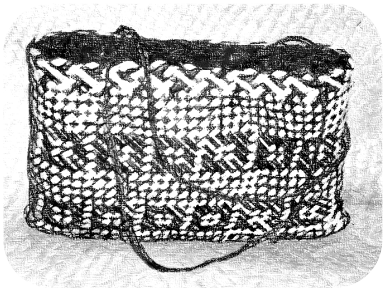
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What's in my kete?

An exploration of women and leadership in not-for-profit organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand



A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Adult Education)

at Massey University,
New Zealand.

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Abstract:

This thesis listens to, and learns from, the perspectives of five women in leadership roles of not-for-profit organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The key objective of this research was to examine the essence of leadership for these women. This qualitative study adopted an integrated research approach, which wove together Māori and Pākehā understandings of research, knowledge, and symbols. It privileged indigenous ways of knowing by centring the research on the concepts of the *kete* – as a material metaphor and a way of communicating Māori ways of knowing – and *kōrero*, which is meaningful conversation together with others, from which to gather data. The key question asked was "What is in your kete?" which asked what they brought with them to their understanding and role of leadership, and what continued to shape and sustain them as leaders. Participants were invited to reflect on the research question, over the period of a month, collecting material symbolic items in a kete if they desired, and then the five participants gathered for kōrero or focused group conversations – two participants in one kōrero and three participants in another, with myself as a facilitator.

From this dual method qualitative research approach, three key themes emerged. The first theme was that the participants have a whole personal community in their kete, which has not only influenced the leader in the past, but continues to have an ongoing significance in shaping the heart of leadership for these women. The second theme, determined that there is a clear sense of purpose that is foundational to their work in the not-for-profit sector and that there are a whole web of beliefs that underpin the way these women understand their leadership. The final theme that emerged is the realisation that there is power in their kete.

Dedication

To my whānau whānui – family and friends, who shape, encourage, and sustain me in leadership and life.

To God – the ultimate servant leader.

Acknowledgements

This study would not have been possible without the enthusiasm, grace, courage, honesty, insight, and generosity of the women participants. I felt privileged that they joined me on this adventure of discovery, and they will forever be in my kete.

I would like to thank my thesis supervisors, Dr marg Gilling and Gloria Slater, whose patience, optimism, faith that I could complete, timely insights and listening ears have made this thesis possible. Thanks also go to Dr Janet Webster for her valued input given as the need arose late in the process. Their encouragement has enriched this thesis immeasurably.

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I would like to thank my work community, Tertiary Students Christian Fellowship (NZ), for their support to undertake this research project as part of my ongoing leadership development and sometimes at significant cost to the organisation. Their willingness to incorporate much of this learning, and to ask many of the questions that are at the conclusion of this thesis, is testimony to the organisation's openness to do leadership differently and courageously in the not-for-profit context.

I wish to thank all those who work – in both a paid and volunteer capacity - in the not-for-profit sector. Your courage and care, to give of yourselves for the benefit of others, often in significantly testing conditions, is an inspiration to me and to many, and a taonga in our society.

He mihi

Ko Tapuae o Uenuku te maunga

Ko Wairau te awa

Ko Kurahaupo te waka

Ko Rangitane o Wairau te iwi

Ko Huataki te tangata

Ko Omaka te marae

Ko Howard raua ko Jill oku matua

Ko Valerie Animoa Goold toku ingoa

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa.

I am a woman

I am a leader in a not-for-profit organisation.

I greet you, the reader, and invite you to listen to the perspective and the wisdom of the women in this study and to learn from them, just as I have.



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Chapter 1 Introduction

Leadership. It is written about by many. It is an aspiration for some and a responsibility that is carried cautiously and reluctantly by others. I believe it is exercised by all, in some community and in some context, but it is recognised as such by only a few. For some it is associated with a role as part of their paid employment, and is understood by others to potentially extend to all areas of life.

The key research objective for this project was to explore what is the essence of leadership for five women who have executive leadership roles in not-for-profit organisations. The research sought to give a fresh approach to describing what is formational and foundational for these women's understanding of leadership, and particularly how they understand it in their organisational role. Hearing how people describe their experience and perspective of leadership gives the opportunity to add new understanding to the leadership discussion, as well as challenge or confirm currently researched theories and practices of leadership. This is particularly true when one listens to perspectives that have not previously been commonly heard in the general discussion.

Leadership defies simplistic definition, and invites enquiry and examination from many perspectives to gain greater understanding and insight into this complex concept. The complexities that surround the phenomenon of leadership can be embraced and celebrated as positive challenges or grieved as overwhelming impossibilities (Stentz, Clark, & Matkin, 2012). "One reason so many attempts to define leadership and to categorize its features have foundered, often turning into brain-numbing mush, is that they are not grounded in the messy but momentous details of everyday experience and happenings, contexts that alone can give life and meaning to abstractions" (Hartman, 1999, p. 23).

Some of the many descriptors of what is at the essence of leadership include: it is a process; influence; ability; goal or task; authority; persuasion; vision; control; and empowerment. I have the opportunity in my work context to facilitate leadership development opportunities for tertiary students, and, when describing my understanding of leadership in a simple manner, I use three key concepts – influence, ideas, and initiative. Leadership is about influence, in that it is fundamentally about a human interaction where people have an impact in the lives of other people and in our society as a whole. Leadership is about ideas, in that it is not just maintaining the status quo but looking for what is ahead and how things could be different for the world. Leadership is about initiative, it is not just a theory or esoteric concept, it is worked out in the very activity of everyday life.

As a woman in a leadership role in a not-for-profit organisation in Aotearoa/New Zealand I am constantly exploring what I can learn from others that will enrich my understanding of my leadership approach and responsibilities. This research gave an opportunity for me to hear and learn from the participants, and has hopefully enriched the wider discussion of leadership with some fresh perspectives.

1.1 The research question and approach

This piece of exploratory qualitative research asked five women leaders of not-for-profit organisations the question "What is in your kete?" The participants were invited to explore, through reflection, metaphor and conversation, what resources they already carried with them and to explore how these shaped their current leadership role.

The impetus for this research arose out of numerous conversations that I had with other women leaders of not-for-profit organisations, that I encountered through my own leadership role. I was often hearing some nervousness among my peers about whether they were equipped or experienced enough for leadership of organisations to whom they felt passionately committed. There was talk of 'just being a mum', 'wanting to serve but not always knowing how', and 'I do not feel I have that much to offer'. I suspected that what is put in Curriculum Vitae when applying for a job might

not tell the whole story of what women bring to their role and understanding of leadership, particularly in the not-for-profit sector. As a leader in this sector, I am aware that some women have come to leadership roles without as much formal or academic training as they think would be helpful, and there is not always a lot of money and time available for 'professional development', but I wondered if women might have more resources to equip them in leadership than they realised.

The particular approach of this research arises out of my personal journey of identity. I have identified as Pākehā for most of my life, while knowing I had both Māori and Pākehā heritage. Over the last six years I have had the opportunity to explore and engage with my Māori heritage more fully and I am growing in my understanding of what it means to be a person of two streams - he tangata awarua (H. Collins, 2004). It was my desire to express my two cultural streams in my research project, while not excluding those whose cultural identity was different from mine.

I believe that the choice of the central concept of the kete is a natural one for telling women's story of leadership. Across many cultures it is very common for women to carry some form of bag or basket with them – whether it be a handbag with everything they may need for the day, a basket for food, or a woven sling for carrying children – so I thought that participants of any cultural heritage could relate to the central concept. Within Māori culture, the weaving and carrying of kete is commonly (although not exclusively) associated with women in the community (Puketapu-Dahm, 2006) making it a particularly appropriate metaphor for telling women's stories.

I also believe that the choice of kōrero or conversation, rather than the more traditional interview, resonates with the way women gather information and insight about one another – often chatting together in relaxed small groups, listening and sharing to each others stories.

There is a lot of leadership literature available for perusal but I wondered whether there is uniqueness to leadership in the not-for-profit sector that is not currently explored or explained in the existing body of research. When I mentioned to others

that I was thinking of exploring what women had in their kete, I was met with an overwhelming number of women asking if they could tell their story as part of the research. Many of these women indicated that the perspective of women in the not-for-profit sector was largely untold, and significantly unheard, and I was encouraged to embark on this project.

1.2 Not-for Profit/Social profit – what is the best language?

Currently there is ongoing discussion around what to call the sector that is the focus of this research. Commonly a five-sector model is used to analyse our economy:

- The public sector – which includes all those organisations that are owned by the state
- The business, private, or 'for profit' sector
- The 'third sector', social economy, social profit sector, volunteer sector, nonprofit, not-for-profit, non-governmental (NGO), independent or charitable sector
- The household or personal sector
- The community sector

The focus in this research is on the middle category of the five listed above, although there is significant overlap between the third and final categories and so it is possible that both of these are included when people refer to the not-for-profit sector (Statistics New Zealand, 2007).

There are currently critiques of all the labels commonly used to describe both the organisations and the sector as a whole (Tennant, Sanders, O'Brien, & Castle, 2006).

