Rangitīkei Environmental Operations Limited: Whānau and iwi collaboration through governance and business operations

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

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Executive Summary

This executive summary provides an overview of this thesis, which is focused on exploring the governance and business operations of Rangitīkei Environmental Operations Limited (REO). This organisation is owned equally by the four rūnanga of Mōkai Pātea who are; Ngāti Hauiti, Ngāi Te Ohuake, Ngāti Whitikaupeka, and Ngāti Tamakōpiri. The thesis recognises the integral role of whakapapa and iwi within the context of Māori culture and acknowledges these unique positions as the cornerstone of Māori society.

The literature review, examines the complex procedures and shifting paradigms of governance, highlighting the differing viewpoints of Western, Indigenous, and Māori governance systems. It looks at governance, corporate governance, co-governance, and business models emphasising any potential synergies that may result from the interaction of these frameworks.

The methodology chapter compares and contrasts Western research paradigms, including positivism, post-positivism and critical theory, before discussing kaupapa Māori approaches. It explains the qualitative methodology that is used, combining kaupapa Māori concepts of whakapapa, kōrero, manaakitanga, and pānui documentary analysis. Whanaungatanga is highlighted as a key aspect given that the position of the researcher is an insider who has been granted access to interview participants due to their whakapapa and connections with the iwi involved.

The findings and discussions chapter aligns the research results to three themes: Mātauranga derived from the concept of capability, Kaupapa rather than the standard idea of capacity, and Whakapapa instead of succession. The interviews with the five participants show that REO is operating successfully due to the kaupapa-driven commitment to the work, and strong values of whakapapa ensuring that connection between the four iwi and the environmental development is retained. However, while mātauranga is shared where possible, the capability gap in terms of business and financial skills

presents difficulties to the business. The findings show that succession at REO will require greater opportunities to compensate board representatives and build business acumen while maintaining whakapapa links to the iwi to ensure whānau and environmental wellbeing is centered.

The conclusion summarises the findings using the contrast between the Western and Kaupapa Māori themes. It makes recommendations to address the challenges shared by the interviewees and lays out the current reality for an iwi like Mōkai Pātea who are yet to settle their Treaty of Waitangi claim. The chapter finishes with the aspirations that the findings of this thesis will serve as steppingstone in enhancing the capabilities of the iwi business and whānau.

Overall, the thesis question was answered, shedding light on key aspects of the topic; however, further investigation is required to delve deeper into certain areas, explore alternative perspectives, and address potential limitations, ensuring a comprehensive and robust understanding of the subject matter.

Aronga/Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the woman whose love and support shaped the very essence of who I am today. To my late Mother Roanne Takiwaiora Hepi (nee Martin) who never got to experience my achievements with me and our whānau during my academic journey.

As I reflect on the countless sacrifices you made for our whānau, I am in awe of your unwavering dedication and selflessness. You were not only my mother but also my first teacher, showing me the power of perseverance and the importance of empathy. Your love illuminated every facet of my life that transcends the boundaries of time and space.

“Ka mau tonu ki ngā mahara, e kore koe e wareware, arohanui ki a koe tāku Māmā”

Mihimihi/Acknowledgments

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I want to thank everyone who took part in the study and voluntarily contributed their time, knowledge, and assistance. You are essential to the success of this research. You helped make this investigation worthwhile, and for that, I am incredibly grateful. He mihi atu ki a koutou mō ō koutou tautoko.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Shirley Barnett, for your invaluable guidance and support throughout this research journey. Your expertise, dedication, and commitment to excellence have been instrumental in shaping the outcome of this thesis. I am profoundly grateful for your insightful feedback, constructive criticism, and continuous encouragement, which has pushed me to achieve my best. I am honored to have had the privilege of working under your mentorship and will forever cherish the knowledge and skills I have gained. You have been a fundamental aspect of my research.

I would like to thank my work colleagues, friends and whānau for providing me with your ongoing support and encouragement to help me push through and complete my studies.

To Koro Graham, Manawatahi and my Ohu Rangahau tuhituhi group, thank you for all your whanaungatanga, manaaki, kōrero and laughter. You have all been a highlight of this study journey.

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Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Liam for being my biggest supporter throughout the completion of my thesis. Your understanding, patience, and belief in my abilities have been invaluable. Your willingness to provide emotional support, proofread drafts, and engage in insightful discussions has enriched the quality of my work. I am truly fortunate to have such a dedicated and supportive partner by my side, and I am grateful for your presence throughout this challenging journey. Thank you for keeping the home fires burning and continuously looking after our whānau. I look forward to our next chapter together.

“Mā pango, mā whero, ka oti te mahi”

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In this chapter, I provide an overview of what is discussed in this thesis. Initially I discuss the positionality of myself in the research as I acknowledge and recognise my subjective position in this research. Next, I discuss the background to this study and outline the research topic and objectives of the thesis. Finally, I provide an overview of the chapters in this thesis.

1.1 Positionality

Positionality in research is the acknowledgement and awareness of the researcher's social identity, personal experiences, and subjective position, all of which may have an impact on the study's process and results. It emphasises the knowledge that each researcher brings, as well as their own prejudices, worldviews, and presumptions that they bring to the table. More importantly, positionality acknowledges that people are located within certain social, cultural, and historical settings that influence their worldview and have an impact on the design, collecting, interpretation, and dissemination of data for study (Smith, 1997).

1.1.1 Ko wai au?

Ko Suzanne Hepi tōku ingoa
Ko Aorangi te Maunga Tapu
Ko Moawhango rāua ko Rangitīkei Ngā Awa
Ko Ngāti Whitikaupeka, Ngāti Tamakopiri,
Ngāti Hauiti raua Ko Ngāi Te Ohuake Ngā Iwi
Ko Moawhango Te Marae
Ko Taonui Matana tōku Koroua
Ko Roanne Takiwaiora tōku Māmā
Nō te rohe o Mōkai Pātea

My position in this research is that I am uri[1], whānau[2] and whakapapa[3] to the four iwi[4] who belong to the organisation of Rangitīkei Environmental Operations Limited. I am not doing this investigation on behalf of Massey University looking from the outside in. Rather, this research is being performed internally for the institution, looking from the inside out. As an insider researcher, I have an opportunity to access strategic planning discussions, invitations to formal settings, kōrero[5] and documentation that an outsider researcher would not have been able to access. Due to this, it has made my research journey easier to navigate. However, it is important to note that insider status in research entails certain obligations and difficulties and as such, it takes dedication, tenacity, and a commitment to ethical behaviour to succeed in the competitive and challenging atmosphere of research. Hence, while conducting this research, it has been critical for me to strike a balance between the benefits of being actively involved in research and any pressures or demands that may arise.

Being of Māori decent, I always knew the importance of my whakapapa and connection to my own whenua[6]. As a parent, it was my own identity, belonging, and responsibility to ensure I instilled this cultural value to my own tamariki[7]. Born and raised in a business environment from birth my parents were not actively involved with keeping the paepae[8] warm or doing the mahi[9] in the kitchen, because of the responsibilities they had from being Māori business owners. Instead, they helped to financially contribute to our Marae[10] and whānau and tried to participate in activities as much as they could. Since they could not always physically be there to help, they always made sure myself and my sister could. They would send us along to whānau working bees and other hui as representatives for them. Looking back on that experience, I used

[1] Descendant
[2] Family
[3] Genealogy
[4] Tribe
[5] Discussion
[6] Land
[7] Children
[8] Platform
[9] Work
[10] Meeting house

to think that I was getting dropped off to whānau because my parents were too busy with their own mahi, but now I understand the picture was much bigger than that. I also consider myself very fortunate for all those memories and experiences with my whānau, and it is not until now that I appreciate my parents for providing me with those opportunities.

From birth, I was raised closely alongside my mother's whānau and grew up on her Marae in Moawhango. As I am the youngest child in my whānau, I was not exposed to my father's whakapapa until I was much older. Watching and contributing to my Marae from a young age, I had a strong connection to my mother's turangawaewae[11]. In 2009, my mother was diagnosed with stage 4 terminal cancer and suffered through a short battle, albeit surrounded by all her close whānau. She was the oldest of eight children and the matriarch of the whānau. Hence, the rationale for conducting this research is strongly linked to my motivation, which allows me to continue opening pathways for me to investigate, research and most importantly work alongside my whānau in this space as a representative of my mother because she is no longer here. Her brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, cousins, aunties, and uncles are all heavily involved in this space as they contribute back to our iwi and hapū[12], which in turn, gives me an opportunity to give back to my own people through this research.

Fast forward to where I am today and taking on the learnings and experiences in my academic career, I have always used my own whakapapa ties as a research topic in this space. Consequently, I saw the potential for a thesis to become an even bigger opportunity to conduct research and learn with my own whānau. With this in mind, I perform this study, not only for my own understanding, but for the iwi and future generations to come. This investigation has given me the chance to actively engage with whānau about iwi aspirations, Rūnanga[13] governance and get a clearer grasp of what is happening in my own developing iwi space. Since moving away from my

[11] Standing place
[12] Sub-tribe
[13] a Māori assembly or council.

homeland of Mōkai Pātea, I have not been involved on the marae as much as I have wanted to, therefore, I see this piece of research as a contribution from afar.

Conducting this research has been a very personal and a meaningful journey for me as it has allowed me to construct a more in-depth understanding of my iwi and their commitments. Also, it has helped me to understand the evolving dynamics of an iwi that is utilising the resources they have, to enable a sustainable future for the generations of their whānau and mokopuna[14]. Hence, I want to ensure that the knowledge and information I discover on this identity journey is a steppingstone for my own whānau to participate in this area. Additionally, I want to guarantee that the research I find and key learnings I compose, are passed on for future generations to explore. I also want to encourage my whānau, hapū, and iwi to never stop learning about our whakapapa, as well as contribute knowledge and understanding to ensure that the next generation can be proficient in this space.

In summary, conducting research for myself and whānau has been a crucial endeavour that has aided in developing my whānau ties, preserving our cultural history, and providing an opportunity for the next generation to have authority over expressing our future narrative. This research plays a crucial part in safeguarding and transmitting our whānau knowledge, and traditions for forthcoming generations. Overall, this investigation has given me a deep appreciation of my whānau, hapū and iwi and the contributions, efforts, and sacrifices they make for our people.

1.2 Background of research topic

The topic of my research is focused on the stand-alone business arm of Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei. They are a collective made up of iwi and councils within the Rangitīkei region, who have been working together to develop and implement a more strategic approach for improving the health and well-being of the Rangitīkei Awa. In addition, Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei have been able

[14] Grandchild

to deliver some important iwi-led outcomes throughout the catchment by establishing in 2021, an iwi-owned fencing and planting business called Rangitīkei Environmental Operations Limited (REO), which facilitates business responses from a collective iwi and hapū perspective. This organisation has undertaken various responsibilities such as fencing, land retirement work and native tree planting on their behalf (Horizons Regional Council, 2023).

Rangitīkei Environmental Operations Limited is owned equally by four rūnanga of Mōkai Pātea who are; Ngāti Hauiti, Ngāi Te Ohuake, Ngāti Whitikaupeka, and Ngāti Tamakōpiri. They each hold a share of 25% of the business, giving them the autonomy to have representatives from each rūnanga to govern the organisation in governance positions. I whakapapa back to all four of these iwi on my mother's side, and am fortunate to learn about the formation and progression of this business.

Their extensive environmental work has been funded by the Te Mana o Te Wai and Jobs for Nature funds. Activities have included native tree planting and riparian enhancement work all throughout the catchment, creation of a cultural monitoring framework for the Awa that incorporates Mātauranga Māori and Western science, and creation of a long-term management strategy and action plan for the Awa and its catchment. In the past year, REO has helped to install over 68km of fencing throughout the catchment and planted over 210,000 native plants. Moreover, REO is on target to install over 85km of fencing and 366,000 native plants in the Rangitīkei by the end of 2023 (Horizons Regional Council, 2023).

1.3 Research investigation

Aotearoa New Zealand is fighting to protect its natural environments on water and land due to decades of environmental degradation. More recently, Aotearoa New Zealand Government has introduced legislation for freshwater reforms, a change in the Resource Management Act 1991, new rules around farming and agriculture and significant modifications to ensure hapū and iwi contribute to these new strategies (Ministry for the Environment, 2022). Ngā

Puna Rau o Rangitīkei is a collective of hapū and iwi who have a connection to the Awa Catchment from source to sea. Also, Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei was developed by tangata whenua for tangata whenua as an innovative approach around collective Hapū and Iwi action (Horizons Regional Council, 2023).

My research topic is significant because it pertains to the future of my hapū and iwi. As such, it is of benefit to the direction of REO and its tributaries, and it aids in the formation of new plans to increase hapū and iwi knowledge. Moreover, this research will help build a greater understanding of how REO provides present and future opportunities that actively manage and lead restoration, remediation, and development, expanding employment opportunities for Rangitīkei mokopuna through initiatives, and balancing sustainable economic growth with environmental, social, and cultural goals.

REO was established in 2019 to benefit from financing obtained by Nga Puna Rau o Rangitīkei. At that time, the funding was provided for the fencing and planting of riparian zones on Māori owned whenua in the Rangitīkei catchment. Through the funding arrangement, capital items were purchased, giving REO the opportunity to go into business with a modern fleet of equipment and in a debt-free manner. As this is a recently established iwi-owned business, I wanted to explore how they operated as an iwi collective through governance, co-governance, and business structure.

1.4 Research Topic and Objectives

The research area investigated for this thesis is: Rangitīkei Environmental Operations: Whānau and iwi collaboration through governance and business operations. The main research questions are:

- How does REO work as an iwi collective organisation?
- What is the governance structure of REO?
- What does capability, capacity and succession look like for the organisation?

1.5 Outline of thesis

Literature Chapter

A review of relevant literature that underpins this thesis is provided. In this section, the literature review offers a critical evaluation of the literature, highlighting important theories, ideas, and knowledge gaps. Additionally, the review provides a framework for the study, and further enhances the development of research questions and hypotheses.

Methodology/Methods Chapter

The methodology adopted in this study's data collection and analysis is described in this chapter. This is followed by an overview and rationale of the actual methods used, which also describes about the participants, the research design, data collection and analysis. In the context of research, the findings to be valid and reliable, the research technique must be strong and transparent. Additionally, this chapter draws attention to any restrictions or difficulties that were found during the research process such as the ethics application that determines the risk of the study.

Findings and Discussions Chapter

The research's findings are presented in this chapter, which also addresses the study's goals and main questions. To arrive at the findings, this section explains how the analysis and interpretation were applied to the data gathered using the selected methodologies. Descriptive qualitative analysis is highlighted in this section, where the findings are added to the existing body of knowledge; all of which are closely related to this research's goals. Intertwined within the findings is the discussion section, which offers a thorough evaluation and interpretation of the research results. It also considers the prior knowledge and examines the results ramifications, contradictions, or unexpected outcomes.

Conclusion Chapter

The thesis' conclusions chapter provides a concise overview of the research's findings and their implications. Moreover, this section highlights the key

contributions and addresses the study's aims, while also summarising its approach and comprehensive data analysis to examine several facets that are critical to the research topic.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Overview of chapter

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the research focus of governance, co-governance, and business models from the perspectives of Western and Indigenous cultures, with a further analysis of perspectives in te ao Māori. It focuses on the distinctive beliefs, concepts, and practices that influence decision-making procedures and economic models as it explores the various approaches to governing systems. This chapter seeks creative models of governance and business by distinguishing different perspectives.

2.2 Governance from a Western perspective

In this chapter, an overview of the research on governance, co-governance and business models from a Western perspective is provided. It begins by defining governance and highlights several of its most important components, such as the functions played by the government and civil society in governance procedures. The idea of co-governance is then explored, along with its main components and success criteria, in more detail.

2.2.1 Governance

Ancient civilisations such as the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman empires created formal systems of government to control social and political interactions among their populations, ultimately giving rise to the concept of governance. The primary goals of these early systems of governance were to uphold order and guarantee the preservation of citizens' rights and property (Rosenau, 1992).

The 20th century saw the emergence of the contemporary notion of governance, which was particularly evident in the years following World War II, when countries worked to reestablish their institutions and economies. However, the idea of governance has changed over the years to encompass not only political systems, but also social and economic ones, including institutions like businesses, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), and international organisations (Bevir, 2011; Rhodes, 1997).

The term governance is defined as a concept that has become more frequently used in fields of political and public society (Giddens, 1998). Governance encompasses the system by which a group is controlled and operated, and contains the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to account. It can also be understood as a procedural framework used by institutions, organisations, businesses, and citizens to articulate their rights, interests, differences, and obligations (Jessop, 2010; La Frechette, 1999).

Moreover, the term governance can be applied to varying levels of society. For example, governance can refer to the formal institutions, like government, exercising its authority and power, or it can refer to a broader set of social and cultural norms that influence how people behave both individually and as a group within a certain culture (Bissessar, 2012; Peters, 2018).

