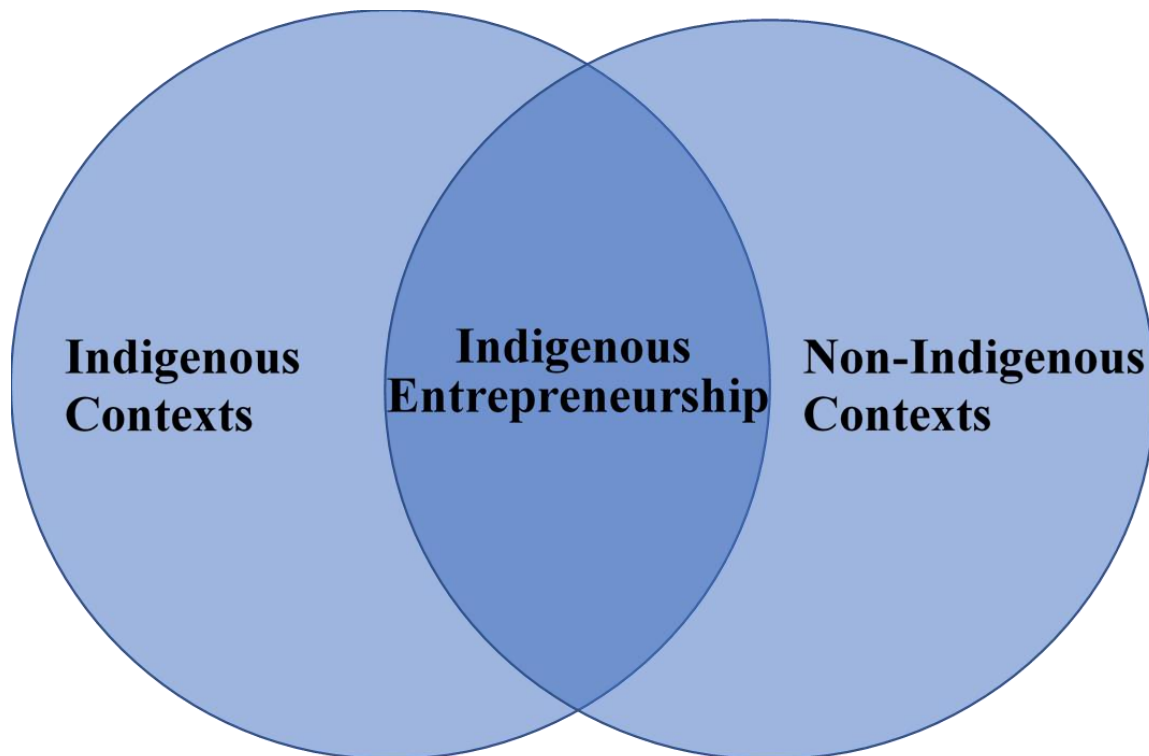
Colonisation has left intergenerational trauma (Raphael et al., 1998), economic disadvantage, poor health and social outcomes for Aboriginal entrepreneurs (Denny-Smith & Loosemore, 2017). The act of engaging in Indigenous entrepreneurship is an active process of emancipation (Goss et al., 2011; Rindova et al., 2009) that breaks the dynamic social processes that inevitably perpetuate remnants of colonisation set to disadvantage Indigenous people. The very act of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives highlights how participants are finding ways to perpetuate cultural practices in contexts that colonisation would have (and possibly still) deemed incongruent with it.

Third, the high cultural/high commercial category prioritises both cultural and commercial imperatives. This category utilises strategies that give equal weighing to both imperatives. Aboriginal entrepreneurs are aware of the increased interest in Aboriginal culture from mainstream Australia and are leveraging it to foster cultural understanding. Inside organisations with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees, cultural awareness training is being utilised for team building. Some organisations are pairing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees to learn from each other and overcome inherent biases. Cultural understanding opens up alternative meanings and possibilities and helps to restrain the rush to stereotype (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). According to participants, cultural education and shifting biases toward indigeneity is crucial to achieving Aboriginal self-determination and inclusion.

Fourth, there were no examples of strategies that did not prioritise cultural or commercial imperatives (low cultural/low commercial quadrant) in this participant group.

### 7.13 Hybridity in Indigenous entrepreneurship

This thesis of Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs confirms the hybridity of Indigenous entrepreneurship, meaning that entrepreneurial practice is embedded in Indigenous and non-Indigenous (mainstream) contexts (see Figure 6). Venter (2012) describes hybridity as a mix of two or more perspectives, therefore, moving away from essentialist positions.