- 'nonprofit' – can be interpreted as indicating that the organisations bring 'no profit' or benefit to society
- 'not-for-profit' – describes part of the nature of the organisations in this sector but does not fully encapsulate the positive purposes of these organisations
- some feel uncomfortable that the title 'charitable' makes the sector sound as though they are reliant on handouts and does not appropriately describe many of the organisations in this sector

- ‘volunteer’ sector does not adequately describe that some in the sector are ‘paid employees’ of organisations but focuses more on the reality that the organisations in this sector have high volunteer participation rates
- ‘the third sector’ does not say anything meaningful about the sector, only that it is not one of the other sectors, and for some has negative connotations from the previous description of parts of the world as ‘third world’ which conjures up images of poverty and hardship

A recent trend has been to explore the use of the term ‘social profit’ or ‘social economy’. Two of the participants expressed a definite preference to refer to the sector as the social profit sector, as they viewed the work that they were doing as actively contributing an investment or benefit in the community or wider society. Others in the kōrero were still not convinced that it was the best term, but recognised that no term used to refer to the sector was ideal at this stage.

While many of these different terms will arise when there are direct quotes, or when the participants themselves used a variety of descriptors, for the purposes of this study I will be utilising the term ‘not-for-profit’.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

The following is an outline of what is addressed in each of the sections of this thesis. This first chapter has introduced key objectives and the research question, which will be considered throughout this thesis.

Chapter 2 outlines some of the layers of literature and existing research that has a bearing on this research project. I begin with the basic concept and theories of leadership. I then narrow the focus a little more closely by examining specifically some of the research delving into women’s perspectives on leadership. The next step is an examination of some of the special characteristics of leadership in not-for-profit sectors globally. This is followed by an exploration of some of the uniqueness of leadership in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context. The final focus is on the immediate

research context, of women in leadership in the not-for-profit sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Chapter 3 provides some greater understanding of what the kete means as concept and as metaphor in Te Ao Māori. I then briefly discuss the theoretical underpinnings of this research project, before outlining in more detail the process undertaken – from the selection of the participants, through to the steps of the multiple methods approach (using both kete and kōrero), and how the data was analysed – finishing with the ethical considerations taken throughout this research.

Chapter 4 is an opportunity to gain insight into the richness of what was shared through the participants' kete and kōrero.

Chapter 5 outlines three of the key themes that arose out of the offerings of the participants in response to the question "What is in your kete?"

In the final chapter are some concluding thoughts and a number of questions, which could warrant further enquiry.



Chapter 2 Literature Review

The focus of this research, women leaders in not-for-profit organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand, has elements that are each areas of considerable research and debate. Some of the research that impacts this project is outlined below.

I will begin with leadership. I will distil the most significant contributions that relate to this project from an area of considerable literature, research projects, discussion and assumptions. Following that, I will examine some of the literature addressing the particular experience of women in leadership and then leadership in the not-for-profit sector around the world. Then I will introduce the reader to some of the literature describing the unique characteristics of leadership in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context. I will then outline the key information that describes the reality of the not-for-profit sector in this country. I conclude with current research that exists that highlights the perspective of women in leadership in the not-for-profit sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

2.1 Leadership

I argue that a century ago leadership was largely a male domain. Writers refer to a tradition of Charismatic or Hero leadership, where the 'Great Man' theory was most dominant (Burns, 1978; Greenleaf, 1977). This often centred on authoritative, visionary, objective, and powerful leadership (ideally with some moral constraint) and which was, almost universally, a masculine image.

Over recent decades the breadth of leadership research has expanded as we look beyond leadership as something that is the purview of only a few outstanding people, to an understanding that leadership is something exercised by nearly all of us in some

way, shape or form during our lives. This new breadth of understanding makes it harder to define but more important for each of us to understand better.

> I view leadership as the most important part of the work that we all do and the influence we have in our lives. There is leadership – potentially - in most actions and sometimes it is the most common of actions in which we can exercise extraordinary leadership. Leadership is work that serves valuable purposes, be those purposes to help people around us to grow, to adapt, to support, to learn, to do new things, to take responsibility, to take risks which unveil formerly unseen possibilities (Sinclair, 2005, p. xi).

2.1.1 The origins of leadership

Family and personal history

Early events in leaders' lives have been of interest as people seek to understand how admirable leaders have developed their skills and values of leadership – exemplified through the popularity of biographies about people considered successful leaders. It is only more recently that research has been looking more closely at the link between personal backgrounds and leadership values and practices. Some elements of one's personal history that are coming under greater academic scrutiny include one's family, childhood, culture, education, occupation, work experience, role models, and prior leadership experiences (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005). Increasingly researchers are discovering that life narratives are not only 'who am I' stories but also include at least implied answers to the questions, 'how have I become a leader?' and 'why have I become a leader?' (Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

Leadership often emerges when contexts are difficult and challenging, and leaders are people who are not only focused on the now but have a vision of how things could be (Ligon, Hunter, & Mumford, 2008). These 'contexts' can be experienced from the very beginning of life and outstanding leaders are often those that are able to 'make sense' from whatever they encounter. Accounts of leadership development in leaders' life stories are organised around four major themes or proto-stories: leadership development as a natural process, leadership development out of struggle and hardship, leadership development as finding a cause, and leadership development as a learning process (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 403).

Many of people's early life experiences occur within the context of a family. Parents are often the first models of leadership that are identified, and within the family unit is where many of the first leadership lessons are learnt. Some research has been carried out to see if birth order of people who have siblings has particular leadership outcomes. Mant's research discovered that many of the leaders in politics, business and society were first-born in their families (Mant, 1983).

When considering influences on leadership there are also questions about whether there is a genetic link to leadership or whether it is primarily a learned belief and behaviour (De Neve, Mikhaylov, Dawes, Christakis, & Fowler, 2012). The life stories studied as part of Shamir and Eilam's research included participant perceptions of themselves as 'born leaders' as well as 'late bloomers' - who describe their leadership as a learned or later development in their life (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 404).

Culture

Culture, which is a key aspect of any person's life and identity, has been the focus of examination to discover links between cultural values and leadership approaches and beliefs (Dickson, Den Hartog, & Mitchelson, 2003). An initial international leadership research project - known as the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) project (House & Javidan, 2004) - looked at nine different cultural dimensions – uncertainty avoidance, power distance, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, assertiveness, future orientation, performance orientation, and human orientation – and established that different cultures valued and responded to different leadership approaches, although many of the transformational leadership values, outlined in a later section, were embraced by a wide range of cultures (Trompenaars & Voerman, 2010).

Role Models and mentors

Another factor that is often included in the influences on a person's understanding of leadership is the contribution by role models and mentors. Role models are people that have provided some example of leadership which have provided inspiration and learning for those that follow. Role models may be studies from afar (often through

the use of biographies (Gattung, 2010; Welch, 2009)) or be people with whom there is some personal connection (Hartman, 1999; Shamir & Eilam, 2005). While there is some overlap between these two concepts, mentoring is a relational experience through which one person empowers another (Elmore, 1998), and may occur in formal and informal ways, with peers or with an intergenerational component, and is a valued part of leadership learning in life (Aurora, 2004).

2.1.2 Theories of Leadership

In an effort to understand leadership more fully and to draw out transferrable learning from the lives of people admired as leaders, there has been a move to develop a variety of different models of leadership that help us understand different aspects of this large topic. There are a number of models that provide helpful insight into understanding the situation for women in leadership of not-for-profit organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand, including the general area of transformational leadership and the more specific models of servant, authentic, and relational leadership.

Transformational Leadership

In the last few decades, the leadership theory landscape has changed dramatically and now some would argue that leadership is a concept caught between two paradigms – leader as hero and, more recently, post-heroic leadership (Tremaine, 2007). Burns is identified as one of the key architects of this paradigm shift when he introduced the idea of there being both *transactional* and *transformational* aspects to leadership. Transactional leadership refers to the exchange relationship between leader and follower to meet their own self-interests (Bass, 1999). It describes aspects of the leaders' work that is about the 'business of getting things done' (Boehnke, Bontis, DiStefano, & DiStefano, 2003).

Once the idea of transformational leadership was introduced it was picked up by a number of researchers and developed in a number of different models. Bass argued that transformational leaders achieve 'superior results' by focusing on the 'Four I's' – idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration (Bass, 1999).

My critique of Bass' model of transformational leadership is that it still has significant echoes of the hero paradigm in that the 'Four 'I's' are still framed, in essence, from the perspective of the leader. Others have sought to broaden the paradigm, such as Kouzes and Posner (1995), whose five point model involves 1) model the way, 2) inspire a shared vision, 3) challenge the process, 4) enable others to act, and finally 5) encourage the heart.

'Transformational leadership' has become a key phrase in leadership discussions, but it is not always a concept that is used clearly or consistently. Shields distinguishes between 'transformational leadership' (and its focus on the transformation of the institution) and 'transformative leadership', which seeks to include the consideration of the character of the leaders themselves (Shields, 2003). Burns' initial proposition of 'Transformational Leadership' focused more on the transformation of the organisational performance beyond expectation rather than a transformational focus on teams and 'followers' (Burns, 1978).

Servant Leadership

One key area of leadership research that has particular relevance to this research project is the growing field of discussion around Servant Leadership. When Greenleaf was first describing his theory of servant leadership he used phrases such as 'an innate value and desire to serve', building 'trust' in those who are being served in leadership, and 'foresight' in order to 'act constructively on that knowledge when given a chance to act is derived from their ethics and is a foundational component' (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 26). Servant leadership models accommodate a broad range of worldviews, and there is research which suggests that servant leadership may be relevant and constructive for discussing leadership across a range of cultures (Trompenaars & Voerman, 2010). Servant leadership also has the potential to offer 'organizations a leadership approach grounded in values, ethics, morals, and empowerment of others' that may be more in keeping with not-for-profit organisations (Boyum, 2006, p. 1).