Governance can also be understood as a government structure that navigates a cohort towards mutual goals. However, it is important to note that in more recent times, notions linked to complexity measures, dynamics and diversity have become universal in today's exposure to governance, which is particularly concerned with avoiding potential impacts on society. For example, one complex measure often seen in governance is the performance of these individuals. Additionally, the capability for persons to represent and display governance is reliant on their knowledge, expertise, experiences, and interests, with an aim to contribute to all levels of society (Bissessar, 2012; Bosch-Sijtsema & Postma, 2009; Giddens, 1998; Turke, 2008).

While governance theory and structures have gained widespread acceptance and support, there are some individuals and groups who do not support them. One example is authoritarian regimes, where the concentration of power resides in the hands of one person, or a small number of people, which is a defining characteristic of authoritarian governments. Coercion, censorship, and other strategies are sometimes employed by authoritarian regimes to quell dissent and challenge to their power, and all ideas and notions related to governance are frequently not supported by these regimes because they see

them as a challenge to their authority and ability to control society (Jamal & Tessler 2008; Rhodes, 1996).

According to critics, the term governance is frequently used to represent a variety of activities, from formal government institutions to unofficial networks of people, which can make it challenging to identify and study certain governance processes (Jessop, 2000). Furthermore, the emphasis on varying aspects and practices of governance changes in different countries because societies respect methods and outcomes differently due to different cultural norms and varying common objectives (Joseph & Benton, 2021). As societies struggle to create legitimate and effective institutions that can address the needs and ambitions of their citizens, the concept of governance tends to evolve in a diverse and dynamic manner that continues to be the focus of intense scholarly and policy debate.

2.2.2 Corporate Governance

Corporate governance can be classified as a formal system of accountability of management to the shareholders. It also refers to the systems, processes, and structures that are put in place to oversee and manage the affairs of a corporation, and ensure that it operates in an ethical, transparent, and accountable manner (Hasan, 2009; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Corporate governance is a multilayered topic with numerous perspectives, and as more organisations transform from privately-owned businesses to larger corporations, there has become a requirement for a corporate governance to act as an authority (Hart, 1995). Moreover, the effectiveness of corporate governance and its models relies on how these theories are executed as solutions for solving the issue of collective activity that occurs from having scattered shareholders (Freeman, 2010; Hasan, 2009).

There appears to be several corporate governance models evident in society, and these have received increasing attention and examination due to the increase of globalization (Becht & Barca, 2001). In more recent times, the new

economic context of doing business and distributing resources among companies, developing the central bodies for each national economy, is heavily influenced by the proficiency of what corporate governance model is implemented (Alam et al., 2019; Mastrodascio, 2021).

The different corporate governance models are known as: the shareholder model, the stakeholder model, the agency model, and the stewardship model. The shareholder model emphasizes the role of shareholders in corporate governance. The stakeholder model underlines the interests of all stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and the broader community, in addition to shareholders. The agency model accentuates the separation of ownership and control in corporations and focuses on the role of managers in representing the interests of shareholders. The stewardship model focuses on oversight and management of a corporation's activities to ensure that it runs in an ethical, open, and accountable manner, alongside the systems, processes, and structures that have been put in place (Becht & Barca, 2001; Cadbury, 1992; Freeman, 2010).

It is important to note that interpreting what the most suitable corporate governance model to use is not an easy choice as there are multiple factors to consider in relation to an organisation’s structure. All of which can be influenced from internal and external agencies and the changing dynamics of social, economic, and environmental pressures. Both Becht and Barca (2001) and Mastrodascio (2021) investigated various governance models and the two main dominant styles they focused on were the European model and Anglo-Saxon model. While both models have strong differences due to how these are adopted and used in a business context, Fanks and Mayer (1994) argued that the characteristics between both models can be assessed based on how ownership and control is organised.

2.2.3 Co-Governance

This literature review identifies similarities of themes and definitions between the terms co-governance, partnership, and collaboration. Hence, the meaning

of co-governance should not be seen as a handing over of ownership but rather, as a conveyance of partnership in a management structure. Overall, these concepts have a mutual understanding, and this is identified from the following literature discussed below.

Co-governance is a term that is still developing in meaning in accordance with how it is being used. Overall, it involves a mutual establishment and a representation of numerous collectives that connect simultaneously to target specified goals or outcomes. It is also regularly used in a government role where a co-governance group has the responsibility of acting on behalf of its representatives (Johnson & Osbourne, 2003).

Kooiman (2005) identified three type of governance methods: hierarchical governance, self-governance, and co-governance. The most relevant for this research is co-governance. In an organisational setting, it is argued that co-governance is applied in political applications, where at least one of its participants is a governmental one (Johnson & Osborn, 2003; Somerville & Haines, 2008).

Traditionally, government bodies are a part of the shared cohort involved in the relationship between political structures and citizens. Co-governance advocates for strengthening the connection between the state and its people and the establishment of more inclusive and equitable decision-making processes that lead to better policy outcomes (Fung & Wright, 2003; Khalid & Arshad 2021). Moreover, this can be executed in any area that a collective operates. However, from a political lens, there are three specific areas that include the term co-governance within their practice - government fields where authority is carried out for the state, non-government bases, and developing governmental and non-governmental cohorts.

Government fields refer to the different spheres of governance and public policy that fall under the purview of governmental bodies such as health care, education, social welfare, environmental protection, and national security. Furthermore, the public good and meeting societal needs are generally

priorities in these government areas (Khalid & Arshad 2021; Somerville & Haines, 2008).

Non-governmental grounds involve independent citizens making decisions about what to do and what needs to be done. These arenas are often characterized by their independence from formal government structures and their ability to challenge and influence government decision-making. They offer opportunities for individuals and groups to voice their concerns, organize around shared goals, and participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives (Lewis et al., 2020; Willetts, 2002). One example of this citizen-led change is Greenpeace, who are active in challenging the government to improve environmental policies (Eden, 2004).

The growth of governmental and non-governmental cohorts is a crucial component of contemporary societies. These cohorts are made up of people or organisations who cooperate to advance their shared interests on a certain issue or area of policy. Hence, decision-making, representativeness and possible debating measures are conducted in a manner that prioritises collaboration (Rosenbloom et al., 2018; Somerville & Haines, 2008).

The development of governmental and non-governmental groups demands clear communication, trust-building, and acknowledgement of the distinctive skills and viewpoints of each sector. For these collaborations to be successful, there must be efficient coordination, clearly defined roles and duties, and shared decision-making processes. Together, governments can unleash synergies and build more inclusive and sustainable societies. (Rosenbloom et al., 2018; Somerville & Haines, 2008).

According to Kooiman (1993), governments are typically perceived of as interacting closely through different types of collaboration with local businesses, organisations, or neighbouring areas of governance such as between city, district, and regional councils. This sort of co-governance has been deemed advantageous for doing things as a collective, rather than doing them unaccompanied (Kickert & Koppenjan, 1997; Roiseland, 2010). In

contrast to the definition by Johnson and Osbourne (2003), co-governance is understood from a hierarchical sense through autonomy, power-sharing, and government responsibilities.

It's vital to remember that the idea and application of co-governance has changed over time and will likely continue to do so. Although the precise language and methods may change depending on the circumstances, co-governance's fundamental theories of shared decision-making, inclusion, and collaboration never change. Co-governance is now widely acknowledged as an effective strategy for tackling difficult social issues, enhancing transparency, and legitimising governance procedures (Bovaird & Loeffler, 2012; Marcussen & Torfing, 2007; Roiseland, 2010).

What defines co-governance is its aims to involve all stakeholders in the decision-making process. Moreover, co-governance works to ensure that businesses are governed in a way that generates sustainable long-term value for all stakeholders by allowing stakeholders a role in corporate decision-making. Even though the idea of co-governance is still relatively new, there is a growing number of businesses and organisations choosing to implement this strategy. In addition the need for more inclusive and participatory forms of governance in the face of difficult social and environmental issues is becoming increasingly evident. Overall, a co-governance approach has the potential to produce organisations that are more accountable, resilient, and egalitarian, as well as supportive of their overarching objective to create a more sustainable and just society (Freeman, 2010; Hasan, 2009; Waddock & Bodwell, 2004).

2.2.4 Business Models

Western business models relate to the strategies and tactics employed by organisations in Europe, North America, and other areas that have embraced comparable business philosophies. These models have changed over time in response to shifting economic, social, and technological conditions and are distinguished by their focus on efficiency, profitability, and innovation (Baden-Fuller & Morgan, 2010; Chandler, 1990).

The industrial revolution, which started in Britain in the late 18th century and extended to the rest of Europe and North America, is largely responsible for the development of Western business models. Large-scale manufacturing began to emerge during this time, and new technologies, including the steam engine and the power loom, allowed businesses to make items more swiftly and affordably than ever before (Bagnoli, Dal Mas & Massaro, 2019; Bellman et al., 1957; Khalid, & Arshad, 2021).

According to Chandler (1990), the development of railways and telegraphs during the late 19th and early 20th centuries made it easier for companies to expand internationally, which gave rise to the contemporary multinational corporation. Consequently, companies started implementing new management ideas and techniques, which sought to boost productivity and efficiency through standardisation and specialisation.

One of the world's most successful business models that brought influential change to society was the travellers check, also known as American Express. Its Founder, J.C Fargo, faced a difficult time translating his letters of credit into cash and he expressed how frustrating it was to have this paper on hand and believed that other travellers shared in this same frustration. Hence, American Express was established and with it came a robust business model. This model created value for its customers in exchange for a small fee. Various merchandisers also opted to use it, which in turn attracted more customers to sign on, ultimately building a powerful network of organisations accepting this trade of monetary value (Magretta, 2002; Osterwalder et al., 2005).

Western business models underwent yet another significant upheaval following World War II as businesses turned their attention from manufacturing to service industries and embraced new types of organisational structure and management. These new management theories placed a strong emphasis on customer satisfaction and continual development, such as Total Quality Management and Lean Manufacturing, which emerged during this time (Bagnoli et al., 2019; Berenguer, 2018; Munim, 2019).

Jones (2005) notes it has become easier for managerial techniques and organisational structures to cross national boundaries; multinational businesses have had a substantial impact on the development of the Western business model. The adoption of Lean Manufacturing principles by businesses in the USA and Japan may have had a substantial influence on the recent evolution of the Western business model (Womack et al., 1990).

Research in the early 21st Century revealed that there are four main components contained within business models. They are strategic selections, creating a value proposition, capturing this value, and the value network. When amalgamating these elements into a business strategy, these categories can help to address the direction of a business' overarching operations (Gilbert et al., 2003; Scott et al., 2005).

In comparison, some research argues against the interpretation of business models as a strategy when it comes to achieving the organisations goals (Scott et al., 2005). Scott et al. (2005) argue that a business model is not a strategy at all. They specifically identify that a strategy is a pattern, plan, position, or a perspective guide and is occasionally observed as a pattern of choices made over time when thinking about how future business could be conceptualised. In contrast, a business model symbolises a set of choices, which are typically tested and analysed to ensure their cause and effect is reasonable, and that the choices are mutually agreed upon. Overall, these choices work to ensure that the business has a structure with these adoptions (DaSilva & Trkman, 2014).

Overall, a business model is a representation of the organisation's core strategic options that are created to capture value within a specific value network. However, the way that companies operate in the 21st century is forever changing to accommodate moving trends like technology, globalization, diversity, and gig economy. Consequently, the concept of the business model has accompanied this growth throughout the time scale of its existence and is positioned to adapt to the constant change. The business

model aspect became apparent when corporations insisted on bringing value proposition all the way through to the end user after discovering that this method of conducting business allows them to connect their target market insights to value (Magretta, 2002; Scott et al., 2005; Hamel, 2000).

Today, the Western business models continue to develop due to new technical advancements and shifting market conditions. Businesses also are embracing innovative new business models such as the sharing economy and the circular economy, which aim to decrease waste and boost efficiency as they become more concerned with sustainability and corporate social responsibility. When exploring the meaning of business models, its interpretation is conveyed as an association to a strategy or plan (Baden-Fuller & Morgan, 2010; DaSilva & Trkman, 2014; Scott et al., 2005).

In summary, governance, co-governance, and business models, are essential elements of successful organisations. Governance supports ethical decision-making while effective co-governance promotes cooperation and inclusivity. Business models offer a strategy for generating value and profits. Organisations can pursue transparency, accountability, sustainability, and flexibility by incorporating these ideas, building stakeholder trust, and achieving their objectives in a constantly shifting business environment.

2.3 Governance from an Indigenous perspective

This section discusses how Indigenous communities can express their rights to self-determination and control over their lands and resources by Indigenous government, co-governance, and business models. Indigenous governance refers to the various decision-making and leadership techniques used by Indigenous peoples worldwide. These systems place a high value on maintaining traditional knowledge and ways of life. To cooperatively manage lands, resources, and other significant challenges, ways of governance typically entail collaborations between Indigenous communities and governments or other institutions. This approach aims to strike a balance

between Indigenous self-government and sovereignty and the necessity for group decision-making and shared responsibility.

2.3.1 Governance

Indigenous governance refers to the systems and practices of self-governance developed by Indigenous peoples. These approaches have developed over thousands of years and are deeply rooted in Indigenous cultural traditions and values. For governance to have a meaning in this context, it is crucial to apply a cultural lens to every aspect of governance and not rely on a Western perspective (Wilson et al., 2022).

Colonisation efforts have impacted many Indigenous peoples, including the British colonisation of both Australia and Canada, where there has been a significant loss of cultural identity, as well as materialistic marginalisation. Governance and autonomy on these two Indigenous groups is being increasingly discussed in the literature and show a familiar theme underpinning the Indigenous perspective of governance in these two countries (Barnett, 2022, 22-23 June; Von Der Porten, 2012). However, it is important to note that prior to colonisation, Indigenous communities successfully practiced their own forms of governance well before colonial settlers arrived. They were also able to organise their own way of living, and had their own set of laws, rules and made collective choices that enabled them to resolve disputes within communities (Nikolakis et al., 2019).

According to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), traditional Indigenous government systems were frequently built on kinship networks, with leaders and decision-makers chosen from within the community. These individuals oversaw upholding social harmony and balance, resolving conflicts, and making choices regarding the use and management of resources and land. These institutions were based on a strong sense of community and shared responsibility, as well as a deep respect for the land and the natural environment (Barnett, 2022; Hunt et al., 2008).

During the late 18th century, European colonisers had a significant effect on Australian Indigenous governance. For example, the British conquerors forced their own political institutions on the Indigenous peoples, frequently with little consideration for the political, social, and cultural systems already in place. This had a disastrous effect on Indigenous communities, resulting in widespread relocation, dispossession, and cultural upheaval (Barnett, 2022; O'Malley, 1996).

This Indigenous cohort held the status of autonomy until the 1967 referendum, which brought Indigenous affairs under the power of the government and constitutionally prohibited Australia's indigenous people from having rights of self-determination. Consequently, the state policies and legislations produced from this amalgamation were extraordinarily discriminating towards the First Nations people, and over time, the Indigenous people struggled to preserve and restore their traditional governmental structures in the face of this disturbance. Given this, recent restoration attempts have required a variety of tactics, such as the creation of new governance structures based on ancient norms, the resurrection of ancient rituals, and the reclaiming of ancestral territories (AIATSIS, 2021; O'Malley, 1996; Smith, 2006).

The Indigenous Canadian people also experienced similar collisions. Colonialism, assimilation, and resistance have all had an impact on their long and complicated history of Indigenous administration in Canada. Historically, the Indigenous groups spread across Canada also had their own government structures and legal traditions before European contact, which varied greatly depending on the region and culture (Von Der Porten, 2012). However, the introduction of colonial laws, treaties, and policies that aimed to eliminate Indigenous sovereignty and control over their lands and resources was just one of the fundamental changes that came about because of European settlement (Nikolakis et al., 2019; O'Malley, 1996).

Notwithstanding these obstacles, Indigenous peoples in both Canada and Australia have persisted in claiming their rights to self-determination and

government, and significant changes in recent decades have recognised and supported Indigenous governance methods (Garling & Sanders, 2008; O'Malley, 1996).

Australia and Canada's Indigenous governance structures have advanced significantly since their colonial eras. While there is still more to be done to ensure that Indigenous communities have complete autonomy and self-determination, substantial strides have been achieved in recognising their rights and actively seeking their participation in decision-making. Both nations have put in place several programmes and policies to encourage Indigenous governance, including constitutional changes, land rights agreements, and the establishment of specialised representative organisations. While difficulties still arise, there is cause for hope as these models are continuing to develop and adapt to the shifting needs and ambitions of Indigenous peoples.

2.3.2 Corporate Governance

When referring to both Australia and Canada, the term "corporate Indigenous governance" describes the management and oversight of Indigenous-owned companies and organisations, often alongside an emphasis on integrating Indigenous values and expertise into decision-making procedures. This type of governance has developed as a result of the increased demand for Indigenous goods and services as well as the growing acknowledgement of Indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination and economic independence (Barnett, 2022; Nehme, 2013; Young, 2021).