**Figure 6 Hybridity of Indigenous entrepreneurship**

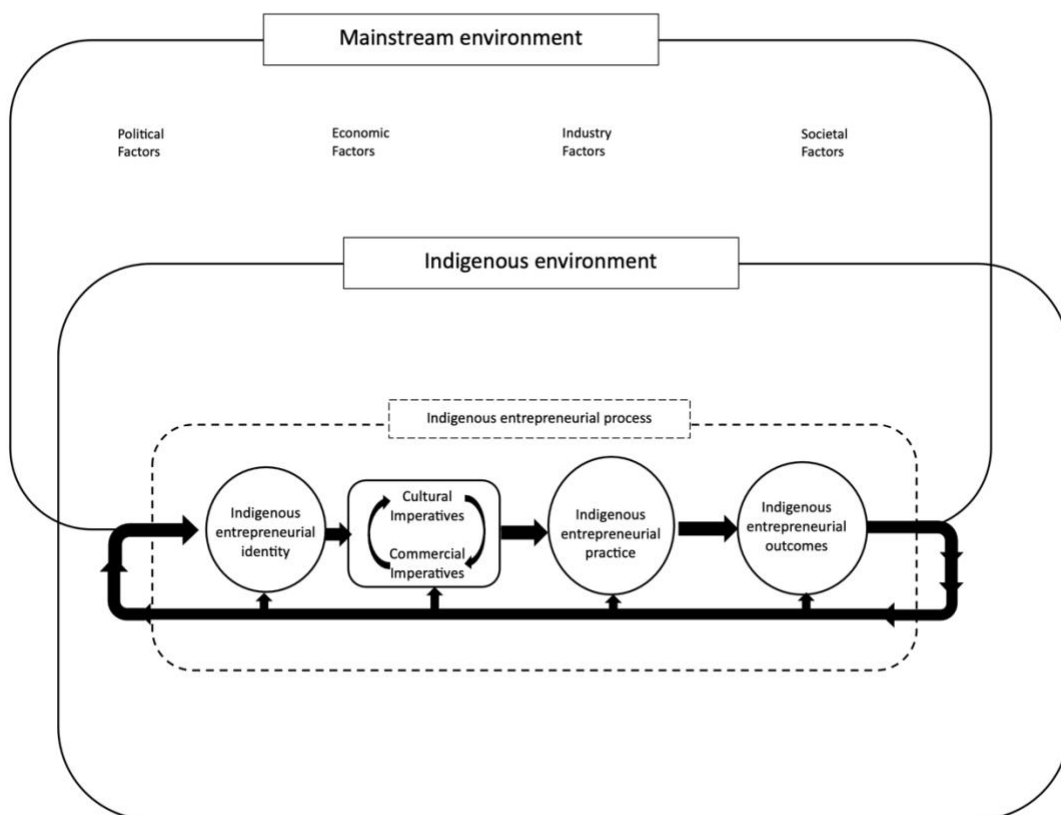
Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurship, whilst having accountabilities to both their cultural imperatives and their commercial imperatives. Indigenous entrepreneurs have cultural responsibilities, whether stated or implied, which by virtue of being part of an Indigenous people, they are expected to fulfil. For example, Aboriginal entrepreneurs described an expectation to be part of the proceedings of sorry business; and an Aboriginal participant exemplified this in discussing that not attending [to]

sorry business can cause issues. According to Carlson and Frazer (2015), being absent from sorry business proceedings can bring shame and possible repercussions under the community's law.

Māori entrepreneurs also described an expectation to uphold tikanga in their business practice. A Māori participant relayed that the community will “let them know” if they are not upholding tikanga. The cultural responsibilities co-exist with commercial imperatives which aim to ensure their businesses continue to operate. According to Altman (2009), the hybrid economy model (HEM) points to the existence of the customary economy. The customary economy encompasses productive activities of cultural progression which may have non-financial benefits (Curchin, 2013), for example Aboriginal smoking ceremonies and kapa haka for Māori. Cultural activities in the customary economy are often unacknowledged by mainstream economic assessments because they tend to not be monetised which therefore makes it difficult to calculate economic worth (Altman, 2001; Curchin, 2013). Whilst the HEM is useful in understanding the hybridity of Indigenous entrepreneurship from a macro-analysis perspective, Indigenous entrepreneurship is nuanced and contextual (Collins et al., 2017; Peredo et al., 2004). Macro-analysis offers a system level examination of the subject (Dopfer et al., 2004) and in the case of the HEM explains the interaction of cultural and commercial imperatives at the economy level (customary, market and state). A nuanced approach guided by a contingency theory of entrepreneurship (Peredo et al., 2004) is appropriate to address the research question. The contingency theory supposes that entrepreneurial activity is influenced by contextual factors such as environment, cultural influences, industrial life cycles amongst others (Linton, 2014; Peredo et al., 2004). Consequently, according to contingency theory, Indigenous entrepreneurship manifests differently and is a localised phenomenon.

### 7.14 Framework of reconciling cultural and commercial imperatives

The research finds that Indigenous entrepreneurs evaluate cultural and commercial imperatives to achieve desired outcomes. Indigenous entrepreneurs evaluate contexts and situations by adopting and applying a strategic stance in their entrepreneurial practice (Figure 7). A strategic stance is “how an organisation views its ‘fit’ with its environment and how it behaves in or interacts with that environment” (Pasha et al., 2018, p. 886).



**Figure 7 Framework of reconciling cultural and commercial imperatives**

Figure 7 combines the framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice (Chapter 5) with the framework of Indigenous entrepreneurial imperatives (Chapter 6) for a unified