The research around Servant Leadership focuses on six common dimensions of behaviour by leaders. Firstly, there is *Voluntary Subordination* – where the leader exhibits a willingness to take up opportunities to serve others, whenever there is a legitimate or perceived need. Secondly, the *Authentic Self* – servant leaders are able to work behind the scenes willingly without constant acknowledgement or approval from others. Thirdly, *Covenantal Relationship* – servant leaders engage with and accept others for who they are, not for how they make servant leaders feel. Covenant based relationships, are intensely personal bonds marked by shared values, open-ended commitment, mutual trust, and concern for the welfare of the other party. Fourthly, *Responsible morality* – since the exercise of authority and power always entails ethical challenges in every leader-follower relationship, servant leaders also ensure that both the ends they seek and the means they employ are morally legitimized, thoughtfully reasoned, and ethically justified. Fifthly, *Transcendental spirituality* – servant leaders often exhibit a holistic, and integrated life. Finally, a *Transforming influence* – servant leadership is contagious. The personal transformation that servant leaders bring about in others occurs collectively and repeatedly, and in turn, stimulates positive changes in organisations and societies (Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008).

Authentic Leadership

In the past decade another model of leadership that has received a lot of examination and discussion is that of authentic leadership. Avolio and Gardner (2005) particularly promote the concept of 'authentic leadership', which includes an element of follower self-awareness and self-regulation. Shamir and Eilam (2005) argue that authentic leadership differs from other models of leadership in that its focus is on leader attributes and self-understanding rather than behaviours, which means that there could be authentic or inauthentic transformational leaders (or servant leaders, or relational leaders and so on)(p. 398).

The appeal of authentic leadership theories are that they are strongly values based, incorporate a high value on reflection and self-awareness, promote relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, and with the desired outcome being positive self-development for both leader and follower.

A recent piece of research in Aotearoa/New Zealand examined the relationship between authentic leadership and the outcomes of job satisfaction, team performance and follower authentic leadership (Tapara, 2011). Using a quantitative approach (via an Authentic Leadership Questionnaire), it found a link between authentic leadership and the leader/follower relationship, but it found inclusive links between authentic leadership, and job satisfaction and team performance.

However there is a lot of confusion in the body of research as to what is meant by 'authentic' – it can mean real or genuine, self aware or examined, not hypocritical, entirely revealed or committed, congruent or reliable, trusting or trustworthy, to name just a few perspectives (Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011). A particular view of authentic leadership is taken by researchers such as Shamir and Eilam (2005), who argue that authentic leadership is where a person leads as an expression of their true self, where people lead from a framework of belief or conviction, and where leader uniqueness is acknowledged and developed.

Relational or Friendship leadership

As I consider leadership in an area often referred to as the 'Social Sector' it would be natural to learn from models that place relationships at their very core. Rosener (1990) developed the concept of 'interactive leadership' which encourages participation, shares power and information, enhances the self-worth of others, and finally energises others to do their work. Relational leadership theory seeks to explain more fully the impact and outcomes of relationships on the leader (such as mentoring) and the way in which leaders interact with their followers. Intriguingly there has been recent examination of relational leadership being described in terms of friendship leadership – primarily utilising friendship as a metaphor for the way leaders may relate to followers, but recognising that what begins as a symbol may eventuate into real life friendship experiences.

> The fullness of experience we could expect from our relational lives is lost because the mutual assistance, approval, and support that friendship promises is not fully realized in our relationships and, as such, has resulted in a somewhat anemic discourse. Considered sentimental and selfish, friendship is dismissed as

> inconsequential, and then stored away with other matters abandoned and forgotten. Sharp's metaphor of the cultural attic implies that, along with an accumulation of the lost and discarded, lays the treasure of friendship whose value is yet to be discovered (Fredericks, 2009, p. 1).

2.1.3 Applied leadership theories

Leadership literature not only focuses on understanding the theory of leadership, it often seeks to give helpful principles or advice for the outworking of leadership – to be applied to the work context or to life in general. Two such popular writers are Jim Collins and Stephen Covey, both of whom were mentioned and discussed during the data gathering of this research project. I also introduce the developing works of Amanda Sinclair, who has researched leaders in Australia, and whose insights are particularly relevant to this project.

One of the most popularly discussed studies into leadership models and 'success' is the work of Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great* (J. Collins, 2001) where he studied specific companies, that are not necessarily the 'top' companies but ones that have shown remarkable and notable growth above the norm for other companies in their sector, and identified five common characteristics in all these organisations. One of the key characteristics is known as 'Level 5 Leadership' which does embody many of the transformational leadership qualities discussed above.

Collins has followed his book 'Good to Great' with a monograph entitled 'Good to Great and the Social Sectors' (J. Collins, 2005) that looks at how his leadership perspective might be specifically applied to the not-for-profit sector. Interestingly, he highlights the complexity around being a 'Level 5 Leader' in a diffuse power situation common to the not-for-profit context, even though there is often an assumption that the not-for-profit sector should be an 'easy' environment in which to exercise transformational leadership because of the prominent discourse of 'values'.

Another popularly cited writer in discussions of leadership is Stephen Covey. Two of his works that were discussed in the course of the data gathering of this research are '7 Habits of Highly Effective People' (Covey, 1990), and 'First Things First' (Covey,

Merrill, & Merrill, 1994). Many of the themes raised in transformational leadership theories are echoed in these habits but applied in a way that is easily accessible for the general reader.

Amanda Sinclair

Dissatisfied with the dominant heroic model of leadership, which she felt was out of touch with the contemporary demands of organisational leadership in a global society, Amanda Sinclair has researched and written about leadership that has much to enrich this research project.

In 1999-2000, Sinclair and Valerie Wilson interviewed thirty leaders to explore ideas about leadership and cultural diversity, and outlined their findings in a book entitled *New Faces of Leadership* (Sinclair & Wilson, 2002). Three themes emerged from their research of leaders in business and public life. First they discussed the importance of the 'Roots of Leadership' – including family structure and early experiences and concluded that it is unwise to ignore personal antecedents when seeking to understand leadership and that successful leaders have often undergone significantly dislocating experiences, which were interpreted as negative experiences at the time but which ultimately worked out as leadership strengths later in life (Sinclair & Wilson, 2002, p. 40). The second theme explored the 'Routes to Leadership' which identified a multiplicity of pathways into executive leadership roles and the importance of 'border crossing' experiences – such as working in a variety of companies or countries – to develop a rich array of leadership skills. Their final theme considered the capabilities and strategies common to the people they heard from, which included elements of reflectiveness, humility, openness, listening and learning, dialogue, challenging status quo or prejudice, and the courage to step out into the unknown (Sinclair & Wilson, 2002, p. 60). Ultimately they concluded that the global leadership context needed a new type of leader who has:

- Ways of putting their own values in context, reflecting on how those values have come about and how they shape and limit leadership practice;
- Well-practised habits of being able to hear and recognise the validity of different ways of looking at and experiencing the world;
- Identities which do not rest on membership of a single social group or tribe but are able to inhabit multiple groups and cultures without feeling threatened or paralysed;

- Courage to stand up to the status quo, and argue for and practice a different way of doing things (Sinclair & Wilson, 2002, p. 112).

McLeod-Jones (2004) used Sinclair and Wilson's framework of the roots, routes, and routines of leadership as the basis for a masters thesis investigating a group of five leaders in the New Zealand context. His findings affirmed many of Sinclair and Wilson's findings, and also indicated that there were no examples of mentoring received by the respondents, and that 'on-the-job' training was valued above formal training by the leaders in his study.

Building on the earlier research, Sinclair then wrote another book entitled *Doing Leadership Differently* (Sinclair, 2005).

> For men and women in organisations, being different as leaders means asking what their leadership work is for, and whose agenda or interests are advanced by it. It involves standing up for work that is valuable and important, and insisting on doing it in a reflective and compassionate way, not simply capitulating to imperatives generated by an overpowering boss, truculent client or invented sense of urgency. Leadership of this kind risks the individual being scape-goated, being singled out as 'not a team player' or not 'on board' with the interests of the organization. Yet, in a wider sense, taking such a position is exactly what leadership is often about.
> Doing leadership differently also means bringing the whole self to the job, not living in camouflage. This can include many things: asserting values that are important but have been crushed under the weight of other priorities, bringing other parts of the self to the role, the sexual and gendered parts, the trusting and generous parts (Sinclair, 2005, p. x).

Sinclair does not attempt to determine whether men and women have different styles of leadership, but she argues that gender contributes to different experiences and expectations of leadership. She has a section about men in leadership, in which she examines masculinities in managerialism – such as metaphors and models - and the importance of making these masculinities visible in the corporate environment if there is a commitment to make the organisation's structures more inclusive. Sinclair then has a section about women in leadership where she revisits themes in *New Faces of Leadership*, in more particular focus, by examining the family and background influences on leading women, identifies obstacles to women acquiring power, and discovering different ways women exercise influence in a gendered work environment. She finishes her book by confronting the resistance to systemic change as well as the

opportunities that doing leadership differently may afford in the competitive and culturally complex global stage.