One example of this comes from Australia, where The Indigenous Land and Sea Company (ILSC) was established to incorporate the voice of its indigenous peoples. It was founded in 1995 to promote Indigenous peoples' economic and social objectives by purchasing and managing land and other assets and is a prime example of corporate Indigenous governance in Australia. With a portfolio of assets valued at over $1 billion and an emphasis on fostering sustainable economic development for Indigenous communities,

the ILSC has subsequently emerged as a prominent participant in the Indigenous business sector (ILSC, 2022).

Similarly, in Canada the government combined with the indigenous community and public have created a Development of Impact and Benefit Agreements (IBAs). This is between firms and Indigenous communities and has been identified as one of the essential elements of corporate Indigenous governance. These agreements set forth each project's terms and conditions, including its effects on the environment and society, job and training possibilities, monetary compensation, and revenue-sharing. Moreover, IBAs offer a way for Indigenous communities and businesses to keep in touch and consult often (Kielland, 2015).

Corporate governance is essential for ensuring that enterprises in Australia and Canada are transparent and accountable. Both Indigenous nations have put in place a variety of legal structures and principles to encourage moral behaviour and sensible business decisions. Also, both nations have given priority to the interests of stakeholders, including owners, employees, consumers, and the larger community, despite certain disparities in their governance arrangements (Barnett, 2022; Kielland, 2015; Wilson et al., 2022). While there is always space for improvement, both nations' corporate governance policies continue to be maintained and improved over time. Hence, to ensure long-term sustainability and foster trust among stakeholders, it is crucial for businesses in these countries to be informed about the most recent advancements and best practices concerning corporate governance.

2.3.3 Co-Governance

Over the past 100 years, the Indigenous people of Australia have battled with retaining their rights over the land they own, their culture, religion, and political interests. For example, the Mobo case was a significant legal case that recognised the land rights of the indigenous people who own the Murray Islands. The High Court acknowledged that Indigenous peoples had been residing in Australia for thousands of years and had rights to their land under

local laws and customs. There was a requirement to create an agreement that served as a shared agenda for all of these groupings such as a co-governance relationship between government and the indigenous people of Australia (Cornell, 2007; AIATSIS, 2021).

Since the early 1900s, Canada's First Nations peoples have struggled with safeguarding their own lands, alongside continuously fighting for the recognition of constitutionally protecting their indigenous rights and title. For example, large corporations, with the support of local government, have argued for their right to harvest timber on indigenous lands, even though these domains were being occupied by protestors during the logging events (Cashore et al., 2001; Saarikoski et al., 2013). Overall, it became problematic for all parties to agree on a neutral optimal decision for the land use. With this concern from local businesses, environmental groups, and First Nations peoples, there was a need to establish an agreement that formed a common agenda between all these groups (Head & Ryan, 2004; Howlett et al., 2009).

Through a relationship between First Nations and provincial government, negotiations took place for land-use planning processes and legitimacy of land-use decisions (Saarikoski et al., 2013). Underpinned by a governmental collaboration framework, there was also an opportunity for stakeholders such as the First Nations people, business owners and others to present proposals and recommendations for land-use contracts. However, the final decisions and implementation of agreements occurred between First Nations collectives and provincial government. Hence, this stance has aided in fostering a new relationship between government and the Indigenous community, which acknowledges First Nations aspirations and Indigenous perspectives (Cashore et al., 2001; Saarikoski et al., 2013).

The co-governance example discussed above acknowledges the constitutional position held by First Nations people rather than them being converted to a stakeholder position. This has ensured that there is an inclusion and acknowledgement of Indigenous knowledge and representation which

adds value to the co-governance model (Berkes, 2015; Tiakiwai, Kilgour & Whetu, 2017).

Moreover, co-governance with First Nations people is an important step towards recognising and respecting their inherent rights and culture including the right to self-determination. It also facilitates the creation of policies and initiatives with a comprehensive grasp of the distinct views and requirements of First Nations communities by actively incorporating these groups in decision-making and drafting processes. More importantly, this collaborative approach encourages fruitful partnerships, develops trust, and paves the way for a society that is more egalitarian and inclusive. In addition to being a lawful approach that has moral values embedded in it, co-governance represents a step towards a more just and peaceful Canada, where the rights and aspirations of First Nations people are fully honoured.

2.3.4 Business Models

Across the globe, Indigenous business models cover a wide range of economic structures and procedures that are firmly based on the ethical principles that are shared by Indigenous peoples' social, cultural, and environmental values and activities. These models reflect the distinctive ways that Indigenous people have historically developed and maintained their economies, frequently in harmony with their customary lands, resources, and ways of life (Mrabure, 2019; Macpherson et al., 2021; Spencer et al., 2016).

Indigenous entrepreneurship contributes to the Indigenous culture of a country's identity and creates an essential part of how the world perceives them. This can be through either or both financial and non-financial measures and creates a sense of philosophy that contributes to an area's local economic development and maintenance of Indigenous culture. However, as pointed out in various literature, when Indigenous culture is being promoted as a sellable product and marketed as tourist or cultural artifact, Indigenous entrepreneurs have the added responsibility to maintain and sustain their culture (Ruhanen & Whitford, 2016; Spencer et al., 2016).

For Australia and Canada, due to their similar but also distinct historical, cultural, and economic contexts, their Indigenous business models have parallels and differences. For example, both have been colonised and still suffer from the detrimental effects of colonisation. As a result, many Indigenous people in both countries have lost their land, culture, and traditional industries (Berkes, 2015; Kielland, 2015; Krausova, 2019).

Indigenous cultures in Australia and Canada are also varied and specific to the context of each local community, where Indigenous peoples' business models are influenced by their cultural norms, beliefs, and traditions. For instance, Indigenous firms in Australia place a premium on preserving culture and ties to the land, whereas in Canada, Indigenous businesses may concentrate on traditional arts and crafts or resource management. As an example, these Indigenous business models frequently function as social enterprises. This is to help meet local needs, promote social harmony, and produce cash for sustainable development. These businesses combine commercial endeavours with a social mission and frequently concentrate on topics like tourism, natural resource management, arts and crafts, and cultural preservation (Cashore et al., 2001; Phillips et al., 2016; Spencer et al., 2016).

There is also similarity in how both Indigenous groups have put in place a variety of legislative and regulatory structures to support the growth of Indigenous economies. For example, The Indigenous Land Corporation and Native Title Act in Australia offers a system for acquiring land and opening economic opportunities. To assist Indigenous economic self-determination, the federal government of Canada has put into place programmes like the First Nations Land Management Act and the Aboriginal Enterprise Development Program. This has given these indigenous groups the opportunity to collaborate and form alliances with non-Indigenous organisations. These partnerships have opened joint ventures, co-management arrangements, or agreements with governmental or commercial organisations. Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners can use their combined abilities, resources, and

knowledge to achieve shared objectives while upholding Indigenous rights and interests by cooperating (Macpherson et al., 2021; AIATSIS, 2021).

Indigenous business models provide a distinctive and long-term strategy for economic growth that is based on cultural values, community well-being, and environmental care. These approaches place a strong emphasis on the value of preserving traditional knowledge, encouraging local ownership and control, and encouraging inclusive and equitable economic opportunities. Overall, Indigenous enterprises are effective tools for fostering cultural resurgence, producing readily available money to fund local projects, and increasing employment within Indigenous communities. They also encourage economic empowerment, social resilience, and environmental sustainability, while simultaneously honouring Indigenous cultures and promoting Indigenous self-determination via the acceptance and assistance of Indigenous business models. Here, it is crucial to acknowledgement and highlight the contributions made by Indigenous peoples to the commercial sector, as these have aided in ensuring their rights, knowledge, and voices are respected and safeguarded.

In summary, Indigenous governance, corporate governance, co-governance and business models are a crucial step towards fostering cooperation, inclusivity, and shared decision-making between governments and Indigenous peoples in both Australia and Canada. Both nations have struggled with the past injustices that have been perpetrated against Indigenous communities and have come to understand the significance of Indigenous self-determination and participation in political processes. Even if there are still issues, the advancements in co-governance show a dedication to reconciliation, a respect for Indigenous rights, and an effort to create societies that are both more equitable and sustainable in Canada and Australia.

2.4 Governance from a te ao Māori perspective

This section discusses how Māori communities in Aotearoa New Zealand have a complex and multidimensional structure of governance for decision-making, leadership, and management. Māori governance involves a wide range of

institutions and structures, such as trusts, corporations, tribal authorities, and elected representatives in local and central government, and is based on traditional Māori customs, values, and beliefs. Being guardians of the land and the Treaty of Waitangi are cornerstones of Māori governance, which is intricately entwined with Aotearoa New Zealand's overall political, social, and cultural systems. Māori governance displays a strong dedication to working towards a more just, equitable, and sustainable future for all people who live in Aotearoa New Zealand despite persistent difficulties and tensions.

2.4.1 Governance

The word Māori means normal or natural, encompassing traditional connections to ancestors, environment, cultural and spiritual beliefs. The definition and understanding of the word ‘Māori’ has always been problematic due to the political, legal, and social construct associated with our history. Moreover, a Māori person can be defined as an individual that identifies as tangata whenua or has ancestry links to whakapapa and the Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand (Mead, 2013; Moeke-Pickering, 1996).

Māori hold a strong sense of connection to their family and take pride in their whakapapa and are fully engaged in activities related to their cultural ideas, values, history, language, and spirituality. All Māori people have a whakapapa, which is linked to both a hapū and iwi, and to an area of specific land they are descended from. Moreover, their identity is intertwined with the land and is a fundamental familial connection they inherit from their past ancestors. While an iwi is a larger tribe, a hapū is a subtribe, and a part of that iwi. Māori and their relationship to their whakapapa, see hapū and iwi as having the responsibility and obligation to protect their land, ocean and resources through upholding Māori values and customs (Bauer, 2003; Mead, 2016; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Williams, 2004).

According to Bradford and Mere (2002) and Mahuika (2019), whakapapa was never exclusively about physical genealogy. Rather, it involves broad sets of knowledge, including phenomenological, supernatural, biological, historical,

spiritual, and ethical characteristics. The description of this type of knowledge, from a Western perspective, does not align well as it gives credibility to phenomena that earlier science disciplines deemed unjustifiable or invalid (Roberts, 2013; Te Rito, 2007). However, in more recent times, several Māori academic researchers have argued differently, and supported by evidence, they have determined that the concept of whakapapa is an essential component to undertaking any research relevant to Māori (Hudson et al., 2007; Marriott, 2002; Stewart, 2007).

The history of Māori governance dates to the arrival of Māori people to Aotearoa New Zealand around 800 years ago. The earliest Māori communities were divided into individual iwi, hapū, and whānau based on land occupation with chiefs and elders, who held positions of authority and decision-making (Calman, 2012; Orange, 2004). However, Māori governance underwent substantial changes after European settlers arrived in the late 18th century. This was the birth of colonisation with the establishment of British control over the Māori population. Once they arrived it was not long until new immigrants started causing problems that led to musket wars, loss of land and more horrific acts, which almost decimated the Māori population. In a rare turn, it was decided that a Treaty would be drawn up to ensure that any issues or dilemmas stemming from the lawlessness of British settlers, would help to eradicate the negative impacts on Māori. The aspiration from this was that both societies would live harmoniously together, Māori and Pākehā alike. In an ideal world, Māori people would thrive off the European privileges and the strong relationships it built and become a nation that lived happily within the peace of both cultures (Durie, 1998; Orange, 2004).

In 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi was signed by various Māori chiefs and representatives of the British Crown, which cemented a partnership between the two peoples and recognised Māori sovereignty over their lands and resources. However, since the signing in 1840, government policy has shifted from recognising Māori self-governance and Māori determination, to enacting political decisions that have aided in the assimilation, inhibition, suppression, and destabilisation of governance by Māori (Orange, 2004; Palmer, 2008).

Moreover, the signing of the Treaty has been utilised as a tool to implement colonisation protocols on Māori people, which have attempted to influence, restrict, and dismantle their cultural practices and beliefs. Given that Māori identity is intertwined with the land, the impacts caused by land confiscation were significant and ultimately changed the way Māori lived and upheld their cultural values (Orange, 2004; Palmer, 2008). For most of Aotearoa New Zealand's political history, a Western government has been in power and continues to be embedded in a contemporary structure. Over time, however, Māori governance has continued to emerge, develop, and grow stronger. Today, Māori practices have managed to move out of the margins and work to re-establish themselves and their principles within the country's political sphere. (Mutu, 2010; Orange, 2004; Palmer, 2008; Warren, 2006).

Despite the impacts of colonisation, it was fortunate that Māori continued to maintain their cultural values and tribal associations as whakapapa has played a tremendous part in the resilience and resurgence of Māori identity and Mātauranga Māori. This has also supported them across their kinship groups and provided additional stability as whakapapa is strongly embedded in Māori culture. As Walker (1993) notes, "…the whakapapa of a tribe is a comprehensible paradigm of reality, capable of being stored in the human mind and transmitted orally from one generation to the next" (p.16). Overall, whakapapa provides Māori with a sense of identity and belonging to a tribal group.

Understanding Māori governance through a Mātauranga Māori approach of whakapapa uses a founded and inclusive Indigenous classification to facilitate and enable understanding, and its logical paradigm permits circumstantial knowledge of the theory within its surrounding intellectual landscape. Simultaneously, it has an enhanced relevance to Māori, who belong to a society that has been disadvantaged on their own homelands, and who now live contemporary lifestyles as part of a world-wide society. Mātauranga Māori, however, allows Indigenous people to both hold on to their knowledge (in a manner that confirms their cultural identity), and look forward to the future

using their cultural understanding and basis, to nurture that information and understanding (Durie, 2005; Mead, 2013; Muru-Lanning, 2012; Rout et al., 2020).

Over the past three decades, some Māori have been able to regain their identity by actively becoming self-sufficient through Māori corporate governance and co-governance. The ways in which Māori organisations and Māori businesses perform governance functions, depends on their capability, direction, and values within the Māori communities they represent. In addition, their Māori views and beliefs are exercised through consultation, decision-making and accountability (Durie, 2003; Joseph & Benton, 2021; Kent, 2011).

Overall, Māori governance aims to guarantee that Māori people have a voice in the choices that have an impact on their life, culture, and environment, as well as ensuring their rights and interests are respected and preserved. This is frequently accomplished by forming alliances with public and commercial organisations, and by establishing Māori governance entities (Bauer, 2003; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Webster, & Cheyne, 2017).

2.4.2 Corporate Governance

In Aotearoa New Zealand, an iwi or Māori tribe is one of the largest kinship groupings. They are regionally based around New Zealand and are made up of several hapū who descend from tūpuna. These groups existed prior to the Treaty of Waitangi settlements and emerged out of the concept of whakapapa, which is a paradigm with various layers of genealogy. However, due to the settlement processes, the creation of several well-resourced and organised Māori commercial institutions was formed, as well as the restitution of sizable assets to claimants. As a result, an increasing number of iwi have redirected their attention to development-related post-treaty settlement issues. These groups are often referred to as Māori corporate governance entities as they are guided by principles and practices of Mātauranga Māori (Panoho & Stablein, 2005; Te Aho, 2005).

Māori society is governed by a series of behaviours, relationships, kinships, and connections with a strong foundation of whakapapa and cultural norms. Therefore, Māori businesses also tend to see their values and cultural identity as a resource of long-term and authentic competitive advantage over non-Māori organisations. This demonstrates an interpretation of motivation and expertise that Māori feel the right to exercise their values in a manner that guides their organisation's practice. (Ballara, 1998; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Tinirau & Gillies 2010).

In Māori corporate governance, intergenerational wealth creation and long-term sustainability are key emphasis areas that these businesses focus on. Māori companies frequently take a more comprehensive approach to success, considering not only financial gains but also the social, cultural, and environmental effects of their operations. They aim to strike a balance between economic growth and the preservation of natural resources, cultural traditions, and community wellbeing. This strategy emphasises the interconnection and interrelatedness of Māori ideals, and it enables Māori firms to positively influence the growth and welfare of their communities (Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Tinirau & Gillies 2010).

Māori corporate governance has many advantages, yet there are still issues. The conflict between upholding cultural integrity and fulfilling business imperatives is one of the major obstacles. Māori-owned enterprises must balance sustaining Māori ideals and cultural norms with the challenges of functioning in a globalised economy. It can be difficult to strike the correct balance between economic expansion and cultural preservation. Furthermore, it might occasionally be difficult to find qualified Māori specialists with experience in corporate governance, which presents a problem for guaranteeing the efficient use of Māori corporate governance principles and values (Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Panoho & Stablein; 2005, Te Aho, 2005).

Māori corporate governance offers a framework that acknowledges the significance of cultural values, community engagement, and long-term sustainability in company decision-making. Māori enterprises help strengthen

communities, safeguard their cultural heritage, and advance the general welfare of Māori people by incorporating tikanga Māori and using a participative approach. The availability of qualified specialists and issues with retaining cultural integrity while operating in a globalised market continue to be problems. Despite these difficulties, Māori corporate governance offers a useful example of how to promote economic growth that is based on cultural identity and community well-being (Panoho & Stablein; 2005, Te Aho, 2005).