conceptualisation of how Indigenous entrepreneurs reconcile cultural and commercial imperatives. Identity as Indigenous people is important to Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs. First, identity impacts their belongingness to a people and second, establishes a connection to culture (strong or weak) which moderates behaviours and attitudes (Lindsay, 2005). Chapter 4 is mainly focused on positionality in the research process, but also demonstrates a process that each entrepreneur must go through to affirm who they are, where they come from, and how they exercise their individual liberty (the identity component on the framework in Figure 7). Not all Indigenous entrepreneurs may want to openly identify as an Indigenous business. According to Jamieson et al. (2021), Indigenous people who choose to not be identified as Indigenous could be motivated by many reasons, including past experiences of discrimination and stigma. Indigenous entrepreneurs position themselves in relation to who they are and how aligned they are to their cultural identity. As discussed in this chapter, a loss of connection to their culture (Barcham, 1998; Rameka, 2018), bias and discrimination (Barnett, 2018; Lino, 2017; Shirodkar, 2021) has negative implications for their cultural identities. Indigenous entrepreneurs adopt a strategic stance on the question of identity, that they believe will best deliver outcomes that matter to them. To achieve desired outcomes, some Indigenous entrepreneurs hide their cultural identity in an effort to minimise barriers to enterprise, such as difficulties in accessing business financing. Yet, strongly associating with cultural identity has benefits. These benefits include goodwill and community support, and access to initiatives specifically availed to Indigenous businesses such as Indigenous procurement contracts, support from Indigenous Business Australia (IBA), Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) and being on the Supply Nation registry. Positionality is not just a research process, but it's an Indigenous entrepreneurial practice as well. How cultural and commercial imperatives are evaluated depends on Indigenous identity and situational factors.

Indigenous entrepreneurs are exposed to the situational factors of their mainstream business environment, these being political, societal, industry, and economic and the Indigenous environment, examples being cultural expectations and belongingness to a community. Whilst the individual entrepreneur was the unit of analysis in this thesis, whānau and the community play a key part in the entrepreneurial process. With the desired outcome defined, an Indigenous entrepreneur may choose to adopt either a culturally aligned, commercially aligned, or equally weighted strategic approach to navigating cultural and commercial imperatives. Once the Indigenous entrepreneur reaches a decision, the strategic stance is then applied in their entrepreneurial practice. Indigenous entrepreneurs set goals and outcomes, but work through contexts of Indigenous identity, Indigenous values, and Indigenous cultural practices. As Figure 7 illustrates, the process has a feedback loop meaning that if desired outcomes are not realised, a change of strategic stance is required in the process of reconciling of cultural and commercial imperatives. For example, an Aboriginal entrepreneur described how they reconciled a situation involving sorry business (cultural imperative) and urgent business matters (commercial imperative) requiring their attention. The Aboriginal entrepreneur reconciled this tension by having immediate family members represent them for sorry business whilst they attended to the urgent business matters. In another example, a Māori entrepreneur discussed prioritising the employment of iwi members (cultural imperative). Whilst, limiting the pool of potential employees has its disadvantages, the Māori entrepreneur's strong cultural alignment prioritises this specific cultural imperative in their entrepreneurial practice. The framework of reconciling cultural and commercial imperatives is driven by the rich descriptions from interviews with both Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs in the thesis.

### **7.15 Indigenous entrepreneurship and emancipation**

In view of my experience in Zimbabwe, freedom and financial advantages of entrepreneurship were apparent for the Indigenous population post-independence. Macroscopically, black owned businesses gave their owners financial freedom and created work for other black people in roles previously reserved for Europeans. In line with da Costa and Silva Saraiva (2012) notions of a dark side to entrepreneurship and the doctrinal support of capitalist ideas, the duality of emancipation and oppression (Verduijn et al., 2014), there were, however, cases of exploitation where the Indigenous entrepreneurs took advantage of kinship ties and social hierarchies to expose the poor to harsh working conditions such as low pay and cruelty. There is a duality of these forces, but in the context of Indigenous entrepreneurship, emancipation outbalances oppression. This is because entrepreneurship is a vehicle for individual and collective self-determination and seeks to break through the constraints created from the legacy of colonisation. In some respects, the idea that one can be an entrepreneur if they choose to do so is liberating in itself, but beyond this, the process of actually pursuing it satisfies the self-determination goal. Additionally, if Indigenous entrepreneurship is framed in verbs rather than nouns (Goss et al., 2011; Rindova et al., 2009), it becomes an active process of emancipation. Its praxis can also be observed in the story of Māui as Keelan (2009) explains: in the name Māui, mā means freeing up from tapu (a state of the profane or sacred) and ui invokes the process of enquiry (Williams, 1985). These elements in the name Māui provide some insight into the potential behaviour of Māori entrepreneurs as Māui is considered an entrepreneur from a Māori perspective. An Indigenous entrepreneur is actively pursuing self-determination (Barry, 2000) and breaking the dynamic social processes that inevitably perpetuate remnants of colonisation set to disadvantage the Indigenous agent.

Viewing the emancipatory effect of entrepreneurship requires an understanding of the reasons why individuals seek to disrupt the status quo and change their position in the social order (Rindova et al., 2009). Henry (2017) and Henry et al. (2018) examine emancipatory Māori entrepreneurship in the mainstream screen industry in Aotearoa. The research highlights that the participants shared common views about the importance of their Māori identity and their desire for emancipation through creating businesses that can liberate them from the organisations in which they previously worked. Emancipatory Indigenous entrepreneurship can be contemplated as the thread that binds me as an Indigenous person in Zimbabwe with the Indigenous peoples in this research. On a personal level, being born in independent Zimbabwe exposed me to the emancipatory effect entrepreneurship gave my people. Entrepreneurship was a vehicle for breaking free from defunct social constructs of race-based economic opportunities and poverty. Despite the risk and uncertainty, my grandfather opened a small shop, which was his way of breaking free of the social construct of the time which my father also passed on to me. That is, that a black man's highest achievement was to secure a stable job and work. Many could not see past this as they had been conditioned to believe that ability was directly linked to race. The same emancipatory effect can be observed in the Māori screen industry as studied by Henry (2017); Henry et al. (2018) and in Aboriginal entrepreneurship (Foley, 2004).