Sinclair took a further step to develop her propositions to challenge conventional leadership theories in another book entitled *Leadership for the disillusioned: moving beyond myths and heroes to leading that liberates* (Sinclair, 2007). She communicates two key ideas about liberation and leadership: first, that leadership as a practice and a body of thinking needs to be liberated from itself; and second,

> … is that the purpose of leadership should be to liberate. Good leadership aims to support people (including leaders themselves) to make thoughtful choices about what to do and how to influence. Leadership can liberate us from confining or oppressive conditions – imposed by structures, others and ourselves. Rather than being used as a means to compel compliance and conformity, to dominate or prescribe, leadership can invite us to imagine, initiate and contest. Proceeding with a liberating intent requires leaders to be acutely conscious of power relations, to commit to using power and authority ethically, not in competitive self-interest or to control others (Sinclair, 2007, p. xix).

In the course of the book, Sinclair outlines some practices of liberating leadership – which include going back into personal histories, working with power, bringing bodies into leadership, and 'breath and mindfulness'. She then explores the deeper implications of seeking to lead differently – through identity work, spirituality and leading with less ego. This ultimately leads her to the conclusion that:

> Part of our task in learning about leadership is not to learn how to do it, but to learn how myths of leadership have come to have a hold on us. Our task is not to perpetuate an unthinking set of assumptions about what makes a leader, but to probe deeper into where our hungers for leadership come from and what effects they have (Sinclair, 2007, pp. 183-184).

2.1.4 Leadership and power

An aspect of leadership, which is important to engage with, but is complex to understand is the relationship between leadership and power. Many of the words that we use to describe leadership – such as influence, authority, persuasion, process, and empowerment – all have overlap with the concept of power. The concepts are inextricably linked, such that there are times where the two concepts are used interchangeably without any explanation of the differences (Coughlin, Wingard, & Hollihan, 2005).

Power is as difficult to define as leadership. Lane (1996) outlines different types of power as a way of describing the breadth of the concept of power.

- Coercive – fear-based; the ability to punish, sanction, force.
- Expert – acknowledge expertise, skills. Must be credible, trustworthy, relevant.
- Legitimate – position power, authority. The power of the position you hold.
- Referent – personal traits, charisma, the "halo" effect.
- Reward – perceived ability to provide valued rewards.
- Connection – networks, connections, who knows whom…
- Information – access to information, gatekeeper (/opener) (Lane, 1996, p. 278)

Blackmore argues that leadership and the power that accompanies it should be redefined as the ability to act with others and to support them to do things (Sinclair, 2007, p. 84). Themudo defines power as "… control over resources and participation in political and economic forums" (Themudo, 2009, p. 664). Sinclair identifies that we do not just exercise power through decisions and control, but also through responses such as resistance and subversion (Sinclair, 2007).

I have outlined some of the discussion surrounding the early influences on a self-concept of leadership, some of the leadership theories that exist, and some of the applications of theory to leadership practice. I will now turn to look more closely at some of the literature providing insight into the particular experience of women in leadership.

2.2 Women and leadership

Women make up nearly 50% of the workforce in Aotearoa/New Zealand, yet they are more likely to be employed in part-time work and there are very low numbers of women in chief executive and board director positions in New Zealand businesses (Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2008, p. 22). In a recent survey, at least 30% of the top 100 SX Companies had no women in their senior management teams, and only two women held Chief Executive positions in those 100 companies (McGregor, 2010, p. 22). Questions have been asked why the situation for women in leadership is so different from that of men. Unfortunately much of the research began not by asking what was wrong with leadership that so few women were singled out as leaders, but

rather what was wrong with women that they had not achieved more leadership positions (Hartman, 1999).

In essence, good (male) leaders are portrayed as visionary, multi-skilled, self-regulatory, facilitative, goal-oriented, entrepreneurial and service oriented. In a subliminal and subtle way the literature popularises women's leadership in oppositional ways and suggests that they might exercise traits characteristically described as flexible, supportive, nurturing, collaborative, collegial and socially just (Fitzgerald, 2005, p. 2). Masculine leadership is promoted as being more 'instrumental' and feminine leadership as being more 'expressive' (Embry, Padgett, & Caldwell, 2008).

Judy Rosener (1990) makes a prominent claim that there is a difference between men's and women's leadership style. Rosener's research found that men more commonly describe their leadership in transactional terms, whereas women used more transformational leadership descriptors. Bass and Avolio (1996) argued that women are not *less* transactional, but possibly *more* transformational, therefore the explanation of the different statistics of women in senior leadership may be more about the glass ceiling than gender ability. Rezvani (2010) argued that women showed strengths in critical thinking and problem solving, were careful planners, were adaptive thinkers, were comfortable with collaboration, had a higher ability to multi-task, sought to build consensus, and had strengths in communication and relationship building. Fine's research of women leaders…

> … revealed a moral discourse of leadership that features leadership whose purpose is to make a positive contribution in the world and which is accomplished through teamwork and open communication. These findings suggest a framework for developing a model of ethical leadership based on a feminist ethic of care (Fine, 2009, p. 183).

Recent research has evolved to include inquiry into the differing experiences of women in leadership, rather than being fixated on trying to 'define' the difference between the sexes.

A second aspect of Rosener's research was to engage with gender stereotypes about leadership. She argued that it was not always about a quantifiable difference in the way genders lead, but also whether there were prejudices or stereotypes that have a functional impact on the ability of women to continue to lead until they reach the most senior positions in organisations. She identified three groups of leadership traits that were part of common discourse about gender and leadership: 1) "feminine" traits – being excitable, gentle, emotional, submissive, sentimental, understanding, compassionate, sensitive, and dependent; 2) "masculine" traits – dominant, aggressive, tough, assertive, autocratic, analytical, competitive, and independent; and 3) "gender neutral" traits – adaptive, tactful, sincere, conscientious, conventional, reliable, predictable, systematic, and efficient. Interestingly she found that both men and women described themselves as being roughly equal in having traits from all three categories (Rosener, 1990).

A final question that has been more recently posed in research is whether leadership by women might be more effective or better meet the needs of any organization than leadership by men? (Eagly & Carli, 2003). If women are in any way more transformational, or at least 'equally' transformational, then shouldn't women have some sort of 'advantage' in leading, in this post-heroic paradigm of leadership? (Kolb, Williams, & Frohlinger, 2010, p. 2). Some researchers have identified the advantages of a gender diverse leadership team which means there is a broader talent pool, a wider identification with a greater range of customers, and often results in a more participative organisational culture that promotes teamwork (Kolb, et al., 2010).

I believe that it is not about finding a 'women's model of leadership' but models of leadership that women may feel comfortable and find effective in using to exercise their leadership power and responsibilities, and to advance their career.

2.2.1 Gendered workplaces

Increasingly there is a school of research that is asking 'Is it the job or occupation that is gendered rather than the style of the person in that position?' (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Many would argue that the work of pay equity and equal opportunity advocates may have succeeded in creating the conditions for an equal playing field for women in the workplace, yet the statistics still show a significant disparity between women and men being able to enjoy that equality (McGregor, 2012). Some argue that professing to promote based on 'merit' overlooks the intrinsic biases that often favour male leadership qualities and that it functionally reinforces inequity (Kolb, et al., 2010).

There are three areas that have come under particular scrutiny in looking at gender and organisational transformation: the work/life divide, the exercise of power, and foci and ways of working for the whole organisation. Some researchers have argued that unless feminist goals are worked thoroughly into organisational values there will only be token culture change rather than deep structural redress of power imbalances (Acker, 1990; Rao & Stuart, 1997).

Among scholars and activists focusing on women's lives, a consensus has begun to emerge that there is a need to re-imagine leadership (Rezvani, 2010; Sinclair, 2007). We need to find new ways to talk about what leadership is and what it might be, and to articulate more forcefully why it matters that women in far larger numbers be supported in seeking and securing decision-making positions (Hartman, 1999). "Now a second wave of women is making its way into top management, not by adopting the style and habits that have proved successful for men but by drawing on the skills and attitudes they developed from their shared experience as women. These second-generation managerial women are drawing on what is unique to their socialization as women and creating a different path to the top" (Rosener, 1990, p. 119).

One of the difficulties is that there is still very little research as to whether transformational leadership, which resonates more strongly with many women (Rosener, 1990), is actually helping leaders achieve the success criteria that their organisations set. Much of the research is that transformational leadership is aspirational, and yet a significant portion of leadership activity still reverts to the transactional or even heroic models. Transformational leadership does not necessarily lead to accolades or recognition of success (Tremaine, 2007).

Hartman's (1999) research listened to the stories of women in leadership, and let their experiences shape the observations of some aspects of an 'essence' of the phenomenon of leadership for women. Some of these women were conscious from the beginning that leading was what they were all about. Others came to that realisation late, and with strong misgivings. All of them came to the conclusion that the world needed to change and that part of this task rested with them. Regardless of their different reactions to the label 'leader', these women were united in a commitment to positive change – change that includes improving women's lives and options. "What is most valuable in these interchanges, well beyond the undeniable pleasure of personal details and entertaining anecdotes, is the variety of images, experiences, approaches, strategies, and insights that these women have to offer about what it is like, …to be a woman and a leader" (p. 18).