2.4.3 Co-Governance

The Treaty of Waitangi formed a partnership and provided Māori with certain rights and protections with the British crown, which has been an influential part of the groundwork for contemporary Māori society. In Aotearoa New Zealand, co-governance is viewed as a means of respecting the Treaty's guiding principles, which include collaboration, participation, and the defence of Māori interests (Harmsworth, Awatere & Robb, 2016; Orange, 2004).

Co-governance in Aotearoa New Zealand is also seen as a formal constitutional arrangement that shares mutual ground and decision-making between Māori and Aotearoa New Zealand government. This is a relationship based on the provisions and principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and is a foundation that guarantees it remains a constant and meaningful relationship. There is an expectation of ensuring equal partnership between Māori and the Government in this co-governance space, and it has become more popular in recent times as Māori have used it to decolonise colonial knowledge as legislation emerges from Treaty of Waitangi settlements (Fisher & Parsons, 2020; Harmsworth et al., 2016; Sharples, 2009, 28 July).

Within these co-governance arrangements, there are representatives that act on behalf of the Crown, who generally are agents from provincial, district or regional Government, and iwi delegates, who sit together on governance boards and decide the direction of the organisation’s goals in a collaborative approach (Fisher & Parsons, 2020; Harris, 2015; Harmsworth, 2009). Moreover, under the co-governance framework with Māori, the primary

direction ensures there are guiding principles for this structure. Also, the theories put into practice are mantled under Māori values, which can be defined as instruments regarding how Māori operate based on their wairua[15], ethical and cultural values (Fisher & Parsons, 2020; Kenter et al., 2016). Included in these are:

Whakapapa[16]: Interpreted as identity, whakapapa is vital in the Māori world as it shapes Māori and their association to tribal membership, ancestors, and the natural environment such as mountains, rivers, and tribal land. It is also seen to be the representation of Māori history and expertise as they seek to understand the whole ecosystem and the connections through whakapapa (Barlow, 1991; Mahuika, 2019; Mead, 2013; Mutu, 2020).

Kaitiakitanga[17]: How Māori see themselves in relation to land, water, and air, where they adopt responsibility for safeguarding and protecting these taonga[18]. In some instances, people or groups are delegated the duty of this role to ensure that their whenua[19], awa[20] and environment are taken care of (Harmsworth, 1997; Mead, 2013; Smith, 1997).

Whanaungatanga[21]: A core value when Māori seek to connect/build relationships and strengthen ties with whānau and communities. This practice helps bind people together and provides the foundation for a strong sense of belonging and unity. It is important for Māori to observe whanaungatanga performances with other Māori, communities, and government agencies as it facilitates a shared sense of kinship and collectiveness, especially when working to achieve similar goals for the greater good of society (Mead, 2013; Rolleston & Awatere, 2009; Smith, 1997).

[15] The spirit
[16] Genealogy
[17] Guardianship
[18] Treasured possession
[19] Land
[20] River
[21] Kinship

Manaakitanga[22]: Demonstrates respect, generosity and care for the environment, surroundings, and people. This also reflects on the importance of reciprocity, which can be found in actions coming from the environment and people in and around the community (Mead, 2013; Neill, 2015).

Rangatiratanga[23]: Linked to leadership, autonomy, and sovereignty. This is a significant aspect for Māori because it allows them to obtain a sense of governance and self-determination. Hence, it is evident in the determining and accomplishing of goals on both an individual and collective level for achieving aspirations. It can also strengthen Indigenous perspectives to participate in their leadership autonomy (Mead, 2013; Rolleston & Awatere, 2009).

Mauri[24]: the living creation and existence for all who are in the ecosystem. This is a representation of both physical and spiritual entities together, which is tied together by mauri. The opposite of mauri occurs when the environment is seen to exploit unhealthy measures in manner that impacts on those living, and sometimes causing a detrimental health concern for them (Marsden, 1989; Mead, 2013; Smith 1997).

Incorporating Māori principles into co-governance structures helps ensure that Māori perspectives, values, and aspirations are respected, as well as integrated into decision-making processes. Also, when these values are introduced early and implemented at a foundational level, they aid in numerous ways, such as increasing Māori participation and normalising Māori ways of doing and engaging with others (Kenter et al., 2016; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Te Aho, 2005).

Despite having an Indigenous perspective that is introduced through Māori cultural values and beliefs, there are some issues with co-governance. According to Harris (2015), and Mika et al. (2019), capacity is a huge barrier for hapū and iwi. For example, while local authorities may have the resources

[22] Hospitality
[23] Chieftainship
[24] Life force

to employ teams of consultants, planners, and lawyers, iwi and hapū representatives often have the added responsibility of fulfilling multiple governance roles. Therefore, they do not have the required resources to match that of councils. Moreover, one could also argue that this comparison is highly relevant as councils are typically financed through taxpayers' money, whereas iwi and hapū are self-funded (Best & Love, 2010).

Despite the recent advancements in Māori co-governance, there are still other obstacles to overcome, including inconsistent levels of acceptance and support, institutional hurdles, and potential conflicts of interest. To ensure that these relationships are more effective, inclusive and provide positive outcomes for Māori and the larger Aotearoa New Zealand society, ongoing efforts are required. Overall, Māori co-governance is an innovative strategy that has the potential to change the way Māori and the government interact, advance social justice, establish environmental sustainability, enact cultural diversity, and make Aotearoa New Zealand a more welcoming and prosperous place for future generations.

2.4.4 Business Models

Prior to 1840, Māori had a growing economy and were in a niche position in the primary sectors of business, which produced collective gains and income through agricultural activities such as gardens, wheat farms and food production facilities. Māori were seen as the biggest influencers of the New Zealand economy (Love & Love, 2005; Petrie, 2006). However, once colonisation efforts were underway in Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori were faced with new threats and uncertainty. The natural resources and the environment that Māori grew up with and protected were suddenly being confiscated from them. Moreover, these treasures were significant to the way they lived as they relied on them to support their way of life, their whānau and overall survival (Best & Love 2010; Harmsworth, 2005; Harmsworth et al., 2016).

When an individual's resources and livelihoods are confiscated including their culture, social living arrangements, and reciprocal economies, it involves taking away their opportunity for development, and self-purpose. Understandably, Māori suffered in extreme ways due to large-scale land losses that were permitted and deemed legitimate due to colonial legislation. For Māori, land is the core element of their whakapapa, all living things and their spiritual realm. It not only provides them with life, but it is also their identity. This is epitomised in the Māori language, where the word for land, whenua, is also the same word for placenta. Both these terms relate to the beginning and birth of the Māori worldview. Hence, when Māori had their land removed from them, they also felt the loss of their own identity (Geare, 2005; Mead, 2013; Mika et al., 2019; Orange, 2004; Smith, 2021).

In the 20th century, Aotearoa New Zealand became an industrialised country where main towns and cities developed into commercialised businesses, therefore employment was largely offered in these areas. Consequently, many Māori had little choice but to uplift their whānau and settle away from their hapū, iwi and traditional rural lifestyles. The government also introduced policies to attract Māori into the cities to work for economic gain (money), but they mainly had unskilled jobs. This resulted in one of the largest shifts into urbanisation from an Indigenous culture. Overall, the traditional Māori way of life saw a complete switch, where they went from being self-employed and successful business operators, to being employees and working in a foreign and often unfriendly environment (Harmsworth, 2005; Love & Love, 2005).

Unfortunately, this labour trend was popular, until the early 1990s, when a change occurred in large manufacturing companies who relocated offshore, causing a detrimental impact to Māori workers. As a result, many Māori were laid off and left jobless without a foreseeable future in the labour market (French, 1998; Love & Love, 2005). This caused a social, economic, and behavioural transformation for Māori, as they now had to source other avenues of income. However, this change presented Māori with an option to revitalise the entrepreneurial spirit their Tupuna once performed through the

establishment and development of their own business ventures in a customer-driven world (Best & Love, 2010; Love & Love, 2005; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014).

Defining what is a Māori business is complex and Māori researchers have been studying and writing about this for the past three decades. Currently, the researchers state that to be classified as a Māori business they should have, someone of Māori descent owning at least 50% or more of the business (Best & Love, 2010; Haar & Delaney, 2009; Harmsworth, 2005; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014). Alongside Māori business ownership, traditional Māori values are another way to identify a Māori business. Moreover, traditional Māori values have been practiced for hundreds of years and in today's climate, the context of these principles has been used in modern business, which are becoming an increasingly popular incentive. As these values are based on customary concepts and beliefs, and shape the way of the Māori worldview, they can be understood as Mātauranga Māori, Māori knowledge (Haar & Delaney, 2009; Mead 2013; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014).

Values associated with Mātauranga Māori form the foundation of the Māori world view and provide a cultural basis for managing human behaviour and defining issues that may arise. Because of the way Māori upkeep their cultural beliefs, these values have the tendency to influence their engagements with others, while also governing their responsibilities, relationships, and networks. Therefore, Māori values are the basis of principles, protocol, ethical procedures, and cultural norms. Furthermore, Māori values in business are associated with the foundation and framework for Māori development, which assists with Māori economic development, strategic planning, and business operations (Durie, 1998; Harmsworth, 2005; Mead, 2013; Tapsell & Woods, 2008).

In Māori organisations, such as rūnanga, incorporations or trusts boards, these foundations are commonly exhibited through cultural and legislative matters and encompass political issues, historic grievances, Treaty settlements, governance responsibilities, and relationships. The purpose of these Māori organisations is to provide a way of helping with strategic direction influenced

by Māori. They focus on political structures, governance, providing lines of business and services, and are represented by ancestral connection through whakapapa (Best & Love, 2010; Durie, 1998; Harmsworth 2005; Mika et al., 2019).

This section has provided discussion on how a holistic strategy that integrates cultural values, community well-being, and environmental practises is demonstrated through Māori business models. These models promote a sense of connectivity and empowerment among Māori communities because they are based on Māori concepts such as kaitiakitanga, whanaungatanga and rangatiratanga. More importantly, these Māori businesses have not only achieved economic success, they have also turned into engines for constructive social change by incorporating Indigenous knowledge, protecting cultural heritage, and prioritising common prosperity. In doing so, Māori business models offer invaluable lessons and insights that can help construct a more equitable and sustainable global economy for future generations, as well as serve as an inspiration and monument to the transformational power that be realised via Indigenous business and entrepreneurship.

In summary, Māori governance, corporate governance, co-governance, and business models are all integral components of contemporary governance and management practices. To enhance Māori communities' self-determination and all-around wellbeing, Māori governance is based on indigenous cultural ideas. Corporate governance promotes openness and accountability, whereas co-governance places a strong emphasis on cooperation and inclusivity in the decision-making process. Business models are consequently established or supported by governance. When taken as a whole, these strategies illustrate how governance is a dynamic process, influenced by a variety of social, cultural, and economic elements that influence efficient and ethical management techniques. This promotes more inclusive and resilient governance systems for the benefit of all stakeholders by comprehending and accepting these many models.

2.5 Summary and overview of chapter

This literature review chapter explores the intricate processes and changing paradigms of governance, highlighting the divergent viewpoints of Western, Indigenous, and Māori governing systems. It looks at governance, corporate governance, co-governance, and business models, highlighting any potential synergies that may result from the interaction of these frameworks.

The chapter begins by discussing the history of Western governance models then examining how corporate governance mechanisms have developed historically, focusing on the different numerous models, the functions of boards and frameworks. In addition, this chapter touches on the expansion of developing business models that underwent significant changes from the 19th to 21st century.

Shifting the focus to Indigenous governance, the chapter discusses the various systems and ideologies that inform resource management and decision-making in Indigenous communities in Australia and Canada. I have explored how these governance, corporate governance, co-governance, and business models place an emphasis on group decision-making, intergenerational accountability, and all-encompassing sustainability strategies by drawing on Indigenous epistemologies and traditional practises.

Furthermore, the te ao Māori theme discusses, how Māori governance, corporate governance, co-governance, and business models are all integral components of contemporary governance practices. Māori governance draws on indigenous cultural ideas. Corporate governance promotes accountability and openness in business, whereas co-governance emphasises collaboration and inclusivity in decision-making processes. Business models give organisations across industries the structure for value development and sustainability. Together, these strategies illustrate the dynamic nature of governance, economic, social, and cultural elements interaction to influence ethical and efficient organisation techniques.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Overview of chapter

This chapter outlines the research methodologies used to analyse and evaluate the data, as well as the ethical procedures and techniques applied during participant recruitment and interviews. A qualitative descriptive technique supported by Kaupapa Māori[25] research served as the theoretical framework underpinning the methodology, which informed how this research was conducted. Therefore, this research can be viewed as a framework for Indigenous theoretical enquiry, methodology, and epistemology (Walker et al., 2006).

The methods used to gather the data for this thesis are described in this chapter. Moreover, the researcher chose the methods to compliment Te Ao Māori me ōna tikanga[26], alongside research techniques that complement the Māori values held by the researcher, participants, and ultimately the community it is intended to serve. This is in contrast to Māori-related research that has been conducted by non-Māori and constructed using Western frameworks, which often do not consider or serve the interests of Māori (Smith, 2005). Under a Māori framework, there has been an upsurge in research done by Māori for Māori during the past 30 years. More importantly, this approach embraces Indigenous research, where Māori are able to exercise their tino rangatiratanga[27], and retain ownership and control of the research.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Within research, a researcher can understand and articulate their beliefs based on how they go about obtaining knowledge. Moreover, this process reflects ideology via components of research paradigms (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016), in which a system of beliefs, ideas, and values exists and shapes the way people view the real world. Within these assumptions a theoretical framework of paradigms is built around the ideas of ontology, epistemology,

[25] Māori philosophy and principles
[26] Māori worldview and customs
[27] Self-determination, Sovereignty, Independence, Autonomy

methodology and methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Instead of focusing on one philosophical outlook to the exclusion of others, the decision of choosing a theoretical mindset to analyse a phenomenon should be driven by the needs and requirements of a research study (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

3.2.1 Ontology

Ontology can be characterised as a study of reality or as a body of worldviews. In the context of research, ontology refers to the philosophical study of the nature of existence, including the existence of entities, their attributes, and their relationships (Grix, 2004). Moreover, it deals with questions about what exists, what can be known about it, and how it can be categorised and classified. Ontology is an essential component of research because it provides a framework for understanding and organising knowledge, and for determining the scope and limits of a study. In particular, ontology helps researchers to define their research questions, select appropriate methods for collecting and analysing data, and interpreting the results of their research. By establishing a shared understanding of the nature of reality, ontology also enables researchers to communicate their findings effectively to other scholars and practitioners in their field (Grix, 2004; Patton, 2002; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

3.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology in the context of research refers to the study of knowledge, including how it is gained, justified, and used. It addresses queries such as what is genuine knowledge, how should it be acquired, and how can it be verified? Epistemology is crucial to explore because it enables researchers to choose the best techniques for gathering and interpreting data and allows them to assess the reliability and validity of their conclusions. Furthermore, researchers choose the methods they employ, the sources they consult, and the interpretations they offer by developing their own understanding of these various approaches to knowing and how they can be applied to research (Cohen et al., 2007; Gall et al., 2003). Ultimately, a sound understanding of

epistemology can help researchers to produce high-quality research that contributes to the advancement of knowledge in their field.

3.2.3 Methodology and Method

The steps taken to accomplish the research are the subject of methodology and/or method. These systematic and organised strategies are used in research to specify procedures, techniques, and tools to collect and analyse data in order to answer research questions or hypotheses. The research method outlines the overall approach and design of the study and includes various elements dependent on the nature of the research (Bryman, 2008; Garg, 2016; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Researchers can reduce bias and errors in their work and increase the validity, reliability, and replicability of their findings by employing the proper approach (Grix, 2004).

3.3 Paradigm Perspectives

Positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, and constructivism are perspectives that shape the construction of paradigms. The theory viewpoints are acceptable for the research process and can be determined by using the four research paradigms.

3.3.1 Positivism

Positivism is a research paradigm that emphasises the use of scientific methods for studying social phenomena. It assumes that social reality is objective, and that the best way to study it is through observation and measurement. Positivists believe that knowledge can be obtained through empirical investigation, and that research should be conducted using controlled experiments, quantitative data analysis, and statistical techniques (Clark, 1998; Denzin, & Lincoln, 2005). They also seek to establish causal relationships between variables and aim to develop generalisable theories that can be used to predict and explain social behavior. Positivists want to comprehend society in the same way they do the natural world. For example, in nature, occurrences have a cause-and-effect relationship that, once established, enables future predictions to be made with certainty. Here, the

social world holds true for positivists in the same way. Since reality is context-free, researchers from many eras and locations will come to the same conclusions regarding a certain phenomenon. Positivism is the objectivist's epistemic stance and in order to examine phenomena that exist independently of them, it is crucial for researchers to enter the scene as unbiased observers, who do not interfere with, or alter the events being observed (Marsonet, 2019; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

3.3.2 Post-Positivism

The positivist research paradigm holds that knowledge can be attained by unbiased observation and measurement of the world, which is being challenged by the post-positivist theoretical viewpoint. According to post-positivists, the world is too complex and diverse to be fully understood by just scientific means (Fox, 2008; Ryan, 2006). Rather, post-positivism supports a more complex and contextualised approach to study; one that acknowledges the influence of subjectivity, interpretation, and social context on knowledge. Post-positivist researchers frequently triangulate their findings using a variety of techniques and data sources, and they are more willing to interact with critical viewpoints that cast doubt on prevailing beliefs and hierarchies of power (Groff, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Post-positivism emphasises the importance of reflexivity and self-awareness in the research process, which recognises that researchers themselves are situated within particular social and cultural contexts that influence their perspectives and findings (Clark, 1998).