### **7.16 Contribution to knowledge**

This research contributes to Indigenous entrepreneurship in several ways. The reconciliation of cultural and commercial imperatives contributes to Indigenous entrepreneurship theory, Māori, Aboriginal, and Indigenous entrepreneurial practice. The results from studies in Chapters 5 and 6, add to the contingency theory of entrepreneurship (Peredo et al., 2004),

through to a nuanced exposition of the situationality of Indigenous entrepreneurship. Indigenous entrepreneurship is contextual in the spheres of identity, business environment, politics, effects of colonisation, to name a few. Thus, the process of reconciling mainstream values with Indigenous cultural precepts depends on the situation. In Chapter 5, heterogeneous Māori perspectives on the level of tikanga and how it influences entrepreneurial practice appears influential in the imperative negotiation process. The framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice characterises Māori perspectives on the extent to which Māori entrepreneurs apply tikanga in negotiating cultural and commercial imperatives in their entrepreneurial practice. Māori entrepreneurs adopt situationally dependant perspectives of being either culturally responsive, engaged or ambivalent in achieving desired outcomes. The perspectives are not fixed, but are fluid strategic stances. As an analytical tool, the framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice is useful in assessing how Māori entrepreneurs rationalise adopting situationally dependant perspectives in negotiating cultural and commercial imperatives. As well as adding to the process of Indigenous entrepreneurship (Croce, 2017; Mika et al., 2017), the framework can be useful in evaluating and situating how reconciling imperatives is practised. The thesis shows that evaluating the complementarity of cultural and commercial imperatives is an iterative process. Māori entrepreneurs are trying to protect their identity as Māori, whilst ensuring business objectives are met and the framework helps make sense of the reconciliation process.

Chapter 6 adds to the literature on process of Indigenous entrepreneurship (Croce, 2017; Mika et al., 2017), and the contingency theory of entrepreneurial situations (Peredo et al., 2004). The thesis highlights how Aboriginal entrepreneurs utilise strategies to reconciling mainstream values with Indigenous cultural precepts. Aboriginal entrepreneurs in the thesis demonstrate Indigenous control of the entrepreneurial process (Foley, 2000; Peredo et al.,

2004; Warren et al., 2017) despite the barriers that exist as remnants of colonisation. The framework of Indigenous entrepreneurial imperatives (Figure 5) illustrates the process of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives. In grouping specific strategies that Aboriginal entrepreneurs employ in navigating imperatives, the framework offers strategic stances to the imperative resolution process to achieve desired objectives. In practice, Aboriginal entrepreneurs experience bias, stereotyping and discrimination, and the framework illustrates practical and effective strategies to avoid, minimise, or overcome such obstacles.

### **7.17 Contribution to methodology**

Chapter 3 (methodology) and Chapter 4 (positionality) contribute to the theories in Indigenous methodology, intercultural research, and positionality. The contributions are contextualised around researchers who engage with multiple Indigenous participants in the same thesis but do not identify with participants' Indigenous cultures. The methodology chapter utilises Māori raranga (weaving) (Erueti & Palmer, 2014; Timu-Parata, 2010) as an analogy to propose a novel way of combining different epistemology, ontology, methodology and methods to achieve research objectives. The chapter not only demonstrates that it is possible to do so, but also highlights how it can be done in a culturally appropriate manner. Chapter 4 discusses the details of finding positioning in the research process and deciding on the practical aspects of fieldwork. The chapter communicates how life experiences shape research philosophy. Researchers are challenged to reconcile experiences through self-examination, to understand their approaches to research, something that might not always seem apparent. Self-reflexivity encourages an introspection of the motivations and fit in the research process, as well as garnering cultural empathy with the Indigenous communities involved in the research. Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2001, p. 286) define cultural empathy as having “an open and

unprejudiced attitude toward out-group members of different cultural norms and values.” Adding to the participatory mode of consciousness in research (Heshusius, 1994), the paper also challenges the fallacy of objectivity inherent in the positivist approaches when it comes to the emancipatory aspect of Indigenous entrepreneurship.

This research supports Māori and Aboriginal people to be unapologetically Indigenous (the ontology of indigeneity). Indigenous cultural practices and world views are respected in this research and considered legitimate. As a vehicle for self-determination and economic empowerment, Indigenous entrepreneurship is an issue of relevance and of benefit to Indigenous communities. To this end, the research focuses on the entrepreneurial endeavours of Māori and Aboriginal communities and supports the aspirations of cultural sustainability in Western-influenced business environments. Māori and Aboriginal scholars are consulted in the writing of this thesis, sharing responsibility to ensure conclusions are of benefit to the communities involved. As a result, the sovereignty principle is also achieved because Indigenous people have shared control of the research process that is intended to be about them, for them, and with them.

The shared benefit of this research is that relationships were formed between participants, intermediaries, and the researcher. Through these relationships, knowledge is shared and a better understanding of diverse world views is facilitated. The publications resulting from this research offer practical implications for use by Indigenous entrepreneurs. This goes beyond informing theory, but also builds entrepreneurial capacity through practical strategies for reconciling cultural and commercial imperatives in Indigenous entrepreneurship.