2.3 Leadership in the Not-for-profit sector

After exploring some of the context for women and leadership, I now turn to look at the specific leadership environment of the not-for-profit sector. The label 'not-for-profit' indicates that organisations are established without profit as their primary motive. This means that organisations may have reworked the concepts of customers, stakeholders, and performance targets (used in the private sector) to match their particular vision and structure. Dym and Hutson (2005) argue that the key purpose of not-for-profit leadership is to seek alignment between the vision and values of the organisation with the limited resources available. Some of the key challenges for not-for-profit leaders involve serving the vision and mission of the organisation, managing and developing donors, utilising volunteerism as a key resource, maintaining responsible governance and accountable systems, advocacy and encountering bureaucracy, leading across generations, and the sustainability and energy of the vision and the organisation as a whole.

There has been some research that traces how people get involved in community leadership in the first place (Bond, Holmes, Byrne, Babchuck, & Kirton-Robbins, 2008).

Their research identified circuitous rather than linear paths of emerging community participation, and 81% identified the significant influence of family, mentors, and community during childhood and youth in giving them a vision for working in the not-for-profit sector. It found 'an invite' rather than their own 'application' was most common catalyst for specific involvement in community leadership. Half of the respondents acknowledged a significant lull in their community involvement during adulthood – for reasons such as career, study, burnout, and health problems to name a few (Bond, et al., 2008, p. 53). Another research project concluded that "women sought out organisations where they could make a difference" (Kolb, et al., 2010, p. 169). Explanations for why people seek employment in the not-for-profit sector include ideals of selfless service, more opportunities for employment for women and minorities, more options for part-time work, and second earners (typically women) may be able to afford the lower wages generally paid by the nonprofit sector (Themudo, 2009).

Leadership in the not-for-profit sector includes people who are volunteers as well as those in paid employment, and many leadership roles in the sector involve interaction with a lot of volunteers with their own leadership roles in the organisation. One research project has identified six 'personal and social functions' served by volunteering – a coherency between values and life choices, a sense of empathy or understanding of the context or need, enhancement of the organisational or life goals, career advancement, relational strength through obvious connection with community, and a sense of protectiveness or advocacy for others (Snyder & Gil Clary, 1999). Another commonly identified advantage of community leadership is the opportunity to be witnesses of change – in individuals and communities (Bond, et al., 2008).

Recently a qualitative study compared the changing not-for-profit work experience of leaders in four restructured liberal welfare states – Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Scotland/UK – which found that women made up the majority of staff, clients and volunteers in this sector, though men were a majority in executive leadership and that unemployment in the private sector was prompting more men to take up paid care work in the not-for-profit sector. This report identified a significant concern in the

sector,

> … that due to the growth of outsourcing from the public to the voluntary sector, the NPSS [Non-Profit Social Sector] now acts in place of and as an arm of government and is losing its capacity for advocacy, critique and the voluntary ethic (Baines, Charlesworth, Cunningham, & Dassinger, 2012, p. 362).

There is also discussion about the challenges and disadvantages for those who work in the not-for-profit sector. For example, there are organisational and community barriers (a key one is lack of resources), interpersonal tensions balancing all the variety of human resources in a not-for-profit organisation, and personal obstacles (for example, lack of time) (Bond, et al., 2008). Looking at leadership specifically in the not-for-profit sector, is a reminder that leadership depends on a combination of individual characteristics and situational requirements (Freeman, Bourque, & Shelton, 2001).

2.4 Leadership in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context

It is now important to learn a little of what has already been discovered about the unique features of leadership in this country. An aspect of leadership in an organisational context is the interplay between organisational values and personal leadership values, but from where are these values derived? There is a danger of gleaning discourse and insight from the many leadership and management texts and models produced overseas, without considering whether they are founded on values that may not be authentic for this cultural context. If organisations are perhaps more gendered (and perhaps more mono-cultural) than we are aware, is it possible that values and mission statements may be hiding bias and incongruity that causes difficulties for leaders trying to lead from the authenticity of their life and experience?

2.4.1 Aotearoa/New Zealand application of GLOBE survey

Kennedy's research (2000) applied the GLOBE research framework to the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, although he acknowledges that the sample used was dominated by Pākehā male participants, which may have some bearing on the findings. New Zealand leaders showed a high commitment to egalitarianism (low

power distance) and cope quite well with uncertainty (low uncertainty avoidance). The study suggested that New Zealand leaders were strongly individualistic in the institutional context but this was contrasted with a high level of pride, loyalty and interdependence with family (in-group collectivism). Some would argue that the individualism is related to the 'do it yourself' mentality that may be traced back to our rugged pioneering history (Falconer, Watson, & Hofner Saphiere, 2006). New Zealand results slightly favoured what Hofstede described as masculine values (such as assertiveness, competitiveness, and achievement) rather than the feminine values of supportiveness, nurture, and care (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Kennedy's analysis showed that New Zealand leaders were moderate when it came to looking and preparing for the future. The GLOBE analysis results suggested that New Zealand had a very high expectation and value of performance and excellence, which is a complex factor in a society that also has a 'Tall Poppy Syndrome' – where the value of individual achievement and egalitarianism are seen to collide with negative outcomes (Rinne & Fairweather, 2011). New Zealand leadership was adjudged to put a high value on altruism, generosity, fairness, and care for others (humane orientation), but the New Zealand Values survey (Gold & Webster, 1990) tempers this by concluding that 40% of New Zealanders blame the poor for their own poverty and prescribe greater personal effort as the key solution (Pfeifer, 2005).

2.4.2 Māori influence on leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Māori values have been woven into the leadership context in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Māori leadership is embedded within the wider understanding of Te Ao Māori. Māori perspectives on ontology, epistemology, and community all need to be understood in order to grasp the unique characteristics of Māori leadership. While a full examination of these concepts is beyond the scope of this project I hope to highlight some key starting points to begin exploring the rich concept of Māori leadership.

Pfeifer (2005) points to some of the values that underpin Māori leadership – concepts of *mana*[1], *whanaunatanga*[2], and *manaakitanga*[3], and more. Māori leadership is also uniquely concerned with *kawa* and *tikanga* (traditional cultural processes and how they are adhered to in modern day rituals and community specific traditions). Iwi (tribal) leadership plays a unique role in maintaining tradition while allowing those traditions to adapt to an ever-changing world (Hayes, 2003). In regards to Māori leadership there are some obvious common values that impact all leadership models, but it would be a mistake to oversimplify and suggest there is a 'one size fits all' Māori leadership model (Holmes, Marra, & Vine, 2011, p. 134). Many acknowledge that the traditional leadership on the marae is being reworked in new ways in the world beyond the marae – making way for younger people and more women to lead (Diamond, 2003; Katene, 2010). Leadership is 'applied for' in the Pākehā context but is earned through the *mauri* (essence) of the community in Māori contexts (Te Rito, 2007). Titles of senior management do not immediately make someone a leader in the Māori context.

Māori women's experience of, and opportunities for, leadership are increasingly being examined. Hayes (2003) looked at women's leadership in an iwi context, and others have focused on some of the ways women exercise leadership in the wider Māori and Aotearoa/ New Zealand context (Brown & Carlin, 1994; Madden, 1997; Ruwhiu, 2009; Taukamo, 2011; Te Awekotuku, 1991). Leadership is not a static concept in many cultures and societies, and Okeroa (2007) explored what leadership might look like for Māori women in the future.

Māori model of wholeness - Te Whare Tapa Wha

It is not just values are that woven into the tapestry of Aotearoa/New Zealand leadership, there are also indigenous models and research that provide unique insight and perspective on the development of our understanding of leadership in this

[1] Mana – leadership that is earned and communally exercised

[2] Whanaunatanga – the priority of the family and community above the individual

[3] Manaakitanga – the responsibility to care for the community and the environment as we are inextricably linked with the whole of the world.

country. One such example of this is the following indigenous model of well-being developed by Mason Durie since 1985.

> Te Whare Tapa Wha, [is] a construct that compares good health to the four sides of a house and prescribes a balance between spirituality (taha wairua), intellect and emotions (taha hinengaro), the human body (taha tinana) and human relationships (taha whānau) (Durie, 2004, p. 12).

This research seeks to weave threads of leadership insight from both Māori and Pākehā traditions, in a way that embraces and affirms the special character of leadership in the Aotearoa/New Zealand.

2.5 The Not-for-profit Sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Statistics describing the not-for-profit sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand were traditionally difficult to ascertain, and so discussion about the sector has often rested on speculation and assumptions rather than empirical data. Statistics about the nature of women's particular participation in the sector continue to be difficult to establish. However since 2004, there have been a number of significant initiatives that have greatly improved the knowledge of the sector and give the opportunity to significantly increase understanding of the unique features of this sector. Some of these initiatives include more focused reporting on the sector from Statistics New Zealand, the development of the Charities Register, attention on the sector in specific reports - such as the biennial Census of women's participation, and finally Aotearoa/New Zealand's participation in an international comparative study of not-for-profit organisations.

Statistics New Zealand

Standard employment statistics, provided by Statistics New Zealand, do not collect information specifically on the not-for-profit sector; rather this information is more usually included under the industry categories of 'education and training', 'health care and social assistance', and 'arts, recreation, and other services'. Another category of statistic, that is regularly mapped, is the participation in voluntary and unpaid work (in the home and outside of the home) from a household perspective. In 2009, one-third of people undertook voluntary work in New Zealand. When one adds this proportion

to estimates of the number of people served and employed by these organisations, leaders of not-for-profit organisations have influence and input into the lives of a significant proportion of the total population in New Zealand.