3.3.3 Critical Theory

Critical theory is a theoretical framework that has been applied to research to uncover and critique power structures and the social, cultural, and political systems that perpetuate inequality and oppression. Rooted in the works of the Frankfurt School, critical theory has expanded to encompass a wide range of perspectives and approaches, including feminist theory, postcolonial theory, and critical race theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Habermas, 1984; Mohanty, 1988). Critical theory acknowledges that knowledge is socially

constructed and influenced by power relations and thus aims to challenge dominant assumptions and ideologies (Foucault, 1977). Critical theory in research entails challenging the existing status by investigating how power functions in social relationships and looking for alternative ways of thinking and behaving that advance social justice and equity (Smith, 2005). Critical theory in research seeks to expose and contest the underlying causes of social injustice and oppression in order to effect transformational change (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

3.3.4 Constructivism

Positivism and post-positivism are in opposition to constructivism. Constructivism emphasises the value of examining people's viewpoints and interpretations in the context of their social and cultural surroundings, while also acknowledging the subjective character of reality in research. This method has been applied in a variety of research areas, including psychology, sociology, and education, to better understand how people construct their own knowledge and give meaning to their experiences (Adom et al., 2016; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Similarly, in psychology, constructivism has been applied to understand the role of individual experience in shaping beliefs and attitudes (Creswell, 2013).

3.4 Kaupapa Māori Research

An Indigenous research paradigm's underlying assumption is based on a common perspective and way of thinking about the world that is representative of Indigenous peoples' distinctive worldviews, beliefs, values, and ways of living. This perspective and way of thinking are holistic, collective, relational, and spiritual in nature (Chilisa, 2012; Smith, 1997; Wilson, 2008).

While Western philosophies sought to restrict and deny Māori their identity, language, culture, and beliefs (Durie, 1998), Kaupapa Māori research is a research approach that is grounded in the Māori worldview and cultural values, and is designed to prioritise and center Māori perspectives, knowledge, and aspirations. It was developed in response to the history of colonisation and

marginalisation experienced by Māori people in New Zealand and aims to empower Māori communities through research that is culturally appropriate, collaborative, and participatory (Pihama et al., 2002; Smith, 1999).

Moreover, using Kaupapa Māori concepts in research strengthens tikanga Māori[28], and offers a variety of ways to create, find, and analyse data that reflects Māori knowledge; giving Māori knowledge cultural legitimacy (Smith, 2021; Walsh-Tapiata, 1998). According to Cunningham (1998, 7-9 July), Kaupapa Māori research is defined as research in which Māori are involved at all stages of the process, including participants, management, ownership, and analysis. The research is conducted by Māori for Māori and within a Māori cultural context. Using this approach allows Māori researchers and participants to have the freedom and flexibility to engage with, control, and pick the significant challenges that Māori face, as well choosing the most suitable processes and methods that incorporate Māori values, practices, and beliefs.

The focus on partnership and collaboration with Māori communities is one of the distinctive characteristics of Kaupapa Māori research. This is reflected in the planning and execution of research, as well as the dissemination and application of research findings. More importantly, Kaupapa Māori research is a research approach that strives to cooperate with communities, create trusting connections, and produce knowledge that is relevant and valuable to those communities (Smith, 2021).

The application of Māori knowledge frameworks, such as Māori language, customs, traditions, and spirituality, is another crucial part of Kaupapa Māori research. These structures, which are fundamental to the research process, serve as a roadmap for the formulation of research questions, methodologies, and analyses. According to Smith (1997) the importance of Māori knowledge and ways of knowing are crucial to the research process and is just as valid as Western knowledge.

[28] Māori customs and traditional values

Whanaungatanga[29] ties are how Bishop (1998) describes Kaupapa Māori research alongside maintaining ties with whānau[30] of interest, also known as Kaupapa Whānau[31]. According to Durie (2005), a whānau of interest or Kaupapa Whānau is a group of unrelated people who gather together for a particular reason, purpose, or motive.

An attempt to decolonise, control, and recover knowledge that is significant to Māori can be observed in a Māori framework for research. This serves as a starting point for investigation and aids in preserving Māori knowledge. Moreover, a framework that upholds Māori understanding and aspirations is necessary for research and solution-seeking about Māori problems. With the aim of benefitting the community being researched, the development of Kaupapa Māori frameworks in research has given Māori researchers and participants the flexibility to investigate, translate, and disseminate findings in a way that makes sense to them and the researcher (Smith, 1997; Smith, 2021).

In summary, Kaupapa Māori research centers upon Māori culture, values, and ambitions, and provides a potent and revolutionary methodology. It also honours the history and present battle of Māori people for self-determination and is inspired by their collective insight and experiences. Kaupapa Māori research promotes meaningful and reciprocal interactions between Māori and non-Māori researchers and supports Māori communities' resilience through its principles of Māori self-determination, cultural safety, and community engagement. With this, a framework for decolonizing research, empowering Māori communities, and advancing Indigenous knowledge and methods of knowing is provided through Kaupapa Māori research. Kaupapa Māori research is important for establishing the sovereignty and dignity of Māori people, as well as for improving the research environment in Aotearoa New Zealand.

[29] Relationship, Kinship, Sense of family connection
[30] Family
[31] Family philosophy and principles

3.5 Whakapapa

The term whakapapa[32] is a fundamental concept in Māori culture. It emphasises the significance of comprehending and appreciating one's heritage, genealogy, and ties to the past, present, and future. It contains the belief that everything in the Māori universe is interrelated and has a common origin. Whakapapa contains wider topics, including the environment, spirituality, social systems, and goes beyond just tracing family lines (Mead, 2013).

Whakapapa is integral to Kaupapa Māori methodology as it is a holistic, inclusive, and participatory strategy that emphasises the value of collaboration, cultural sensitivity, and common knowledge. Whakapapa also acknowledges the interrelation and interconnectedness of all things, which is one of the primary ways in which it is linked to Kaupapa Māori approach. Moreover, whakapapa recognises that everything and everyone is unified and that our choices affect not just our whānau, but also those of our hapū, iwi, and the larger community. Overall, in the context of this thesis, Kaupapa Māori methodology emphasises the significance of understanding and appreciating the bonds and interactions between participants and researchers, as well as between research and the community (Smith, 2021).

Whakapapa is the foundation for this Kaupapa Māori methodology and allows an emphasis on cultural integrity and authenticity. Whakapapa is aware of the worth of cultural history and identity, as well as the need to protect and uphold Māori traditions, knowledge, and values. Similarly, Kaupapa Māori methodology encourages researchers to interact with Māori communities in a courteous and culturally appropriate manner and prioritises Māori opinions and knowledge throughout the study process (Ellis, 2016; Smith, 2021).

Additionally, whakapapa offers a framework for comprehending the structural and historical settings that influence Māori realities and experiences. Here,

[32] Genealogy, Heritage, The interconnectedness of all things

whakapapa recognises the ongoing effects of colonisation, dispossession, and marginalisation on Māori communities, as well as the continual fight for social justice and cultural revival. More importantly, colonial heritage and the need to confront power disparities and social inequalities via research are both acknowledged by the Kaupapa Māori technique. Overall, it aims to undermine prevailing Western perspectives and contribute to the advancement of Māori self-determination, sovereignty, and empowerment (Smith, 1999).

For this research, it was fundamental how my whakapapa connection is embedded throughout all four participating iwi. It played a crucial part in the project's success, and opened opportunities I would not have had access to otherwise. Whakapapa is important because it has helped me build a stronger connection to my whānau, iwi and Marae without me physically being on the whenua. Also, because I am uri, looking from the inside out, my commitment and diligence has helped identify this study's aims and objectives. Overall, my participation in this research process has been a valuable experience that I will use to enhance my academic, professional, and personal development.

3.6 Methods

There are four methods I have employed within this research: Whanaungatanga, Kōrero, Manaakitanga and Pānui[33] documentation analysis.

3.6.1 Whanaungatanga

Whanaungatanga is considered in Kaupapa Māori research as a guiding principle that supports the research process and informs how researchers interact with participants and the larger community. It acknowledges the importance of relationships in Māori ways of knowing and being, including the need for research to take this interconnectedness into account (Smith, 2021).

The technique for gathering research data that involves the researcher participating in the social environment they are examining is known as

[33] Writing, Article

participant observation. Hence, this approach is considered helpful for deciphering the significance and setting of actions and events within a specific group or community (Babbie, 2016). However, researchers must first acquire entry to the social environment they seek to examine to collect data from via participant observation. According to Atkinson and Hammersley (2007), gaining access necessitates developing a rapport and trust with the group or community being investigated. After being given permission, the researcher can start taking part in the social situation and make careful notes about their findings. Once the data has been obtained, it is then analysed through coding the observations. Finally, the data is categorised into themes and patterns relevant to the research question.

Whanaungatanga has played the biggest influence on this research. As uri to these multiple iwi, participant observation has allowed me to access information that may have otherwise not been available to an outsider, such as receiving invitations to participate in strategic planning meetings and taking part in iwi planting days. Ultimately, whanaungatanga research from an insider perspective allowed me to obtain distinctive and complex insights, while also carefully assessing any biases and difficulties that might result from my position as insiders (Adler & Adler, 2012).

3.6.2 Research participants

The selection of research participants was an essential part of this study. As an iwi member and an insider to this research, I was able to identify potential interview participants, who were receptive to describing and sharing their knowledges and experiences. Furthermore, the confidence and trust the researcher had already built with the interviewees was based on whanaungatanga. Whanaungatanga serves as the fundamental bond that ties individuals together and lays the groundwork for a sense of coherence, belonging, and unity (Mead, 2013). Hence, for this thesis, five key participants were selected based on their extensive relationship with Rangitīkei Environmental Operations, and their knowledge and understanding of the organisation.

3.6.3 Interview process

Providing the interview participants with details about the research objectives and purpose was crucial because it gave a general overview and explanation of my decision to conduct this investigation. The project was briefly outlined to the participants, together with the selection process, their rights, data management, project risks, and supervisor information. All of which was contained in an information sheet *(Appendix 1).*

The participants also received a consent form *(Appendix 2)*, which they signed acknowledging their agreement to take part in the study. The best format for capturing the interviews was audio as it allowed the researcher to actively listen to the material being shared, while also guaranteeing that all participant information was recorded accurately. Participants were informed of their rights, including the right to refuse to answer any question, or to request that the recorder be turned off at any moment throughout the interview. Participants were informed that their interviews would be transcribed and sent back to them for editing and further feedback.

3.6.4 Kōrero

The development of the interview schedule started from initial questions that were categorised into themes. Once these were in a draft form, the researcher then conducted two pilot interviews to see if the questions were suitable for gathering the required information. From this, the draft questions were edited, creating the final questions used in the interviews.

A semi-structured interview schedule served as both a guide and structure for the researcher to follow in the interviews. The semi-structured schedule of questions was used to stimulate participants' discussions about their worldviews, while also allowing for flexibility and maintaining a clear emphasis on the overall objectives of the research. The initial questions served as an introduction to assure participant comfort and ease with the process, while the

subsequent research questions made up the rest of the schedule (Appendix 3).

3.6.5 Manaakitanga

Manaakitanga is a fundamental principle that directs the research process in Kaupapa Māori research. It guarantees that the research carried out is respectful of Māori culture and values and that the findings are advantageous to the participants and their communities. This approach allows researchers to create deeper, more meaningful connections with participants and conduct more relevant, useful, and influential research by putting their needs and interests first. Here, Manaakitanga is considered to be vital element in this research because it encompasses the values of hospitality, care, respect, and reciprocity (Mead, 2013). Especially as communication with iwi members and key people within the organisation has provided the researcher with support, evidence, and information necessary for completing this thesis.

3.6.6 Pānui Documentary analysis

A research technique called documentary analysis involves systematically reviewing and interpreting written or recorded sources to shed light on a specific research subject or area of interest. Documentary analysis is a practical research technique that can be used in a variety of disciplines to shed light on a variety of research problems. Moreover, written, or recorded sources can be analysed to find patterns, themes, and trends that can assist researchers better comprehend the subject at hand and provide insights into their study questions (Markoczy & Goldberg 2016).

The documents analysed in this research were used to describe the developments of Rangitīkei Environmental Operations. These have been in the form of minutes, strategic planning documents and the Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei: Rangitīkei catchment strategy and action plan.

3.6.7 Ethical consideration

Ethical considerations pertaining to te ao Māori[34] have been addressed by the principles of whakapapa. This meant that as the sole researcher, I was to obtain permission from representatives of Ngāti Tamakōpiri, Ngāti Whitikaupeka, Ngāi Te Ohuake and Ngāti Hauiti. In giving their permission, they have requested that they be given the opportunity to view the information before the thesis was made available to the wider audience.

The researcher reviewed Massey University's Code of Ethical Conduct and completed a screening questionnaire to determine whether a full ethics application was required. Only a low-risk notification was required and discussion and ethical analysis between the researcher and supervisor were conducted. The researcher submitted a low-risk notification, and the research was judged as low risk by the Massey University ethics committee (Appendix 4).

As per ethical guidelines an information sheet and a consent form were used, and participants were informed of their right to anonymity. As such, this thesis and any future research published would ensure that their anonymity was protected. Therefore, I have used the following terms when discussing participants:

- Maunga[35]
- Awa
- Marae
- Waka[36]
- Uri

In conclusion, Kaupapa Māori methodology offers a revolutionary and historically informed technique of research and practice. It incorporates Māori values, beliefs, and worldviews and puts Māori people at the forefront of decision-making. The Kaupapa Māori methodology encourages self-

[34] The Māori world
[35] Mountain
[36] Boat

determination and aids in the revitalisation and empowerment of Māori communities by placing a focus on Māori knowledge, perspectives, and goals. Its all-encompassing and comprehensive nature promotes cooperation, reciprocity, and respect, making room for the hearing and appreciation of experiences. The Kaupapa Māori methodology serves as a foundational paradigm for research and practice.

Chapter 4. Findings and Discussions

4.1 Overview of chapter

Thematic analysis is used in this chapter to analyse the data gained from interviews. The subsequent analysis involved coding the information and distilling it into major themes. The themes and concepts are backed up with examples from the interviews, including links to relevant literature review. Consequently, this chapter highlights the main findings from discussions with participants (through a variety of study questions) to determine their governing frameworks and pillars of Rangitīkei environmental activities. Three major themes emerged from the data, which were: mātauranga, kaupapa[37] and whakapapa. Each is examined in this chapter, along with how they connect to the functioning of Rangitīkei Environmental Operations (REO).

4.2 Findings

The major findings presented in this chapter offer a thorough examination of the underlying implications and possible interpretations of REO. This chapter also seeks to clarify the significance of the research question and promote a more comprehensive understanding of the research by burrowing into the data that was gathered and synthesizing the observations that were noted. In brief, this chapter explains the key findings, discusses their ramifications, and starts a meaningful debate with the aim of advancing knowledge in this area.

4.2.1 Participants

An important aspect of this study involved the selection of interview participants. I was able to discover suitable interview applicants who were open to explaining and sharing their knowledge and experiences with a researcher who is an insider and a member of the iwi involved in the study. The basic connection that unites people and creates a sense of coherence, belonging, and unity is known as whanaungatanga (Mead, 2013). Hence, whanaungatanga was the foundation for the researcher's confidence and trust that she had already established with the research participants. In total, five

[37] Project

interviewees were chosen for this thesis, based on their substantial involvement with REO as well as their knowledge and understanding of the company. These interviews were held over a period of two weeks both in-person and on-line. The responsibility that these participants had within REO was that they either held governance positions for the organisation, worked collectively through co-governance as iwi representatives, or were directly involved with the establishment of the business infrastructure.

4.3 Discussion

The themed discussion section gives a thorough summary and analysis of the findings in this thesis. First, it provides a structure for combining and analysing the gathered data, locating themes, and reaching conclusions. Second, it examines and elaborates the data ramifications and importance in more significant detail. It provides a chance to compare the findings to existing mechanisms of literature, theories, and conceptual frameworks, revealing parallels and discrepancies. Last, it also explores potential directions for further investigation or offer suggestions based on the study's findings. Overall, this part critically evaluates the research's primary findings and places them in a larger context.