## **CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter offers concluding remarks on the overall findings in this thesis. Raranga (weaving) was the process utilised in constructing the whāriki (woven mat), representing this thesis. Raranga allowed me to combine the strands of varying epistemologies, methodologies, chapters, and papers to create a cohesive platform for discussing Indigenous entrepreneurship. To begin with, the purpose of this research is restated, followed by a recap of the key insights from the chapters. The limitations of the research are acknowledged, followed by suggestions for future research. Finally, the potential implications of this research for policy and practice are addressed.

### **8.2 Purpose and insights**

This research set out to explore how Indigenous entrepreneurs balance cultural and commercial imperatives in New Zealand and Australia where tensions may arise between Indigenous cultural values and commercial priorities in entrepreneurial practice. Entrepreneurial practice concerns what entrepreneurs do and decide to do in their enterprises. The research on Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs (Chapters 5 and 6) explored how they resolved tensions. The findings suggest that Māori entrepreneurs negotiate, whilst Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives.

Māori entrepreneurs operate in a society that generally views Māori culture favourably. This recognition stems from the acknowledgement of Māori, iwi and hapū as tangata whenua under the Treaty of Waitangi, the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand. Although

there is contention on the meaning, translation, and application of the principles in the Treaty of Waitangi, there is general acknowledgement of the value of Māori culture. Based on the principles and provisions of the Treaty of Waitangi, Māori entrepreneurs have a constitutional foundation on which to negotiate the value of cultural imperatives and priorities. On the other hand, Australia has not yet recognised Indigenous Australians (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) in its constitution, which has implications for Aboriginal people in business. Aboriginal entrepreneurs felt they experienced explicit racism, discrimination, and biases. They felt they had a weak mandate to practice entrepreneurship from an Indigenous perspective because society does not generally value Aboriginal culture. Aboriginal entrepreneurs more so than Māori entrepreneurs expressed having to navigate biases due to their cultural identity, through strategies such as code switching and impression management.

Indigeneity and Indigenous identity are internal factors describing how an Indigenous entrepreneur aligns with and prioritises cultural imperatives. An Indigenous entrepreneur may self-identify and be identified externally by others as an Indigenous person, but the level to which they value cultural practices attributed to their indigeneity varies. Indigenous entrepreneurs with strong cultural connections are more likely to utilise outcomes from commercial activity to support cultural imperatives. In some cases, Indigenous entrepreneurs will ensure that cultural imperatives are prioritised over commercial imperatives as a matter of cultural stewardship. In other cases, Indigenous entrepreneurs will prioritise commercial imperatives over cultural imperatives to avoid undesirable commercial ends.

Situational factors are external factors over which an Indigenous entrepreneur has no direct control. Examples include industry standards, structural discrimination, racism, and societal attitudes. Indigenous entrepreneurs consider how external factors affect their strategic

stance. The study of Māori entrepreneurs shows cultural imperatives can be negotiated because of a favourable business environment, whilst Aboriginal entrepreneurs tend to navigate cultural imperatives in a relatively hostile marketplace. Indigenous entrepreneurial practice, therefore, is context-dependent and will present differently based on factors such as indigeneity, identity, situational factors, and industry. For instance, in the arts industry, indigeneity may have more value, whereas in other industries, not so much. And in situational factors where Indigenous communities provide the labour, then cultural imperatives are emphasised. In the New Zealand and Australian studies, Indigenous entrepreneurs will approach the cultural and commercial imperative continuum with strategic stances that best suit the socio-cultural situation and the survival and success of their entrepreneurial endeavour.

After analysing the literature on colonisation, and having conversations with both Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs, it is apparent that democratic institutions are exclusionary. Not only do they assume homogeneity in their Indigenous citizenry, the social, political, and economic systems are designed to serve the average citizen in the dominant mainstream society. Tracing back to colonisation, imperial systems served imperial interest—the average European settler being the main beneficiaries. Indigenous asset bases and land rights were seized for sale and redistribution to European settlers, who were then protected by imperial interpretation of property rights. Even with the promise of equal treatment under Treaties and agreements, Indigenous people were excluded from political and legislative discourse. Although redresses for past injustices in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia are being implemented, the systems of government are founded on common law. Indigenous homogeneity is the *modus operandi* in the implementation of government intervention. Indigenous cultures are rich with heterogeneity and only with nuance, equal representation and

consultations, will countries be able to make marked progress in improving the lives of Indigenous people in all indicators of wellbeing.

### **8.3 Limitations**

#### *8.3.1 Number of participants in the study*

This thesis was limited to 10 businesses in Aotearoa New Zealand and 10 businesses in Australia. Whilst the total number of participants was sufficient for data saturation in cross-cultural research (Francis et al., 2010; Guest et al., 2006; Hagaman & Wutich, 2017), more participants would have provided a more diverse evaluation of the subject. This research may not be generalisable, but it revealed processes and strategies Indigenous entrepreneurs employ to reconcile cultural and commercial imperatives. The findings can be tested in other contexts and assist Indigenous entrepreneurs to evaluate their entrepreneurial practice.

#### *8.3.2 Snowball technique*

The snowball technique is useful for participant recruitment but can over-represent a single networked group (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Whilst the participants share similar attributes such as ethnicity and belonging to the same business networks, efforts were made to ensure that differentiating factors such as gender and industry type were included. The nature of the research into cultural practice required belongingness to the same cultural groups and similar belief systems, to have validity from an Indigenous perspective (Gillies, 2006a). For this reason, snowball sampling was considered appropriate despite its limitations.