Statistics New Zealand recognised the lack of information, so produced the New Zealand Satellite Account taking a snapshot of the sector in 2004-2005 (Statistics New Zealand, 2007). Some particular statistics from this report that are helpful for the context of this research are:

- Ninety percent of non-profit institutions do not employ paid staff
- Nine percent of institutions only have a paid staff of between 1-19 members, leaving one percent of institutions who employ twenty or more staff.
- The number of not-for-profit institutions as at October 2005 was 97,000.
- There are no specific statistics provided for the proportion of women employed in the sector.

The Charities Register

A recent development in the last decade has been The Charities Register, maintained by the Department of Internal Affairs, of all charities that have applied and been accepted for registration as a "registered charitable entity". While there is no legal obligation to register as a charity, for those that do there are financial and taxation benefits for both donors and organisations. Under the Charities Act 2005 essential information about each charity is publically available – such as their name, address, formal officers, and annual financial return. The Charities Register is a place where this information can be searched and accessed, and also provides some statistics about the sector as a result of this information. According to The Charities Register, as of January 13, 2013, there were 25,092 charities registered in New Zealand.

Census of women's participation

Since 2004, the Human Rights Commission has been producing biennially a 'Census of women's participation', which acts as a 'report card' for goals, initiatives, and development in areas particularly concerning women in leadership, in governance and professional areas. It was not until the most recent edition (McGregor, 2012) that this

report has looked specifically at women in leadership of what it termed the NGO sector (Non-Governmental Organisations).

Johns Hopkins Study - Comparative Study of the Nonprofit Sector.

General knowledge and understanding of the not-for-profit sector has increased considerably over the last decade as there has been a New Zealand team of researchers, with the support of the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (a policy group within the Department of Internal Affairs), working with a team from Johns Hopkins University, in the United States of America, who are undertaking a comparative study of not-for-profit organisations across the world.

The Comparative Nonprofit sector Project (CNP) is a systematic effort to analyze the scope, structure, financing, and role of the private not-for-profit sector in countries around the world, in order to enrich our understanding of this sector globally, and to provide a sounder basis for both public and private action towards it (Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, 2013). The project began in 1991, with the university project team working with teams of local researchers in thirteen different countries. The study is now operating in 45 countries – including New Zealand, which began its journey with the CNP in 2005.

In order to undertake comparative study across different countries there is a need to gather information about the not-for-profit sector in each of these countries. The team has produced two specialist working papers in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context – 'Defining the Nonprofit Sector'(Tennant, et al., 2006) and 'The History of the Non-profit Sector' (Tennant, O'Brien, & Sanders, 2008) – before they finally produced the first full report of the collaborative research teams entitled 'The New Zealand Non-profit Sector in Comparative Perspective' (Sanders, O'Brien, Tennant, Sokolowski, & Salamon, 2008). Each of these documents has provided useful data and insight into the sector being examined in this thesis.

The summary of the 'Defining the Nonprofit Sector' report (Tennant, et al., 2006) highlighted some of the strengths as well as the challenges that the team would explore more fully in the later reports.

> The nonprofit sector is energetic, innovative and vocal, offering rich opportunities for citizen engagement. Indigenous organizations create a unique shape and character within the sector, bringing centuries-old kaupapa and contributions to both iwi and society more generally that have only recently received wider recognition.
> In such a small country, the particular closeness of relations between the nonprofit and state sectors creates both challenges and opportunities. There is a tradition of dialogue and the nonprofit sector has not been backward in taking a stand on critical issues facing vulnerable populations, the country as a whole, and sectoral groups. At the same time, many parts of it, most especially those delivering social services, have become significantly dependent on state funding. Tensions have increased along with this dependency (Tennant, et al., 2006, p. 41).

Of greatest significance to this thesis, is that the 'The History of the Non-profit Sector' report (Tennant, et al., 2008) identified six recent trends: firstly, that the organisational component has become more diverse and professionalised; secondly, that there is a growing divide between large nationally organised enterprises and smaller local expressions; thirdly, that global influences are increasing; fourthly, that ethnic diversity is of greater importance; and fifthly, that religious initiatives in the sector are less prominent. Finally the report concluded that "[f]rom a historical perspective, the shift from the language of voluntarism to that of the "non-profit" (a shift which seems to have cemented in locally over the late 1990's) is the most symbolic of all" (p. 34).

The New Zealand Non-profit Sector in Comparative Perspective

Having established a commonly agreed definition and an understanding of the history of the sector, the research team was able to produce its most comprehensive report (Sanders, et al., 2008). Some of its major findings were:

- The not-for-profit sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand is a $9.8 billion industry. This was calculated by combining the operating expenditures for the year ended March 2004 of NZ$6.5 billion with an additional $3.3 billion of labour (which was the evaluated value of the volunteer workforce contribution).
- The sector is a significant employer. The total not-for-profit sector workforce numbers over 200,000 full-time equivalent paid staff and volunteers, which

represents 9.6 percent of the economically active population (Sanders, et al., 2008, p. 10).

- Comparatively Aotearoa/New Zealand has the seventh largest not-for-profit sector (proportional to the total adult population) of all the countries studied as part of the CNP.
- The not-for-profit revenue structure in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 2004 shows that 25% of all funding comes from the Government, a further 20% is obtained through philanthropic giving, and finally that fees and membership contributions provide the final 55% of all funding (Sanders, et al., 2008, p. 17).

Throughout the report, some of the issues arising from the reality of the not-for-profit sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand are identified – not all of which are unique to our context alone.

- Funding and financial issues have been widely identified as critical issues for all parts of the sector.
- While limitations on funding affects service provision directly, it also has an important indirect impact on the capacity of non-profit organisations to recruit and retain highly skilled and creative personnel. One study estimates that the median base salary in non-profit organisations is 17.6 percent less than that of the overall labour market.
- The contribution that volunteers make to non-profit activity is significant, and issues around recruiting and retaining volunteers are daily concerns for most non-profit organisations. Indeed, many interviewees in this project commented on declining availability of volunteers. While there is not clear evidence of an overall decline in volunteer numbers, demand for volunteers appears to exceed supply for many organisations, which report difficulties in recruiting and retaining sufficient volunteers to meet their needs (Sanders, et al., 2008, p. 30).

While the New Zealand government has continued to use the language of partnership and collaboration with the organisations in this sector, the complexity of this relationship was explored in the report. The change to contracted funding has increased compliance requirements for not-for-profit organisations; has increased the focus on meeting government goals rather than social and individual needs; increased 'competition' within the sector; further complicated the role of not-for-profit organisations in advocacy and service between the government and people in need; and introduced more insecurity about the future for many organisations.

The work of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit sector Project and the New Zealand based research team have provided significant information and insight into the reality of the not-for-profit context in New Zealand, but there is still a paucity of hard data revealing the reality for women, particularly the leaders, in this sector.

2. 6 Women in the Not-for-profit Sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand

While there is not a lot of research or statistics specific to the situation of women in the not-for-profit sector there are a few pieces that help provide information about the context of this project.

In 1993, 'Women Together: A History of Women's Organisations in New Zealand', which contains 132 short histories of such organisations, was published marking the centenary of women's suffrage in this country.

The final piece of research to be considered in this literature review, is the study that most resembles my research project, as far as I can gather. The study, entitled "Altruistic Leaders: Voices of Women in Voluntary Organizations" interviewed four women, in 2001, who were all voluntary leaders in governance positions of welfare organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The objectives of this qualitative study were to:

1. Examine the influences on women along their pathway to leadership and what it was like for them in the leadership role.
2. Examine the impact of gender, unpaid work, women's perception of their leadership style, skills required and volunteer relationship.
3. Examine the impact of community and organizational trends on women and their organization (Hanlen, 2002, p. 1).

Her findings were grouped under two key themes – person-centered and organisational centered leadership. Some of her findings that are particularly relevant to this research in the area of person-centered leadership were:

- That the women considered themselves in a privileged position and sought to promote the status and recognition of the volunteer contribution to society.

- That the women were driven by passion to lead altruistically, for the benefit of others.
- That relationships and teamwork were a very important aspect of leadership for the women studied.
- That their leadership approaches were in keeping with transformational leadership models, and that their preferred leadership style was described as "conciliatory, shared, inclusive, consultative, visionary, available and positive; a balanced style between social and professional" (Hanlen, 2002, p. 108).

Some of her findings in the area of organisational-centered leadership were:

- That volunteering with the organisation at the grassroots level was an asset when it came to senior leadership responsibilities.
- That the leaders sought to provide training and appreciation to volunteers to recognise the contribution they made to the organisation.
- The leaders suggested that a shared governance model, in contrast to a traditional bureaucratic governance model is more suitable for voluntary organisations, and that the relationship between Board and the Chief Executive Officer was of strategic significance.
- That funding issues was a constant challenge for leadership in volunteer organisations.
- "The ability to visualize conditions for the better, to see what changes were necessary and the leadership challenge of 'making improvements' by drawing on previous experiences, appeared to influence motivational drive for these women" (Hanlen, 2002, p. 112).