4.3.1 Semi structured interviews

To obtain data, semi-structured interviews were completed, and thematic analysis was used to identify themes. This required reviewing the information numerous times and spotting patterns that appeared in each of the five transcripts across each of the individual questions. The questions and participant identifier were entered into an excel document, along with extracts that corresponded with each theme. Each participant was renamed due to anonymity and privacy purposes, and I thought it would be both appropriate and relevant for each of their names to be related back to whakapapa. Therefore, the five participants are named:

- Maunga
- Awa
- Marae

- Waka
- Uri

The comments from interviews were entered into the excel spreadsheet for the purpose of thematic analysis and the full set of data was represented by three key themes:

1. Capability
2. Capacity
3. Succession

The sustainability of whānau, hapū, and iwi depends on the principles of capability, capacity, and succession in a kaupapa Māori framework (Smith, 1997). More specifically, the knowledge, skills, and resources that individuals and groups utilise to realise their dreams and objectives are referred to as capability. The ability to mobilise and use these resources effectively and efficiently on the other hand is referred to as capacity, and to ensure the continuing development and progress of whānau, hapū, and iwi, succession is the process of passing on knowledge, skills, and resources from one generation to the next. These ideas are interconnected, and a kaupapa Māori worldview recognises the value of this knowledge, its intergenerational relationships, and shows an appreciation for the distinctive skills and viewpoints of each iwi.

Because the organisation was created for Māori by Māori and I have used a kaupapa Māori methodology, I wanted to ensure that the findings were categorised with Māori overarching names. Therefore, I have used the below Māori names that best define the original key themes. These are:

1. Mātauranga[38] from capability
2. Kaupapa from capacity
3. Whakapapa from succession

In the following section explains this shift in terminology in more detail.

[38] Māori knowledge

4.3.2 Mātauranga from Capability

The transition from the capability theme to mātauranga signifies a change in emphasis, from valuing information in terms of its application, to embracing a broader understanding of knowledge that includes its cultural, historical, and spiritual elements. For this transformation, it is vital to incorporate Indigenous viewpoints, methods, and knowledge.

Moreover, capability often refers to the aptitude or knowledge to successfully carry out duties or functions. It frequently places an emphasis on the practical abilities, ‘know-how’, and expertise that help people or systems use to achieve their goals (Bosch-Sijtsema & Postma, 2009).

Mātauranga on the other hand, means knowledge or wisdom and refers to a comprehensive view of how people, the environment, and the spiritual world are interconnected in the context of Indigenous Māori culture. It contains an appreciation for generational knowledge, cultural history, and conventional ways of understanding (Mika et al., 2019).

Overall, the shift from capability as a theme to mātauranga represents a broader and more comprehensive approach to knowledge and understanding that is based on Māori wisdom and encompasses a deep concern for cultural history, sustainability, and interconnectivity.

4.3.3 Kaupapa from Capacity

The change from capacity to kaupapa represents a transformation from emphasising the development of individual or organisational capacities, to coordinating activities with a transparent set of values and principles. It also entails incorporating cultural, social, and ethical factors into the formulation of strategies and operations.

Capacity often refers to a person or an organisation's potential, resources, or ability to carry out a task, or objective. It frequently focuses on developing

capabilities, infrastructure, and skills to improve effectiveness and efficiency (Bevir, 2011).

Kaupapa means principle, foundation, or philosophy. It is a term used to describe a collection of values, beliefs, and practises that serve as the foundation for a group's actions and decision-making. It includes the common purpose, vision, and guiding ideologies that direct the actions, objectives, and results for an organisation. In contrast to the idea of governance, members having the time or money to go and do the job, the idea of kaupapa draws people towards doing the job where they would not usually be able to. For example, Kaupapa-driven in te ao Māori is often used as praise for those who carry on despite the challenges (Mead, 2013; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014).

In general, the shift from the term capacity to kaupapa signifies a movement towards a more Māori principles approach. It also recognises the value of cultural integrity, inclusivity, and wellbeing, and ultimately results in an overarching kaupapa methodology approach (Mika et al., 2019).

4.3.4 Whakapapa from Succession

The move from succession to whakapapa aids in emphasising and honouring the ancestral relationships and cultural heritage that plays an active role in organising and controlling the transfer of leadership within organisations. While ensuring effective governance, decision-making, and progress through generations, this transition recognises the significance of maintaining values, traditions, and cultural legacy (Best & Love, 2010; Harmsworth 2005).

Succession can be described as the procedure of passing-on leadership, ownership, or responsibility from one generation to the next within a family, organisation, or business. To ensure continuity and long-term growth, it typically entails long-term planning and in preparation for the transfer of knowledge, authority, and power (Bevir & Rhodes, 2016).

Whānau whakapapa encompasses the concepts of family, lineage, and genealogy. It also recognises the connection and intergenerational relationships within a family or kinship group. Moreover, whānau whakapapa underlines the importance of understanding ancestry, cultural heritage, and connections to past, present, and future generations (Haar & Delaney, 2009; Mead, 2013). This contrasts the idea of business succession which most often is future-focused, looking at what is best for the company in the years to come, unrelated to its history.

Overall, changing the term succession to Whānau whakapapa is appropriate for this research as it brings a te ao Māori perspective to the studies. In doing so, it ties together the entire strands of research conducted and lends itself to the inherent values of whakapapa. It is a rich and intricate avenue of connected ties that includes both extended whānau networks and immediate whānau. In this context of this research, whakapapa serves as the basis for identity, cultural legacy, and the generational show of knowledge, values, and customs. Alongside succession, which is interlocked with this these through the transmission of transformational knowledge to the following generation.

4.4 Theme 1 – Mātauranga

> *Like they say, the fish watches from the head, so if the heads not doing any good, the rest of it won't. Whereas when we came together, we made sure there was lots of hui, and questioning ourselves about 'what are we doing?' - Awa.*

The mātauranga theme illustrates the participants outlook on their business' governance structure, the organisation's ability to achieve specific goals, whānau involvement, and strategic direction for the future of Rangitīkei Environmental Operations. As this business is a collective iwi response for how they can control their own outcomes, it is important to understand Māori culture and values, as well as the challenges and difficulties that Māori enterprises must overcome to successfully operate a Māori organised business.

In addition to social and environmental sustainability, Māori enterprises frequently have a strong connection to the land and often place a high priority on community engagement and empowerment. Moreover, there is a strong focus on collective ownership, whānau and hapū structures, as well as a broader perspective on wealth creation that considers both social and cultural values and financial returns (Hikuroa, 2017; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014).

4.4.1 Mātauranga within the governance structure of REO

Mātauranga Māori is the foundation for how Māori businesses operate and provides a holistic framework for understanding the Māori worldview (Te Aho, 2005). This has given Māori the opportunity to regain their identity and become more self-sufficient (Kent, 2011). The way Māori organisations perform governance duties often soley relies on the capability of whānau, hapū and iwi representatives. Furthermore, understanding Māori governance through a mātauranga Māori perspective of whakapapa uses a well-established and inclusive Indigenous classification to ease and enable understanding; its logical paradigm permits contextual knowledge of the theory within its surrounding intellectual landscape (Durie, 2005; Rout et al., 2020).

According to Giddens (1998), capability is dependent on knowledge, expertise, and skill, therefore, if these measures are not experienced, there can be limitations or a lack of ability and understanding that causes restraints on performance or inability of performing duties within the organisation. As a result, it can take time to develop governance capabilities as it requires a dedication to education, flexibility in dealing with shifting conditions, and a constant ambition for excellence in governance roles and duties. To gain a deeper understanding of mātauranga, the first question put to respondents asked them about the importance of skills and knowledge within the governance of REO and understanding how the business was established. Here, participants commented:

Maunga: *REO was always going to be an iwi-shared business. There was space there for iwi to get into the environmental management space. There seemed to be a lot of contractors doing this work in the Rangitīkei but nothing iwi-driven. This was an opportunity for iwi to get started, pull their resources, and start this type of business. As a result, in the space of 6 months, we had all four iwi as shareholders of the business… Business is business, iwi is iwi and whānau is whānau, but when you're in business you've got to keep it afloat and sometimes iwi isn't the best match.*

Awa: *The four iwi of Mōkai Pātea were to have a quarter share as the stakeholders in the business and from each four iwi, representatives were asked to be directors in the company. With my governance hat on, I have helped with recruitment. I was asked to put through a proposal and be a part of recruitment in the operations team, in particular the project manager and project co-ordinator…It's about connections and important relationships with groups that can help further our objectives and in particular, ensure that we can make sure that REO is sustainable and that they can continue to operate.*

Marae: *Because of the position we are in, we have had to go back to each iwi, each rūnanga and ask for some bridging loans, bridging finance because effectively all our assets are split 4 ways, we've got 25% holding, each iwi in REO as the company's assets.*

Waka: *Te Maru o Ruahine trust hold the deed of funding and the contract with the Ministry of Business, innovation and entrepreneurship and Ministry of Primary industries, so we are actually the contract holders through the provincial growth fund and the Māori business, agribusiness unit, which we also have received some funding from iwi as well…The people that are*

currently in these roles were nominated by each of their iwi and they have limited skills. It's not their fault, it's the matter of filling the spots until such time they can get training or replace them with more skilled governance members.

Uri: *I am employed by Te Maru o Ruahine Trust to project manage the whenua enhancement programme, which is funding we received through 1 billion trees MPI project and the provincial development unit. I project manage that overall project, but as a part of it, we had the ability to start an iwi business. For the governance in the iwi business, there is very little procedures for obtaining these roles. We are meeting all our statutory requirements and what they need to do, but as far as management of the business, it's all on myself and our finance officer's shoulders. The thing with iwi is we want to employ our own, but sometimes our own aren't going to be capable. I think a lot of iwi face that problem, they employ their own, they aren't capable and all of a sudden, they get access to a large amount of money and then its spent, or they are questioned, 'where's the money gone?'*

The structure by which an organisation is run, as well as the procedures by which it and its members are held accountable, are all included in governance. It can also be seen as a framework of procedures that institutions, groups, companies, and individuals utilise to express their commitments and to express their rights and differences (Jessop, 2010; La Frechette, 1999). The findings of my research highlight how the governance representatives of REO had the responsibility of ensuring that this business was operating efficiently, but in some cases, capability was a barrier. This in turn impacted on the organisation and at times, some individuals may not have been able to strategically contribute due to personal limitations, but they were able to keep the seat warm until someone more skilled came along.

In relation to the infrastructures of governance in Māori organisations, such as rūnanga, incorporations, or trust boards, these are frequently exhibited through cultural and statutory issues and cover political concerns, Treaty settlements, governance obligations, and interpersonal interactions. These formations serve as a means of serving strategic direction for the organisation. They focus on political institutions and governance that provide avenues of business and service. They are also characterised by representation through whakapapa (Harmsworth 2005; Mika et al., 2019). REO was formed in 2019 to capitalise on funding that supported fence and plant riparian zones on Māori owned whenua in the Rangitīkei catchment, as the health of the river had been damaged over time. This business was a collective iwi response to fulfil and employ their own iwi members to work within this organisation and help look after their whenua, and as highlighted in the comments above, each of the four-iwi have one representative from there rūnanga on this governance board.

Making decisions within Māori organisations that are more inclusive and efficient can be achieved by incorporating mātauranga into governance practises. For REO there are very few procedures for obtaining these governance positions besides being whānau or uri, which can cause complications. Some of this was illustrated by the kōrero from Maunga, Awa and Marae provided above, which mentions individuals who had been nominated or elected to fulfil these governance positions, who may not have the resources or experience to contribute effectively (Best & Love, 2010).

4.4.2 Preferred skills and attributes for people fulfilling those governance positions.

The second question asked respondents to discuss what skills and competencies they preferred for these candidates who are fulfilling governance positions on REO. Their responses showed that there are several preferred abilities in governance that can support good leadership and decision-making. Also, depending on the situation and level of administration, the precise talents needed may change. Moreover, with the goal of

contributing to all areas of society, an individual's competence to represent and demonstrate governance expertise depends on their knowledge, skill, experiences, and interests (Bissessar, 2012; Giddens, 1998).

Whakapapa and cultural norms form a solid foundation for the actions, kinships, ties, and linkages that traditionally regulate Māori society. Within Māori governance, the foundation for exercising this role includes the responsibility to maintain and sustain their cultural beliefs (Ruhanen & Whitford, 2016; Spencer et al., 2016). For REO, respondents showed that it was important for the organisation to have whānau who whakapapa back to the lands of Mōkai Pātea as governance representatives on their board. However, even though these individuals might whakapapa back to one of the four iwi in this business, it did not always guarantee that they would have the necessary skills to execute their judiciary duties. This is demonstrated by the kōrero from all respondents below.

> **Maunga:** *You prefer someone who has had the experience in that type of role, being a governance member in an environmental business, this is business. We're not talking about iwi, although iwi is involved, we're talking about a viable business that needs to keep operating…If you're passionate about driving the business and ensuring its success, then age does not become an issue for people in these roles.*

> **Awa:** *Whoever can come along to our meetings to learn things, that they actually do. To help support and grow their experience skills. In terms of iwi, we have 4 iwi who have 2 reps each, but not all of the iwi have taken up those governance positions mainly due to capacity and capability. If some reps can't attend hui, we try to keep each other up to date. Certainly, having some skills and prior experience can get you a long way, but passion to do this kind of work because working for your iwi is not easy. It very draining, on yourself, on your own resources, on your*

health, on your pocket at times and kaha within themselves. Lots of expectations are put on you.

Marae: *At our first hui, it was mooted that we talked about experience, but there are some of us that haven't been a director before, so we talked about training. To this day we still have not had any training.*

Waka: *The right skill sets, the experience, and the knowledge of management, of finances, of strategy. Financial skills, you actually need to be able to understand a profit and loss statement, your balance sheets, some strategic forecasting, some planning schedules, able to direct your senior staff in regard to your long-term strategic outcome. Communicating clearly with your stakeholders are not only the governance, they are also your shareholders within each of those legal entities. Some strategic understanding of what their responsibilities are. Understanding the fundamentals of a business proposal, what are the key attributes of a business proposal and what is the strategy moving forward for the business. Currently, all of these skill sets are lacking. They've got some of it, but they haven't got all of it.*

Uri: *I do personally, but they probably don't align with the rūnanga. Our rūnanga are pretty overwhelmed themselves. So, anyone who puts their hand up gets a job. That's pretty much the sad part of it, where I personally want people who are switched on, who are committed, have got the time if I send them a document, because I've written our whole health and safety policy, our vehicle policy, our maintenance strategy and sent that out to them for a response or input and I get nothing back, no response. It would be good to have a bit of support, I'm not perfect and it feels like if I make a mistake, there's no one really questioning me. There's a lot on my shoulders. I'd like them to*

come back and say something. I don't even know if they read the stuff.

In summary, there are many factors contributing to Māori governance's capacity, including inadequate representation and resource limitations (Best & Love, 2010). This has been demonstrated in the above interview responses around capability development and having the right skill set to perform governance obligations. More importantly, the above comments effectively demonstrate how crucial it is to provide people with the information and skills necessary to effectively manage and make choices for the organisation they represent. In this regard, capability training for governance positions is a vital endeavour (Kielland, 2015).

Unfortunately for iwi and hapū, they do not always have the necessary resources and time to upskill their representative's knowledge bases, therefore, the duties they are required to perform can become compromised and the organisation may not progress to its fullest potential (Best & Love, 2010). These are on-going conversations that REO are having with their governance board, and while it has been identified that the governance representatives need capability training, there has been no such training as of yet. However, this is a goal that REO continues to work towards and hopes to provide this level of support for their people in the near future. Moreover, recognising these obstacles offers a chance for concerted efforts to close gaps and create stronger governance structures. As highlighted by respondents, the competency and effectiveness of Māori governance can be improved by prioritising skill development and training within these groups (Kielland, 2015; Mika et al., 2019).

Overall, an important aspect of mātauranga is ensuring the meaningful participation of Māori voices and the allocation of suitable resources, which requires collaborative relationships between Māori organisations, government institutions, and other stakeholders. Through these initiatives, Māori governance may strengthen and gain the power it needs to protect these groups' rights, aspirations, and well-being (Ruhanen & Whitford, 2016; Smith,

1997). For REO, to progress as a business, it is important for them to help build capability within the organisation and ensure that their representatives have the resources they need to upskill and become effective in their roles. Furthermore, it is crucial that everyone involved in contributing to the success of REO expresses their contribution for the business, alongside raising concerns about their competence.

4.4.3 Organisational barriers when fulfilling governance roles.

The third question prompted respondents to discuss any barriers they faced when recruiting individuals into governance roles. Here, respondents highlighted how it is important to respect and understand Māori cultural values and the Māori community objectives when fulfilling governance positions. Also, it is commonly known that capacity has been an enormous barrier for Māori and as a result, many representatives fulfil multiple governance roles for hapū and iwi organisations due to inadequate resources and limited representation of individuals. (Harris, 2015; Mika et al., 2019). For REO respondents, this issue was strongly identified, and a common discussion point highlighted by all participants was how their governance representatives were not financially compensated for their positions. Consequently, they give their time voluntarily to participate in their roles. Also, due to their status as whānau or uri of the iwi they represented, they did so willingly, and chose to contribute to the kaupapa for the betterment of their whānau, hapū and iwi.