### *8.3.3 Timing of gathering participant stories*

The process of interviewing participants coincided with National Aborigines and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week in Australia and as a result, some of the initial participants were unavailable. The cancellations were overcome through the snowball method. In Indigenous research, the snowball method facilitates the development of networks through relationship building (Gillies, 2006a). Even though entrepreneurs could no longer participate, they suggested others who could. In New Zealand, the COVID lockdowns took effect not long after the interviews were completed. The lockdowns impacted the ability to keep in contact.

### *8.3.4 Limited understanding of Māori and Aboriginal culture*

The thesis was focused on Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs for reasons outlined in Chapter 4. I am neither Māori nor Aboriginal and my understanding of their respective world views is limited. What knowledge I do have is based on my interactions with my wife's whānau and through my father residing in Perth. This knowledge was strengthened through my engagement with participants. To authentically report Indigenous experiences, guidance was sought from Māori and Aboriginal scholars. The PhD journey is an ongoing process of learning and discovery. For example, I have learned that some Aboriginal scholars consider that although legitimised by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal scholars, the concept of the dreamtime is a non-Aboriginal construct that does not represent Aboriginal world views (Foley, 2018). I acknowledge that I am on a journey of discovery in Indigenous studies and embrace the lifelong learning process. Winiata (2017) describes knowledge as a continuum with no beginning or end. That continuum is where this thesis is located.

## 8.4 Implications for practice

The thesis identifies three perspectives on the extent to which tikanga aids Māori entrepreneurs in negotiating cultural and commercial imperatives: (1) the culturally *responsive* Māori entrepreneur who tries to balance cultural and commercial imperatives; (2) the culturally *engaged* Māori entrepreneur who prioritises cultural imperatives; and (3) the culturally *ambivalent* Māori entrepreneur who prioritises commercial imperatives. The thesis demonstrates that Māori entrepreneurial practice is contextual, and the framework of Māori entrepreneurial practice can be useful in assessing, situating, and understanding how cultural and commercial imperatives are reconciled in practice.

In Australia, the navigation strategies employed in non-Indigenous business contexts shows Aboriginal entrepreneurs how they can and do engage with non-Indigenous business. It also shows non-Aboriginal business and industry what Aboriginal entrepreneurs must do to feel accepted and culturally safe in challenging encounters. By demonstrating the feasibility of implementing both cultural and commercial imperatives, transformation can occur. Proficiency in the navigation process facilitates Indigenous self-determination through offering practical steps to meeting cultural priorities in discriminatory and racist environments.

This thesis also demonstrates to non-Indigenous researchers who are operating in Indigenous spaces, how to conduct research with Indigenous peoples in a respectful, inclusive, and partnering way. Not only is the research possible, but it also creates space for meaningful collaborations and novel ways of knowledge creation.

## **8.5 Implications for policy**

In terms of policy, governments and the legislature can better understand the experiences of Indigenous entrepreneurs, especially when they have to navigate legislative measures, which do not perfectly align with their cultural imperatives. For example, the issue of kaitiakitanga versus conservation policy. Māori entrepreneurs discussed the discrepancy of what the government understands to be resource conservation versus what being kaitiaki means. There needs to be better consultation with Indigenous people and acknowledgement of how Indigenous cultural values vary, for effective policy making. Governments play a prominent role in supporting Māori and Aboriginal entrepreneurs. Further policy developments should offer long-term support for Indigenous-led initiatives to meet the needs of Indigenous people, examples include increasing fiscal allocations and self-governance capabilities.

## **8.6 Future research**

This exploratory research was an opportunity to pursue knowledge and understanding of Indigenous entrepreneurship. Whilst depth over breadth was a key consideration in this thesis, a greater breadth of diverse participants may have created opportunities to test and evaluate the proposed frameworks in Figures 2, 4 and 7. These frameworks remain untested but could be a tool for Indigenous entrepreneurial development. Further research on the process of navigating cultural and commercial imperatives is needed to determine when and how Indigenous businesses can thrive by embracing their cultural identity and world view in other contexts. The heterogeneity of indigeneity requires research that is contextualised to local conditions. This study advances research on Indigenous entrepreneurship by researching internal factors (such as identity) and external factors (such as post coloniality) in their entrepreneurial practice and processes (Foley, 2000; Peredo et al., 2004; Warren et al., 2017).

Indigenous entrepreneurial theory is still developing (Bruton et al., 2018). The prevailing Western theories of entrepreneurship have predominantly been from the United States of America, and they have been insufficient to explain Indigenous entrepreneurship. As a researcher who experienced entrepreneurial aspirations in Zimbabwe and came to Aotearoa New Zealand with the same desire, I was very much aware of how Indigenous entrepreneurship is complex and that context and whakapapa (genealogy of people, place, and time) plays a big role in explaining phenomena. Indigenous research that is context-based and uses analogy and metaphor offers a relevant alternative to established theories and methods (Fayolle et al., 2013). This thesis is part of that whakapapa.

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## APPENDIX A ETHICS APPROVAL

**From:** humanethics@massey.ac.nz  
**Subject:** Human Ethics Application SOB 19/12 Approved  
**Date:** 14 May 2019 at 17:10  
**To:** Admiral.Manganda.1@uni.massey.ac.nz  
**Cc:** humanethics@massey.ac.nz

H

HoU Review Group  
Prof Tim Bentley  
ReviewerGroup  
Dr Farah Palmer  
Dr Jason Mika  
Prof Christian Felzensztein Jimenez

Researcher: Admiral Manganda  
Title: Maori and Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurship: Cultural identity and practices

Dear Admiral

Thank you for the above application that was considered by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Human Ethics Southern B Committee at their meeting held on 14/05/2019.