Hanlen concludes her research with this summary:

> A wide range of variables influence this complex, multifaceted phenomenon of leadership. However, it is evident that these women through their passion, commitment and dedication have the ability to listen to the wisdom of others. They demonstrate the ability to understand, predict and influence behavior. Through strong interpersonal relationships and wide networks they inspire motivation, aspire to life long learning and demonstrate a multiplicity of leadership skills in a challenging, changing, fluid environment. These are special women. Their unique leadership role deserves acclaim in a world where altruistic voices are fading (Hanlen, 2002, pp. 117-118).

This research provided helpful insight into the phenomenon of leadership from the perspective of women who were volunteer governance leaders in the not-for-profit sector, which this literature review demonstrates has not been extensively researched at this point. This research seeks to do likewise, but contributes the perspective of women who are in executive paid leadership roles in the not-for-profit sector.



Chapter 3 Research Approach

3.1 The Kete in Te Ao Māori

The approach of this research is grounded in the concept of the *kete* (basket). The kete is usually a woven basket made of *harakeke* (flax). The kete is a strong image and feature in Māori life, language, and worldview. It is a practical element of everyday life, as well as a feature in many proverbs, and also deeply symbolic of key aspects of *Te Ao Māori* (the Māori worldview). The symbolic meaning of the kete is largely around knowledge and learning.

Practically, the kete has multiple uses in Māori life. Some kete are very basic and plain, and are commonly used in everyday life. They are regularly used to carry everyday necessities, and to store food and other items in everyday life. Some kete are more ornate, utilising dyed flax or complex weaving patterns, and are used to store and protect *taonga* (treasures) (Jeffries & Kennedy, 2009). The art of weaving harakeke is one of the many ways that Māori express their creativity and culture, and the skill to complete a kete is carefully passed on from one person to another, thus preserving tradition, as well as being a relational way of passing on treasured knowledge (Puketapu-Dahm, 2006).

Along with the practical uses of the kete, it also has symbolic and metaphorical meaning within Māori culture. The kete is broadly used as an image portraying knowledge, learning, and collaborative activity in many whakatauki (proverbs). For example, one whakatauki is:

Ko koe ki tēnā kīwai, ko au ki tēnei kīwai o te kete

(You carry your handle and I'll carry my handle of the kete).

Here the kete is used to represent a task or a shared focus and the handles represent both aspects of individual and collective responsibility. "In order for two people to take hold of each kīwai (handle), there needs to be communication, cooperation, consideration"(Okeroa, 2007).

The use of the kete as a metaphor encompassing a storehouse of knowledge is borne out in its use in many names for organisations in relation to information and learning. Te Kete Ipurangi (translated as "the knowledge basket") is the name chosen for the bilingual education portal of the Ministry of Education website, which is described as "a wealth of information, resources, and curriculum materials to enhance teaching and learning…" (Ministry of Education, 2011).

The use of the kete as an image of knowledge and learning goes deeper than just a metaphor from everyday life. Its roots lie in the way Māori express foundational beliefs of epistemology at the heart of the Māori worldview. While there are a few specific tribal nuances, the general description of the origins of knowledge centres around a quest by a heroic character, Tāne, to earn the opportunity to receive the three Baskets of Knowledge, which collectively carry the knowledge of all things – te kete Tūāuri, te kete Aronui, and te kete Tūātea.

The hope of this project was to give women leaders of not-for-profit organisations the chance to uncover and celebrate what taonga already exist in their kete of knowledge, whether they are taonga with which they have filled their basket or taonga that they have found invested there by others.

3.2 Methodology

While the use of the kete as a framework for research is unique, as far as I can currently ascertain, this research project also incorporates research techniques and disciplines that are more widely employed in qualitative research elsewhere. In this chapter I will seek to describe the foundational values of this research method, summarise the method I have chosen, and examine some of the ethical considerations that have been made in this approach.

This thesis emerges from a qualitative research framework in order to comprehend what a selected group of women draw on for their leadership roles in not-for-profit

organisations (Gardner, Lowe, Moss, Mahoney, & Cogliser, 2010). It is interpretive research, in that I asked the women to spend some time reflecting on the research question; gave them an opportunity to contribute symbols or text to enhance the communication of what was important to them, and add them to the kete they had been given. I then listened, recorded and facilitated conversations among the participants, and interpreted the themes in the findings out of the conversations and the symbolic materials provided. All of this occurred within a commitment to both Māori and Pākehā approaches to research.

3.2.1 Integrated research approach

Māori-centred research

This project is based around a uniquely Māori concept of knowledge, resourcing, and learning. It was carried out by a researcher who identifies as both Māori and Pākehā. It endeavoured to honour key Māori values in my interaction with the participants and in the care around data gathering and analysis (Smith, 1999). I affirm that a Māori view of knowledge is a legitimate way of understanding the world and expressing how one lives and understands one's life, challenging the 'cultural superiority' that the Pākehā way of communicating knowledge and learning are the only valid approaches (Bishop, 1999). I hope that in some small way this research reflects some of the purposes of Kaupapa Māori research by "bringing to the centre and privileging indigenous values, attitudes and practices rather than disguising them within Westernized labels such as 'collaborative research'" (Smith, 1999, p. 125). It does, in a small way, prioritise the 'collective' over the individualistic by conducting the verbal information gathering as a group conversation rather than using an interview format. However, it does not go as far as fully understanding a Māori woman leading in a Māori context, where culture may shape different expectations and aspirations than may be held more generally among other cultures (Bishop, 1999).

This research was conducted by someone who is of both Māori and Pākehā cultural traditions, and is hopefully of interest to Māori, but it did not fully meet the aspirations

of Kaupapa Māori Research. I believe that this research project is best described as Māori-centered research (Hudson, Milne, Reynolds, Russell, & Smith, 2010).[4]

Phenomenology

This project seeks to integrate Māori-centred research with a phenomenological approach. This field of research seeks to "explore, describe, and analyse the meaning of individual lived experience" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 19). Patton suggests phenomenology is "how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others" (Patton, 1990, p. 104).

This research could also be described as *hermeneutic phenomenology* – or perhaps more specifically includes elements of *symbolic phenomenology* through its inclusion of the reflection/stimulus material (Laverty, 2003). It is trying to allow the respondents to describe their experience and understanding of leadership (phenomenology) but there is also an interpretive element (hermeneutic), which in this case went beyond just words to include symbols of their choosing. A combination of Kaupapa Māori research methods and a phenomenological approach have been used elsewhere (Foster, 2009), specifically for the synergy between the two frameworks. This may be due to the reality that both these approaches seek to prioritise the respondent's opportunity to tell their own story in a way that is authentic to their community, conscience, or context.

Using the kete as a framework, and providing opportunities for the women to contribute to the kōrero through participant selected symbolic items that have been part of a reflective process, are both elements congruent with an approach that values the metaphor as an aid to deeper understanding and communication of ideas. Lakoff and Johnson (2003), who are key proponents of the significance of metaphor for helping us express the reality we live, stated, "if we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor" (p. 3).

[4] Hudson et al identify three standards of research approaches that include Māori - mainstream, Māori-centered, and Kaupapa Māori.

3.3 Method

3.3.1 Sample selection

The heart of this research rests in the respondents and so the questions of who, what, and how many made up the research sample were of great importance. As I began my thinking around this project and had some casual conversations with colleagues and some women who were leaders of not-for-profit organisations, the initial response was overwhelmingly positive about the direction of the project. A number of women, who could have been possible respondents, were enthusiastic about wanting to participate and expressed a yearning to have their story told.

A key ethical restraint affecting the choice of sample was to exclude from the project any women that I work with in my own organisation or in organisations with whom I have a working relationship. Before any respondents were selected for invitation, ethical approval was obtained, and this process is explained in Section 3.4. Beyond that I began with a purposive sampling approach, which involves the selection of a sample according to the possession by its members of an appropriate characteristic (Diamond, 2003). The common characteristics in this research were 'women' who are 'leaders' in the 'not-for-profit' sector. This commonality was designed to assist with the focus group conversations and which gave an opportunity for the respondents to glean encouragement, resonance, and perhaps wisdom from the contributions of the other participants in the research.

The purposive sample was also limited to those women working in the greater Wellington region, as a commitment to prioritise face-to-face communication wherever possible, and to allow invitation, conversation, and follow-up interviews to occur if the need arose.

A question arose over the sample size required in order to produce data that might result in credible, dependable, and potentially transferable findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The intention was to enlist six respondents, allowing for two kōrero of three

respondents in each group. This gave a greater opportunity to gather sufficient quantity and quality of data from which to observe themes, for a project of this size, than just a single conversation. Three respondents, with myself as a facilitator, was considered an ideal size for conversation dynamics as well as practical organisation.

The initial step to gather a sample using a purposive sampling approach was to establish the criteria of 'not-for-profit' organisations . I chose to use the publically available information on the Charities Register. I was able to search for organisations that had an office address in Wellington, and then I randomly selected some organisations that had a website address provided. I looked up a number of websites to ensure that there were women in their staff team, and then sent a generally addressed invitation to participate in the research project to nine organisations, and received four positive responses. After following up with introduction interviews, a group of three respondents agreed to undertake the first conversation – which I will refer to as Kōrero Tahi.

The first woman to respond to the invitation volunteered a list of more names of possible candidates for me to follow up for a second conversation – hereafter referred to as Kōrero Rua – therefore I utilised a snowball sampling method for this second conversation group (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The woman who had initially expressed some interest in response to the first general invitation, was eventually in contact again and was able to join Kōrero Rua. Along with two positive responses to the snowball sample invitations, the respondents for Kōrero Rua were established.