Differences in educational competencies and attainment levels have an impact on how prepared Māori people are for positions in governance. Their capacity to obtain the skills and credentials necessary for leadership roles can be hampered by lack of skills or professional development opportunities (Kielland, 2015; Spencer et al., 2016). As mentioned in the previous section, it has also been identified by respondents that there is a lack of required skill sets or capability for individuals fulfilling REO's governance positions. Hence, this is identification also causes a barrier for strategic direction of the business and its operations.

Overall, REO can attract individuals who are willing to fulfil governance positions in the business and occupy the representational seat, yet these people sometimes do not have the necessary skill set of business acumen to strategically run the organisations. The following comments highlight this point:

> **Awa:** *I think it's something that goes across all iwi, in that those that sit at the table year after year, after year, may not always be the most capable people to do it. But for the fact they are keeping the seat occupied and also learning along the way, sometimes that doesn't fulfil what you need. We've needed a lot more capability than what we have ended up with, especially when talking about business. Comparing what was required to who could sit there. You can full seats with iwi people, but they definitely need capability to understand.*

> **Marae:** *As REO directors, all of us wear multiple hats. One of our directors was nominated as the chair, then they mentioned that they wanted to step down and put another rep forward. So, this person was brought on board, however with situations developing within REO, our chair is still staying on, even though he was supposed to step down. We have actually asked them if they could stay on for his experience in directorship.*

> **Waka:** *A lot of the issues come down to decision-making and then not getting key decisions being made. You'll get to a situation where operations are having too much say in the decision-making and not the governance. In my mind, you call it the tail wagging the dog. They are not taking their role and responsibility clear and seriously enough to ensure that the best outcomes for the long term sustainable economic development and survivability of the business is being maintained. That's not happening. There are many other things as well because the comms are not coming through clear enough because the*

structures internally haven't been devised. There's not enough knowledge in that space regarding their roles and responsibilities. The governance of this organisation is struggling to maintain its responsibilities…Within the confines of this structure, you've got 4 independent iwi, you've got 4 independent views, you've got 4 independent opinions and they have got to work together collectively to come up with one singular strategy for the business moving forward.

Uri: *Our governance are all volunteers; they don't have much business acumen or know what there really doing, so it has been hard and frustrating. I don't blame them because they are volunteers, but it hasn't made our lives easy having total newcomers to an actual governance of a live business, compared to being on the marae committee. It has been a constant struggle every governance meeting having to explain everything to everybody, they don't understand what I'm saying to them. I send them reports and they don't read them. They just get me to read them back to them which I find frustrating. Me and the admin people have everything prepared ready to go and then nothing happens. It's very frustrating that we are a live business, we can't run off a quarterly hui, we need to be dynamic and that our governance structure is not helpful that they report back to a rūnanga who are very much the same. They don't all know what they are doing, and they're very slow to make decisions. I've presented opportunities to them where with a bit of investment we could have picked up work, that would have paid for itself pretty quickly, but they are very risk adverse. They don't want to take a chance; it's quite frustrating. All of our current REO directors, none of them are currently working in a physical environment.*

4.4.4 Summary

As the findings and discussion above demonstrate, Māori iwi enterprises have proven they are capable of governance through their distinctive cultural practises and beliefs. While they differ from traditional corporate models due to their holistic approach to business management, they also emphasise the interdependence of whānau, economic, social, and environmental concerns. As such, they have been able to build enterprises that are firmly established in their communities by incorporating traditional knowledge and practises into their decision-making processes. Additionally, their dedication to inclusive and collaborative leadership has made sure that every iwi member can voice their regard for the company's direction. As a result, the prosperity of Māori iwi enterprises has also improved their communities' social and cultural climates.

Unfortunately, capability hurdles pose serious obstacles to Māori iwi businesses performance in the marketplace. These obstacles may include a lack of business management experience and knowledge, restricted access to funding and resources, poor infrastructure, and restricted market access. Additionally, as mentioned in the literature review chapter, it can sometimes be difficult for those new to iwi business to build their capacity and successfully navigate the business climate due to resources and capability barriers. Therefore, building solid alliances, creating cultural resilience and identity, and funding education and training programmes that enable people and communities to succeed in business are all necessary for removing these hurdles. But in doing so, Māori iwi organisations will be much more capable of creating strong, sustainable businesses that benefit their communities.

4.5 Theme 2 – Kaupapa

> *One thing you should learn is self-awareness, be aware of yourself. – Awa*

The kaupapa theme illustrates participants' outlooks on the business governance structure, the organisation's ability to achieve specific goals, whānau involvement, and strategic direction for the future of REO. It also

outlines the barriers the business faces due to their iwi directors being involved with different iwi boards. REO is now looking forward to the future as they transition into finishing contracted work and progressing into the open market.

4.5.1 Representation of capacity for REO

The fourth question put to respondents asked them to explore their ideas and experiences of representation for REO. It is also important to note that this question is connected to the above discussion as it relates to how they recruit individuals into these roles and the barriers their organisation must face.

To accomplish certain aims or outcomes, occupying capacity in governance collective roles entails the mutual construction and representation of several cooperatives that link together. Mutual construction and representation are also frequently employed in a government capacity, and it is up to this group to act on behalf of their representatives (Johnson & Osbourne, 2003). As the governance positions in REO are voluntary, they have often struggled to find individuals with the right skill set, or who can focus on just one governance role, rather than multiple.

A key component of ensuring effective decision-making and representation within Māori communities is the capacity of Māori governance boards. These boards play a major role in negotiating the challenges of modern life, while also safeguarding Māori values, traditions, and goals. Fostering effective leadership, advancing cultural competence, and facilitating strategic planning and execution are all parts of growing capacity within these boards (Harris, 2015; Mika et al., 2019). Relating back to the above discussion regarding barriers for REO, obtaining people to fulfil governance positions within the organisation can become difficult because these are non-paid positions, therefore, they either end up with representatives who are occupy multiple governance roles, or individuals who do not have the expertise to fulfil their judiciary obligations. These points are evident in the following comments:

> **Maunga:** *Capacity has always been a big problem for everyone not just our Rangitīkei iwi, it seems to be the same people doing*

the same roles over and over again. It is purely voluntary, at this stage there has been no payment of any kind for any services the directors provide. We hope to get to a position where those positions will be paid in the future. As we work in the open market, we get to look at fair remuneration for our directors and the work that they provide.

Awa: *As iwi Māori, I was asked to go on different panels because of the previous mahi I was involved with. I built up lots of capacity, capability, skills and experience and other organisations knew the work I had done. So that's how I have been asked to do extra mahi.*

Marae: *There's about 8 hats I wear, so my workload is huge and when you look at all of us that sit around the table, we wear multiple, multiple hats. Some you get paid for, but the majority you don't.*

Waka: *I used to be a director and that was initially to set up the directorship because the iwi were still in a position of not having the capacity to stand people up. Three directors had stood in that situation, and they were all members of the fund holder, Te Maru o Ruahine trust. In the capacity of the governance group that stands at the moment, it is the 4 iwi of Mōkai Pātea.*

Uri: *Our governance board are multiple hat wearers, and I can understand why. Because we are a small, unsettled iwi, group of iwi, our Mōkai Pātea, there is a pretty small group of people to choose from. Who are willing to give up their time, so if anyone puts their hands up, it's like wow, that's a job that I don't have to do. If they are the wrong people, they go forward. There's a couple of retirees, it's there only source of income getting a free kai and a bit of petrol money. We are functioning at the moment,*

but I fear for us when we do become settled because there's lots more actual money being thrown around.

4.5.2 The business model and its impact on REO

The fifth question asked respondents about the overall business infrastructure for REO and the history of how the organisation was established. The following comments highlight how similar to other businesses, REO's model continues to evolve due to new technological developments and changing market conditions. In general, many organisations are also adopting new business models that aim to reduce waste and increase efficiency as they grow more concerned with sustainability and corporate social responsibility, such as the sharing economy and the circular economy (Baden-Fuller & Morgan, 2010; DaSilva & Trkman, 2014).

Moreover, Māori business models often provide excellent examples of comprehensive approaches that unify cultural values, community well-being, and environmental practises. These approaches, which are based on Māori ideologies such as kaitiakitanga, whanaungatanga, and rangatiratanga, help Māori communities feel connected and empowered. More crucially, by utilising Indigenous expertise, preserving cultural legacy, and placing a priority on communal prosperity, this not only achieves economic success it also evolved into engines for positive social change (Durie, 1998; Harmsworth, 2005; Mead, 2013; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014).

As noted earlier, REO is a collective iwi-owned business who have the responsibility to act on behalf of their iwi and their cultural values. The establishment of their business came from access to government funding that they were successful in applying for. With this government contract model coming to completion, they are now delving into the open market to secure other work projects. However, the funding model that was originally incorporated never involved remuneration or allowed for any directorship representatives, which is reflect on in the following comments:

Maunga: *In the funding model, it was never allowed for any payments for any directorship…You could have someone who is an outsider that's got all the experience in the world, successful businessman be able to come in and help drive it, sometimes whakapapa is good, sometimes it can hold you back.*

Awa: *The REO project came off our Te Mana o Te Wai project under the governance of Nga Puna Rau. The outcome of Te Mana o Te Wai was successful, and we wanted to build on from that success, so there was a number of funding pools from government, and keeping in with what we started, we decided to do a large planting and fencing project on a much bigger scale than what we had. That was when the idea was mooted to develop and establish our own iwi business. So that's where REO was born. In a way, the structure has been a wee bit messy, but it was what was required to carry out this big project.*

Marae: *We had to extend the length of our project for a number of reasons. The majority of those reasons were to do with weather, it impacted on the ability of our workers to fulfil some of their milestones, so we have been given an extension by our funders…For us as directors, we don't get paid but we get reimbursement for travel when we have our hui and these are either held at Mōkai Pātea Services in Taihape, or at the Te Maru o Ruahine trust office at Rātā Marae. So, these roles are voluntary…We are at the bridging area of our contract, trying to find other work to sustain our company and it's been challenging, very challenging. Especially in Rūnanga roles, we only get paid for certain things, our situation as per se, as a company, is not ideal. Because we are going through this end of phase through one major project and then what's next, we are not in a paid position for our responsibility.*

Waka: *Ideally an odd number of representatives, we've got representations from the 4 iwi, then we should add an independent chair. The structure was set up to try and initiate that, but it didn't quite work out that way. At the moment, they do have 5 members, the original chair has stayed on for the purpose of seeing out the contract and to assist the current iwi with their responsibilities.*

Uri: *We have to transition out of this volunteer buzz. Which we're totally entrenched in, and I see it in lots of stuff we do, the resource consent stuff, and how they manage the rūnanga. Because no one is getting paid, no one's actually got any skin in the game. If they don't do something for a month, it doesn't get done.*

4.5.3 Summary

As the above findings show, with improved access to funding, a revived emphasis on Indigenous values and principles, and the emergence of capable leadership within Māori society, the ability for Māori Iwi enterprise has been steadily expanding, albeit with some complications. However, Māori business leaders have a distinct sense of hope and tenacity even when there are obstacles to overcome. Overall, Māori Iwi enterprises have the potential to create significant economic growth and social development inside Aotearoa New Zealand with continuous support and investment.

For Māori iwi in governance position, there is a common theme that the same people have numerous iwi responsibilities, which presents certain difficulties and necessitates careful consideration of cultural, social, and economic concerns. More importantly, while juggling multiple responsibilities can be very challenging, there are also many opportunities to use different viewpoints and skill sets to spur innovation and development.

4.6 Theme 3 – Whakapapa

> *Ensuring that the future generations are involved in the rūnanga and are representatives of the iwi. Making sure they can turn up to hui and be involved. - Marae*

Succession planning is critically important for any business, and this is particularly true for Māori iwi businesses. Whakapapa and whanaungatanga are central to the way in which business is conducted, and succession planning is an important way of ensuring that these values are maintained and passed on to future generations.

Whakapapa was identified as an essential element of REO, and whānau is a notion that fosters a strong sense of community and support among family members. Iwi representatives who work for the commercial company could potentially feel more devoted and committed to it because they see it as an extension of the prosperity of their own community. Hence, a sense of collective responsibility can be fostered by the close-knit character of whānau, motivating iwi members to cooperate to accomplish common objectives.

4.6.1 What does succession look like?

The sixth question asked respondents about whakapapa (including succession) within the business of REO looked like. In terms of iwi governance, whakapapa is of utmost importance because it is a key factor in the processes for deciding who will manage the organisation moving forward. The ancestral genealogy, which traces the connections between people and their collective identity, is a component of whakapapa that is woven into the fabric of Māori culture. Also, whakapapa is the foundation for legitimacy and authority in the context of iwi governance, serving as a guide for the choice and appointment of leaders within the iwi. As such, it offers a framework for appreciating and comprehending the rights, duties, and commitments that come with ancestry. Iwi governance also ensures that leadership remains based in the ancestors' knowledge and wisdom by recognising the significance of whakapapa in succession. Overall, this aids in promoting continuity,

togetherness, and a sense of collective well-being for future generations (Mead, 2013; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Smith, 1997).

It has been demonstrated throughout all the interviews that whakapapa is necessary for REO. The concept of whānau not only helps family members feel a strong feeling of togetherness and solidarity, but it is also viewed as a continuation of the prosperity of their own community, where iwi representatives feel more fervent and dedicated to it. The following quotes effectively illustrate how the tight-knit structure of a whānau can foster a sense of collective responsibility, motivating iwi members to cooperate to accomplish common objectives:

> **Maunga:** *Each of the 4 iwi had to appoint a director with equal shareholding, which is 25% for each iwi. Those 4 directors then became a part of the governance group. We then ended up taking on a 5th director because one of the iwi directors had to resign, but they couldn't resign until the 5th member got his feet wet and the transition happened. Currently, we still have 5 directors, and eventually that director needs to step away to focus on the Waitangi claims trust: another mahi within this iwi.*

> **Awa:** *We were looking for a project manager and project co-ordinator. These were advertised. It turned out that my son got the job as the project manager. My son who moved home from Australia with him and his family became the project manager for REO. He's still there to this day.*

> **Waka:** *Succession is something that they have been working towards a programme of basically sourcing other iwi members in regard to their skill set. The challenges have been that most of those skill sets are in other areas where the capacity levels are very full.*

Uri: *Experience and some knowledge of business acumen. Also ensuring they can challenge or question something that they don't think is right, instead of being directed by the operations manager. Knowing the importance of reading documents and preparing for governance meetings, that has been a vague area.*

4.6.2 A focus on the areas for succession planning

The seventh question put to respondents was built on the previous question and asked them to discuss specific areas of succession and future planning of the business. Future focus topics for Māori governance planning typically include a variety of crucial elements that enable the organisation to efficiently manage its affairs and promote self-determination. These include leadership development, financial management, legal frameworks, cultural preservation, community involvement, and strategic planning and decision-making. To ensure sustainable economic and social growth, a major focus is placed on creating solid strategies that are in line with the long-term objectives and aspirations of the iwi (Kenter et al., 2016; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Te Aho, 2005).

As demonstrated in the responses in the previous section, having the right skillset, business acumen and experience in governance is a key focus area for REO to work on. Throughout the interview replies in this section, there is a strong emphasis on how the representatives involved in governance positions for REO lack capability and other fundamental expertise to fulfil their judiciary duties. Capability is a crucial area for REO to focus on developing their people in these roles. Furthermore, mentorship, planning and self-sufficient governance within iwi politics is a pace in the future direction for this organisation. This is highlighted in the following comments:

Maunga: *There is a succession plan, do we stick to it? Not quite, but we will. When things start to settle down, we will look at new directors, but right now we have what we've got and we have to work with it. The first focus would be fair remuneration; you've*

got to pay the people what they're worth if they are coming in to ensure that there is some viability in this business.

Awa: *Kaumātua who have mentored us, have said to us, 'well you actually need to stay there a bit longer' However if you're looking at who you should mentor, who you should develop, who you should grow, you should look in the mirror and you look at yourself, and those immediately around you which is your family. Your whānau, your whanui, your hapū, your iwi.*

Uri: *Ideally, we know who we need and what we need in REO there's just a lot of people stuck in the mud. Our Rūnanga get tied up in Pākehā politics where we shouldn't tie ourselves down to bureaucracy. It's our rūnanga, we can do what we want.*

4.6.3 Experience for succession planning for REO

The eighth question asked to respondents is linked to both the previous two questions, in relation to their experience in the realm of business and planning for the prospect of REO. Generally, future-planning is greatly influenced by the iwi governance's practical business experience, and the experiences gained from previous endeavours (both successful and unsuccessful) produce priceless insights and can serve as a basis for strategic decision-making. Hence, iwi governance that utilises their own collective cultural strengths, knowledge and wisdom has a greater potential to uncover areas for growth and progress. Furthermore, iwi governance enterprises can create a path to lasting prosperity by grasping the nuances of the industry, cultivating fruitful alliances, and embracing innovation (Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Smith, 2021).