On behalf of the Committee I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are approved.

Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

If you wish to print an official copy of this letter, Please logon to RIMS (<http://rims.massey.ac.nz>), and under the Reporting section, View Reports you will find a link to run the Ethics Committee Report.

Yours sincerely  
Professor Craig Johnson  
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and  
Director (Research Ethics)

## APPENDIX B INFORMATION SHEET



SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Private Bag 11 222

Palmerston North

New Zealand

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Invitation to Participate in an Interview on How Indigenous Entrepreneurs Balance the Intersection of Cultural Traditions and Business in the Modern Age**

My name is Admiral Manganda, and I am a PhD student in the College of Business at Massey University based in Palmerston North. My research aims to understand how Indigenous entrepreneurs balance cultural tradition and modernity in their enterprises. This research seeks to explore the experiences of Indigenous entrepreneurs in determining their preferred mix of cultural traditions and business against a backdrop of modern innovation and norms. This research is being conducted to satisfy requirements for completion of a PhD in Indigenous Entrepreneurship.

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to be a part of this study to share your experiences amongst other Indigenous entrepreneurs to contribute to the overall findings. I will be asking you about your views, expectations, and experiences related to your entrepreneurial journey. The questions may delve into your current business strategy, perceptions of culture and your opinion on the intersection of culture and business. These findings will be analyzed to produce journal articles and a thesis that will explain the findings in detail. Upon completion of the project, I will provide a summary of my findings to you if so requested.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to withdraw any time during the study. The journal articles and thesis will include collated information and will not identify you personally nor your organization itself. Pseudonyms (fictitious names) will be used in the report to protect your identity and the collected raw data will be stored in either password-protected files or locked cabinets until destruction after completion of the research.

The interview will be approximately one hour long and will be scheduled around a time that is suitable to you. I would like to record an audio file of the interview, but this would only be done with your consent. Upon transcription, the digital recording will be destroyed in its entirety.

If you are happy to be interviewed, please find the information sheet and consent form below for you to sign to formalize the agreement. I will then be in touch to arrange a mutually convenient time for the interview.

Thank you for your time and help in making this study possible

Sincerely

Admiral Manganda

## **Māori and Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Entrepreneurship: Cultural Identity and Practices**

### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEWS**

#### **1. Researcher's name and contact information**

##### **Admiral Munyaradzi Manganda**

School of Management  
Massey University, Private Bag 11222  
Palmerston North, New Zealand.  
Email: [A.Manganda@massey.ac.nz](mailto:A.Manganda@massey.ac.nz)  
Mobile: [REDACTED]

#### **2. Supervisory team and contact information**

##### **Prof Christian Felzensztein**

Dean's Chair in Strategy  
School of Management  
Massey University, Private Bag 11222  
Palmerston North, New Zealand.  
Email: [C.Felzensztein@massey.ac.nz](mailto:C.Felzensztein@massey.ac.nz)  
Phone: (06) 356 9099 ext. 84911

##### **Dr Jason Paul Mika**

Senior Lecturer  
School of Management  
Massey University, Private Bag 11222  
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Email: [J.P.Mika@massey.ac.nz](mailto:J.P.Mika@massey.ac.nz)  
Phone +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 86361

### **Dr Farah Palmer**

Associate Dean – Māori  
School of Management  
Massey University, Private Bag 11222  
Palmerston North, New Zealand.  
Email: [F.R.Palmer@massey.ac.nz](mailto:F.R.Palmer@massey.ac.nz)  
Phone +64 (06) 356 9099 ext. 84912

## **3. Information related to the interview**

### **Outline of the study**

The research seeks to explore the experiences of Indigenous entrepreneurs in determining their preferred mix of culture and modernity in their businesses. The study will look at the factors that determine an appropriate mix of tradition and modernity in Indigenous entrepreneurship against a backdrop of modern innovation and norms.

### **Data type expected to be collected**

This research accepts the belief systems and world views of the Indigenous participants as valid and legitimate. Therefore, participants will be free to pass their opinion on how culture and business interact and how they have personally navigated the intersection of both. The data will be collected through 20 semi-structured interviews of 10 small and medium sized enterprise (SME) Indigenous business owners in Australia and 10 in New Zealand followed by a survey of a sample of the total population of Indigenous business owners in both countries.

### **Targeted Interviewee**

The 20 SME Indigenous business owners will be in the context of two tribal groups (Ngati Porou and Noongar) from both countries to enable a cross-cultural comparative study which may assist in broadening understanding of Indigenous entrepreneur experiences across different nations. The interviews are expected to last for up to one hour to complete.

### **Data Management**

All the collected raw data will be stored in either a password-protected file on a single computer or locked cabinets located at Massey University until destruction upon completion of the research.

### **Confidentiality**

All the collected data will only be accessible to the researcher and their supervisors. No third party will be granted any access, nor will the names of the participants will be mentioned in any publications and/or thesis. The interviewee will remain anonymous indefinitely.

### **Interviewee's rights**

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study within 5 days of the interview;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- request audio recording to be paused / stopped at any time during the interview
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application \_\_\_/\_\_\_ (insert application number). If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Lesley Batten, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06 356 9099 x 85094, email [humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz).