Uncovered in the responses below, upskilling and training is a specific area REO are wanting to focus on in order to improve the overall operations of the business. However, as highlighted in the following quotes, at present, only mentorship has identified as the main form of guidance for professional development in this space.

Maunga: *I think there needs to be somebody experienced in contracting because we are a contracting business. You need someone who is passionate about iwi objectives, so there is a preference sheet, but it is difficult to find someone that meets that criteria, as there's not a lot of people around to choose from. But like I said, we've got to work with what we have got and they're doing a really good job.*

Awa: *I've been mentored by people. I saw things like my mother who had been on the Marae committee for 40 years and I used to watch my mother sit there, taking the minutes, all these different jobs she did, and I thought look how old my mother is and she is still doing this. I felt sorry for my mother, that's why I took on board the role of secretary for the marae committee, which was my first spot. Because I had that kind of mentorship, and I knew it worked, and I knew what was needed to help mentor other people.*

Waka: *There is some governance training in regard to supporting some succession that's been put into play. There's some operational consultancy that they're trying to bring into play to help also with supporting succession in regard to the learnings.*

Uri: *Operationally, I love running this business, and I'm still learning a lot too. There has been a lack of driven young tāne*[39] *who want to actually go for a boss' job. No one wants to actually be the boss. Once we are well-established and I've got good monetary backing and can afford to put someone on to be my 2IC. At the moment, succession isn't looking too good, but it is definitely in my mind and especially my role. I would like to step*

[39] Boy

up into governance and I could probably help all of our iwi in a governance role and just be a mentor to someone else who could do the operational stuff; it's just finding the right person. Which I think when we are settled, and can start paying people, we will.

4.6.4 The importance of whakapapa within iwi governance

I left this question until last as I felt it was one of the most critical points to discuss with interview participants. This question asked them about the significance of whakapapa, especially within an iwi space. As noted earlier in this chapter and within relevant literature, whakapapa is of utmost importance in terms of iwi governance as it provides the framework for the iwi's organisational structure and decision-making procedures (Mead, 2013; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Moeke-Pickering, 1996). Moreover, whakapapa instils a sense of responsibility and belonging within the iwi, and links individuals to their ancestors, their land, and their cultural identity. With whakapapa as a foundation, iwi members gain a profound understanding of their connections to the past, present, and future, which fosters a strong sense of unity and shared purpose within the iwi. Also, understanding and acknowledging whakapapa is essential for effective governance as it provides insight into the historical and cultural context of the iwi, including its traditions, customs, and values (Mead, 2013; Mika & O'Sullivan, 2014; Moeke-Pickering, 1996).

It is evident from the interviews with respondents that the success and continued operation of REO is dependent on whakapapa, where a strong sense of solidarity and community among family members is fostered by the concept of whānau. Moreover, iwi representatives who work for the business tend to be more passionate and committed to it because they perceive it as a continuation of the success of their own community.

Respondents talked about how whakapapa directs their decision-making, ensuring that the ancestors' views and viewpoints are honoured and considered. They also reflect on how it supports the preservation of traditional

knowledge, the upkeep of cultural integrity, and the defence of the iwi's and its members' rights and interests. Ultimately, these findings show how whakapapa can serve as a compass for iwi governance, highlighting the significance of shared accountability, resource management, and the community's intergenerational well-being (Bradford & Mere, 2002; Mahuika, 2019). There are still different views on the importance of a whakapapa approach in contrast to a purely succession, business-driven and future-oriented approach. This is demonstrated in the following responses:

> **Maunga:** *Although Whakapapa is important, we've now got a business model that were trying to run and while whakapapa does feed in, the ownership model is around that. When you think about whakapapa, you think about generations and generations, not only past but the future. It's the same stance you need to take with REO; we've had whakapapa but what is it going to look like in the future? We can't always get directors that whakapapa and have the experience and that's been the difficulty in finding the right match.*

> **Awa:** *Our biggest objective is that we want to employ our own. Being a part of the iwi group, there is more to it than business. For iwi, it's about knowing who you are, knowing where you come from, knowing the history, knowing the whakapapa, being a part of your whānau, hapū and iwi, how you connect with all your marae, what you do when you get to your marae. It comes down to manaaki tangata; caring for the people. Being home with family, nothing can top that, nothing.*

> **Marae:** *All our mahi we do is for our iwi, being involved with the rūnanga, marae and environmental work. It's a lot of work, a lot of work. My dad was one of the founding members of Te Roopu Ahi Kaa way back, maybe 30 years ago when it first started. When dad handed it over, I am now the representative on that mahi.*

Waka: *As a collective iwi, a group that has formed a business in a short space of time, is that we became resilient. We became cognisant of the challenges in front of us and we most definitely were able to eventually get ourselves to a point where we worked as positively as we could under the circumstances that were dealt to us. Focusing on the relationships overall as we are all whānau.*

Uri: *I was in Australia for over 15 years and through a combination of Covid and not seeing my whānau, I started looking for employment back home, closer to my family. I have stayed with REO for as long as I have is because I can see the opportunity. There's so much work out there, especially for our whānau, it's all for our iwi at the end of the day. I want us to be successful.*

4.6.5 Summary

In conclusion, succession planning is a critical component of any business, and Māori businesses are no exception. Whakapapa, which refers to a person's ancestry, lineage, and relationship to the land, is highly revered in the Māori culture. By including whakapapa in succession planning, one is more likely to guarantee that the organisation's values and cultural legacy will be preserved for future generations. Moreover, Māori iwi businesses can secure the continuation and success of their operations while keeping their cultural values by identifying and developing potential successors, involving them in the decision-making process, and ensuring they are adequately equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead the business forward.

Ultimately, the inclusion of whakapapa in succession planning is an effective method for ensuring that Māori culture remains a crucial component of the company's identity, resulting in sustainable growth and prosperity for the firm, the community it serves, and contributing to its longevity and success.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

Since the beginning of my investigation on Rangitīkei Environmental Operations, I found myself grappling with uncertainty and a lack of clarity regarding the specific information I wanted to uncover. However, as I immersed myself in the exploration of various literature, engaged in discussions, and conducted practical investigations, I gradually gained a deeper understanding of what it was that I wanted to know. I have always been passionate about conducting research with my own iwi, and it has become apparent to me that I can always learn something new about my own whānau.

Through this journey, I was able to explore my curiosity, question my preconceptions, and gain a greater understanding of the knowledge I wished to acquire. In the end, I learned how important it is to embrace ambiguity and maintain an open mind because doing so frequently results in unexpected discoveries and a more rewarding research project.

In this research, I have explored the realm of governance, corporate governance, co-governance, and business models in relation to Western, Indigenous and Māori worldviews. I have used Rangitīkei Environmental Operations, a collaborative iwi-owned commercial business, as the centre of my investigation and three key themes were extracted from the findings. These major themes are Mātauranga from capability, Kaupapa from capacity, and Whakapapa from succession. These topics have highlighted the strengths and challenges of this iwi governance structure and provided insights into areas that require attention and improvement.

The first theme, Mātauranga from capability highlights the importance of knowledge and experiences when fulfilling Māori governance roles. It was identified in the interviews that there is a substantial gap in Māori governance regarding capability. It is now clear that the skill sets of those working in the governance of REO do not quite correspond to the extensive ability the iwi possesses. Utilising the potential of conventional knowledge and incorporating it into decision-making processes efficiently is made difficult by this imbalance.

Therefore, Western knowledge is needed for REO and the iwi mahi. It is also important to acknowledge that this is a new kind of information for most of the staff assisting with REO governance.

Prioritising skill development and capacity building within the governance of REO is crucial for closing this gap. Investing in focused training programmes that combine current corporate skills with Māori cultural knowledge will empower individuals to bridge the gap between traditional practices and governance capability. It is important that REO create avenues for continuous learning and professional development. This is to ensure that their governance structure evolves and adapts to meet the changing demands of the iwi businesses commercial ventures, while upholding the integrity of Mātauranga in decision-making processes.

The second theme, Kaupapa from capacity emphasises the volunteer nature of the REO governance positions and lack of governance skills for individuals in these roles. It has been recognised that it is frequently difficult to locate people who can devote their full attention to this governance obligation. As these people tend to have numerous other governance responsibilities. In contrast, even though these individuals are occupying a space on the iwi governance board, occasionally they don't have the right business acumen or strategic decision-making skills.

In REO's governance, the volunteers are generally kaupapa-driven. They are people willing to give up their time even if they may be 'over-capacity'. Capacity alone doesn't solely define whether the work is done. However, in the interviews it clearly shows the limitations that are faced. We are all human and sometimes a lack of capacity means important volunteer contributions don't happen, which affects the whole direction of the project.

To address this challenge, it is crucial to recognise the importance of supporting and valuing the work of governance representatives within REO. Providing adequate resources such as funding, professional development, training opportunities and administrative support, can alleviate some of the

burdens faced by those serving in voluntary governance roles. Moreover, exploring alternative options, such as remunerated positions or shared governance responsibilities among a broader group of individuals, could help attract and retain individuals with the necessary skillsets and capacity to effectively produce results while also retaining the kaupapa-driven focus to get the best outcome.

The final theme, Whakapapa from succession draws attention to the importance of whānau involvement within iwi governance and the future for REO. This was evident throughout the interview responses with an emphasis on ensuring that individuals have the right commercial acumen or have experience understanding Western ideologies of operating a business.

Understanding the importance of Whakapapa in Māori governance is essential. This becomes apparent in the interview responses because informed decisions are made to align with the aspirations of the iwi. It is important to understand that each governance member for REO has Whakapapa to at least one of the Rūnanga. Therefore, they foster a deep sense of identity, belonging and shared purpose among other iwi members.

Furthermore, REO must look towards developing their representatives in these governance roles. Capability has been evident throughout the whole data collection of this thesis, which should be the first focus for REO to concentrate on. Alongside this, mentorship, planning, and self-sufficient governance within REO are also steps in this organisation's future path.

To close this gap, it is essential for REO to provide leadership development, capability uplift and succession planning as a top priority to further develop these governance representatives. This could potentially involve providing opportunities for emerging REO delegates to participate actively in governance activities and learn from experienced elders. REO may also look to establishing structured mentoring programs and leadership development initiatives which could enable the transfer of knowledge and skills, ensuring a

seamless transition of responsibilities and maintaining the continuity for the iwi and its vision and values.

By addressing the skillset gaps and placing greater emphasis on Whakapapa and succession in governance, REO could strengthen the integrity and effectiveness of its governance structure. Investing in leadership development, fostering intergenerational connections, and nurturing a culture that upholds the importance of Whakapapa will enable REO and the iwi to navigate the challenges of the present and future while staying grounded in Māori cultural heritage. Through these efforts, they can ensure the continued success and resilience of REO's governance practices and the preservation of the iwi and its legacy for generations to come.

It is important to comprehend that Mōkai Pātea iwi are a collective iwi who are currently in the settlement process with claims against the Crown for breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi, and this can be a time-consuming and costly process. They have decided to undertake their claims through the Waitangi Tribunal rather than entering direct negotiations with the Crown. This decision is always under review to ensure that the best outcomes can be gained for all the confederated iwi of Mōkai Pātea (Mōkai Pātea Waitangi Claims Trust, 2023).

Therefore, there is a lack of resources for the iwi of Mōkai Pātea as they are yet to settle through a Treaty agreement. This poses significant challenges to their development and self-determination. Without the financial and land-based resources that often accompany Treaty settlements, these iwi face an uphill battle in realising their cultural, social, and economic aspirations. Limited resources can hinder their ability to invest in essential infrastructure, education, healthcare, and economic initiatives that could uplift their communities. Furthermore, the absence of financial resources may impede their capacity to engage in effective negotiations, legal processes, and governance structures to advocate for their rights and interests.

Even though my study has highlighted some crucial elements of the subject at issue, more investigation is necessary to properly grasp its complexities and ramifications. It is important that I completed this thesis because it is a steppingstone for my iwi and the beginning of research for them. My investigation has led to the discovery of new issues and lines of enquiry that need further study. Future discoveries are necessary to increase the validity and generalisation of the findings because the research has some limitations, such as a small sample size or time limits. Only through ongoing investigation, can Māori governance research make meaningful progress and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in this field.

In conclusion, my research question has been addressed and the findings have provided valuable insights. However, to fully explore the topic and gain a comprehensive understanding, it is crucial to expand the scope of the study and include a wider range of interview participants. This additional research will improve the depth of analysis while also fostering a more thorough comprehension of the issues. Therefore, conducting further interviews with a wider range of participants is necessary to generate a more robust and thorough investigation that more fully addresses the study issue.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Information Sheet

Rangitīkei Environmental Operations: Whānau and iwi collaboration through governance and business operations

INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher Introduction
Suzanne Hepi (Ngāti Tamakopiri, Ngāti Hauiti, Ngāi te Ohuake, Ngāti Whitikaupeka, Ngāti Maniapoto and Ngāpuhi) is a student enrolled at Massey University completing a Master of Business studies in the College of Business.

Overview of research topic
This research explores the governance and business operations connected to Rangitīkei Environmental Operations Limited (REO). REO was formed by the four iwi of Mōkai Pātea who are: Ngāti Tamakopiri, Ngāti Hauiti, Ngāi te Ohuake and Ngāti Whitikaupeka. The proposed study will identify and investigate the current governance and managerial structure associated with REO, determine capability and capacity structures that are in place and explore what succession looks like.

Participants
Participation in this research is voluntary and people who agree to participate in this study will be interviewed for up to approximately 1 hour. Participants have the right to invite a support person or whānau to the interview. These interviews will be recorded (audio only) and interview times, date and venues will be mutually agreed, and written consents will be obtained from willing participants prior to the interviews.

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

- decline to answer any particular question.
- withdraw from the study at any time before 30 April 2023.
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation.
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher.
- read the transcription of your interview so you can confirm that the information provided by you does not need to be edited or deleted.
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Participation Identification and Recruitment
Participants have been selected based on the responsibility they have within the governance associated with REO and the contribution they give towards this business. A maximum of six people will be interviewed.

Data Management
The interview recordings and transcripts will be kept confidential and stored safely. All data, including notes and interviewer comments, will be stored in a password protected file.

Contact Details
Suzanne Hepi
[redacted]

Research Supervisor
Dr Shirley Barnett *(Ngāti Tuwharetoa)*
School of Management – Te Kāhui Kahurangi
Massey Business School – Kaupapa Whai Pakihi
Massey University – Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa
Ph: 0800 MASSEY extn 84932
s.j.barnett@massey.ac.nz

Committee Approval Statement
This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. The Ethics Notification Number is: 4000025576. Consequently, it has not been
reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named in this document is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.
If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director - Ethics, telephone 06 3569099 ext. 85271, email: humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix 2: Interview Consent Form

Interview Consent Form

Research Overview
This research explores the governance and business operations connected to Rangitīkei Environmental Operations Limited (REO). REO was formed by the four iwi of Mōkai Pātea who are: Ngāti Tamakopiri, Ngāti Hauiti, Ngāi te Ohuake and Ngāti Whitikaupeka. This study will identify and investigate the current governance and managerial structure associated with REO, determine capability and capacity structures that are in place and explore what succession looks like.

I, _____ agree that this interview can be recorded and transcribed according to the research parameters outlined in the Information Sheet.

Signed_____
_____

I, Suzanne Maria-Rewa Hepi agree to abide by the research parameters outlined in the Information Sheet.

Signed_____
_____

Date: / /

Appendix 3: Interview Schedule

Introduction questions:

- What is your association with REO?
- How did you obtain this role/mahi?

Capability:

- What are the procedures you use to attract or involve people to obtain governance roles in the organisation?
- Are there any hurdles/barriers you face from this? If so, can you please explain?
- Have some strategies worked better than others? If so, why?
- When discussing governance roles with applicants, do you have preferred values/skills/attributes for people filling these positions?

Capacity:

- Who fills the positions regarding governance roles in your organisation?
- Do you have an ideal number of filled governance roles?
- How many of these roles are there? And are they paid or voluntary positions?

Succession:

- What does succession look like in the governance roles you have?
- Do you advertise or recruit people for this position?
- How important is whakapapa in relation to succession for these governance roles?
- Is there any age you have in mind for people filling these roles?
- What does succession planning involve for you?

Appendix 4: Human Ethics

27/04/2022
Dear: Dr Shirley Barnett

Re: Low Risk Notification - 4000025576 - The collaboration with iwi and business models used under the mantle of Rangitīkei Environmental Operations (REO) Ltd

Thank you for your notification which you have assessed as Low Risk.

Your project has been recorded in our database for inclusion in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

If situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your ethical analysis, please contact a Research Ethics Administrator.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

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

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director - Ethics, telephone 06 3569099 ext 85271, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz."

Please note, if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to complete the application form again, answering "yes" to the publication question to provide more information for one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

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

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