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application \_\_\_/\_\_\_ (insert application number). If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Rochelle Stewart-Withers, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 356 9099 x 83657, email [humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz).

## APPENDIX C CONSENT FORM



SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Private Bag 11 222

Palmerston North

New Zealand

### **Māori and Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Entrepreneurship: Cultural Identity and Practices**

#### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

I have read and understood the Information Sheet attached. I have also had the details of the study explained to me by Admiral Manganda (the researcher) and any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and understand that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

1. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.
2. I agree to the interview being sound recorded on condition of confidentiality,

#### **Declaration by Participant:**

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby consent to take part in this study.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Activity	Date
Data collection in Perth, Australia	22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2019 – 29 <sup>th</sup> July 2019
Data collection in Tairāwhiti, East Coast NZ	10 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2019 – 13 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2019

### Research questions

1. As an Indigenous person, do you identify your business as an Indigenous business?
2. What are your views of (your) culture having a place in the modern organization?
3. In what way do your cultural values inform or influence how you approach decision-making in your organization?
4. How does your business outwardly show its association with your culture (Māori or Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander) branding/marketing
5. Have you faced any challenges incorporating cultural values in your organization?
6. What are the benefits to your organization of these values, what are the drawbacks if any?
7. Are there any advantages for Indigenous businesses over those in the mainstream?
8. What are your thoughts on the wider application of Indigenous values and traditional knowledge in businesses over the greater Māori or Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander business economy?
9. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve current tools/technologies/frameworks to allow for Indigenous values to be easily implemented?
10. What are your long-term goals for your business over the next 5-10 years in terms of developing an Indigenous approach to business?
11. What is your outlook on the future of Indigenous entrepreneurs when it comes to culture playing a bigger part in business?
12. When you network with other non-Indigenous business owners in a social setting, what difference is there in the way you interact with them versus other Indigenous business owners?

## APPENDIX E DRC16 FORM PAPER 1



DRC 16

### Statement of contribution to Doctoral Thesis containing publications

We, the candidate, and the candidate's Principal Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

**Name of Candidate:** Admiral Manganda

**Name/Title of Principal Supervisor:** Prof. Farah Palmer

**Name of Published Research Output and full reference:**

Manganda, A. M. (2021). Researcher positionality as self-reflexivity in Indigenous entrepreneurship research – from Zimbabwe to Aotearoa. MAI Journal, 10(2), 180-190.  
<https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2021.10.2.11>

**In which Chapter is the Published Work:** Chapter 4

Please indicate either:

- The percentage of the Published Work that was contributed by the candidate: 80%
- Describe the contribution that the candidate has made to the Published Work:

This paper is a reflexive autoethnographic piece articulating the candidates' positionality in the research process. The paper narrates the candidates' life story and how that influenced the methodological choices for the thesis. The candidate wrote the drafts of the article, edited, and responded to the MAI journal peer review process.

**Candidate's Signature:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Admiral Manganda".

**Date:** 31/10/2022

**Primary Supervisor's Signature:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Farah Palmer".

**Date:** 31/10/2022

## APPENDIX F DRC16 FORM PAPER 2



MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

DRC 16

### Statement of contribution to Doctoral Thesis containing publications

We, the candidate, and the candidate's Principal Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

**Name of Candidate:** Admiral Manganda

**Name/Title of Principal Supervisor:** Prof. Farah Palmer

**Name of Published Research Output and full reference:**

Manganda, A. M., Mika, J. P., Jurado, T., & Palmer, F. R. (2022). How Indigenous entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives: insights from Aotearoa New Zealand. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, (ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEC-01-2022-0017>

**In which Chapter is the Published Work:** Chapter 5

Please indicate either:

- The percentage of the Published Work that was contributed by the candidate: 80%
- Describe the contribution that the candidate has made to the Published Work:

This paper details how Māori entrepreneurs negotiate cultural and commercial imperatives. The candidate conducted the 1:1 interviews with Māori entrepreneurs in the Tairāwhiti region, analysed the narratives and drafted the article for submission to the *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*. The candidate edited and responded to the journal peer review process.

**Candidate's Signature:**

**Date:** 31/10/2022

**Primary Supervisor's Signature:**

**Date:** 31/10/2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Admiral Manganda'.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Farah Palmer'.

## APPENDIX G DRC16 FORM PAPER 3



DRC 16

### Statement of contribution to Doctoral Thesis containing publications

We, the candidate, and the candidate's Principal Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated below in the *Statement of Originality*.

**Name of Candidate:** Admiral Manganda

**Name/Title of Principal Supervisor:** Prof. Farah Palmer

**Name of Published Research Output and full reference:**

Manganda, A.M., Jurado, T., Mika, J. P., & Palmer, F. R. (2022). 'I flip switch': Aboriginal entrepreneurs' navigation of entrepreneurial imperatives [Manuscript submitted for publication].

**In which Chapter is the Published Work:** Chapter 6

Please indicate either:

- The percentage of the Published Work that was contributed by the candidate: 80%
- Describe the contribution that the candidate has made to the Published Work:

This paper details how Aboriginal entrepreneurs navigate cultural and commercial imperatives. The candidate conducted 1:1 interviews with Aboriginal entrepreneurs in Perth, Western. He analysed the narratives and drafted the article for submission. The paper has been submitted to a journal and is currently undergoing a peer review process.

**Candidate's Signature:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Admiral Manganda".

**Date:** 31/10/2022

**Primary Supervisor's Signature:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Farah Palmer".

**Date:** 31/10/2022