It is important to note that the groups that gathered were not a representative 'sample'. They simply provided individual and collective viewpoints of people who have experienced leadership in a not-for-profit organisation through women's eyes (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002). The consequence of the sample size chosen is that I am not making broad conclusions about women's experience of leadership, but more thematic observations from these respondents' experience of leadership.

The process of inviting people to become participants began with initial contact through email or telephone, and then meeting face to face to enable them to ask any questions they needed before they felt able to agree to participate in the project. The proposed participants then received a full outline of the research project – its purpose, its process, and its promises – before they were given time to consider whether they would like, and whether they are able, to participate [see Appendix 2 Letter of Invitation and Appendix 3 Information sheet].

On the day of Kōrero Tahi, I found out that one of the respondents was going to be unable to make it due to unexpected personal commitments. It eventuated that she would not be able to make the second kōrero either and so was unable to participate in the research project, resulting in a sample size of five participants over two kōrero - one with two participants and myself, and the other with three participants and myself. At the beginning of Chapter 4 is an introduction to the two kōrero and the five participants, and to enrich the appreciation of each participant's contribution there is a kōrero and kete profile summary in Appendix 5.

It was a surprise to me that none of the respondents had met or heard of the other members of their kōrero before we met together. New Zealand is a relatively small employment community, and particularly for women who are all not-for-profit leaders it would not have surprised me if they had had prior interaction before the kōrero, but the advantage was to provide a parity of knowledge of each other and a genuine inquiry to get to know what was each person's contribution to the kōrero.

3.3.2 Kete - Reflection and Stimulus material

After the participants had given their informed consent to be involved in the research project, I met with each participant and gave them a flax-woven kete. A skilled weaver had made each kete uniquely for each respondent, expressly for this research project. They were given a month, during which time the respondents were encouraged to reflect on their leadership journey thus far. The key question that was posed to them at this stage was "What is in your kete that you draw from to fulfil your

role as a leader in the not-for-profit sector?" Already in the kete were some items to encourage the respondents to be broad in their reflection process.



Figure 1: Example of a kete and its contents given to each participant to assist with reflection prior to the kōrero

In each kete was:

- a small notebook – for them to record notes as they went about their job
- a mirror – to prompt them to 'see themselves' and to remember to reflect in the midst of whatever they were doing throughout the month
- some A5 card and photo paper – to give them the option of using images if that was preferable for them.
- a small taonga (necklace carved from bone) which illustrated that items might have significant meaning and that they could be included in the kete if they so chose.

When the participants were given the kete they were invited to use all, any or none of the stimulus material provided as a starting point, and that they were free to include as much or as little material in the kete as they felt able to do. These provided stimulus material for the kōrero (Adriansen, 2012; Chrzanowska, 2002a), which assisted in the respondents' recollection and insight from the month of reflection. They also provided symbolic or metaphoric contribution to the kōrero, and are part of the data gathered in this research.

By utilising this approach I believe I opened up the opportunity for respondents to learn from the rich tradition of Māori knowledge and leadership, even though they were not from a Māori cultural tradition. The use of the kete as a framework for the research was responded to warmly in the invitation to participate, and in the kōrero themselves.

Each piece of stimulus material was considered a taonga of the participant and respected as such. At the conclusion of the research their kete were returned to them, partly as koha (gift) for their participation but also in recognition that it is their knowledge and taonga and it is their prerogative to do with it what they will.

3.3.3 Kōrero - Focused Group Conversations

The methodological approach of the interview is being broadened by new research projects and philosophies. Denzin (2001) proposes a new interpretive form of interview called reflexive, dialogic, or performative interview. In this approach the traditional approach of the interview is challenged, not as a method of gathering information (transactional) but as a means of giving voice to a community or creating shared experience among the participants in the conversation (transformational). Stanfield (1997) chooses to use the language of 'artform conversation' or 'surface-to-depth conversation', grounded in Socrates' conversation approach to learning. Marra and Holmes (2005) used stories told about their own work and workplace to understand how someone constructed cultural identity and professional identity. Instead of using an interview method they took their research in situ, and analysed naturally-occurring workplace talk, from which to make their observations.

Clough and Nutbrown's research, which gave rise to the phrase 'Focused Conversation', involved five women over ten weeks having conversation and engaging in collaborative writing of the final analysis (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002). This specific research method would normally involve a number of conversations to assist in building rapport among the conversationalists, as well as developing a collaborative work community so that all the participants can contribute meaningfully to the final data collection and analysis.

'Focus group interviews' is another research approach that has a number of similarities with the 'Focused Conversation' approach (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Focus groups allow respondents to react to and build upon the responses of other group members creating a synergistic effect. In the context of agreement and support, one or more focus group members may enthusiastically extend, elaborate, or embroider an initially sketch account (Wilkinson, 2004, p. 180). This method allows for spontaneity because participants are not needed to answer every question, and they will contribute information when it is most meaningful for them (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002). This method is socially orientated, studying participants in an atmosphere more natural than artificial experimental circumstances, and more relaxed than a one-to-one interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 149).

While I agree with the methodological approach of the focus group interviews I have difficulty with the language. I believe that 'interview' communicates a distance between the 'interviewer' and the participants, rather than an 'along-sideness' that I am committed to as the facilitator of the group conversations. I also have reservations about the phrase 'focus group' which for me conjures up images of a group of people commenting on a product while being watched through one-way glass by the researcher! This image in no way reflects the values and approach that I wanted to underpin this research. I respond warmly to the language of 'conversation' rather than interview as this communicates to me a sharing of genuine interest. The methodological approach I am utilising could be described as 'Focused Group Conversation'. Ultimately I am committed to the 'conversation' language because "…conversations are about voice, experiences, stories and their place in research; about finding new words, new expressions and new learning about ourselves in a shared dynamic of communication" (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002, p. 82). However, in keeping with the privileging of an indigenous approach to research, I have chosen to use the language of kōrero to describe the conversations. Kōrero, is used as both a verb and a noun, and is both singular and plural, and describes conversation in community, which I believe is appropriate for this research project.

After having a month to reflect on their own, with the stimulus material contained in a kete, the participants were invited to participate in a kōrero, of approximately three hours' duration, over the course of a morning.

I was keenly aware of the importance of building trust, creating space to hear from all participants, and managing power dynamics to ensure that the kōrero were trusting spaces for people to share their taonga of learning (Wilkinson, 2004). Each kōrero began with each of us introducing ourselves. I then reiterated the question that they had been reflecting on for the past month, "What is in your kete that you draw from to fulfil your role as a leader in the not-for-profit sector?" Each participant was then invited to share something into the conversation in response to that question. Once each participant had taken a turn to share, the conversation was then opened up for the participants to shape the kōrero. Listening was a key skill for myself as facilitator and for the participants in the conversation. At times there was opportunity for careful prompts to encourage respondents to explain further and the participants were invited to ask searching questions of each other to encourage as deep data as possible (Chrzanowska, 2002b). I was keenly aware that I would get the best data if I did not dominate the conversation but allowed the participants the greatest space to share their stories. The conversations among participants were free flowing for the whole of the allotted time, and my key role was to encourage a refreshment break in the middle and to open up the kōrero to the participants again.

In order to keep the conversation as comfortable and authentic as possible, I chose not to video the conversation but utilised a voice recording approach in the interview. There was ample data gathered from the kōrero and the kete to make the observations that follow, but another layer of meaning could have been gleaned from the unspoken body language that forms part of communication if a researcher wanted to delve deeper into meaning and understanding through conversation.

3.3.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis approach employed in this project was a form of thematic analysis systemitised by Armedeo Giorgi, referred to as phenomenological analysis which has four steps (Malterud, 2012).

The first step was to read the conversations carefully and to study the kete, to get a general sense of the contributions. Initially the recordings of the kōrero were transcribed by someone with professional skills in this area, and then I twice checked the full transcription to ensure clarity and accuracy of the record of both kōrero. Participants were also given a copy of the transcripts so that they could check the accuracy of the record of their contributions.

The second step was to "discriminate meaning units" (Malterud, 2012, p. 796). From the transcripts of the kōrero and from the symbolic offerings of the participants in their kete, I identified threads in the kōrero. In keeping with the metaphor of the kete at the foundation of this research, I referred to these threads as '*whenu*' - which are the strips of flax that are prepared in order to be used in weaving of kete.

The third step was to take the whenu and identify the leadership insight contained within them. After studying the whenu for some time, it became clear that there were three dominant themes in response to the key question of what was the essence of leadership for these women, as expressed in the question "What is in your kete?".

The final step in Giorgi's process, was to synthesize the transformed meaning units, or themes, into a consistent statement or description of the phenomenon being studied. The synthesis of the data analysis is outlined in chapters four and five of this thesis.

3.4 Ethics

Permission to complete this research was obtained from the Massey University of Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) [see Appendix 1: Ethics Approval]. Although this project was officially recognised as a project with low risks of harm, a number of ethical considerations were identified from the beginning of this project and steps taken to minimise any harm to the participants or their organisations – including confidentiality, informed consent, participant ownership of their kōrero and kete, and conflicts of interest.

Confidentiality and informed consent

During the process of invitation to participate, all candidates were given as much information about the aims of the project as was practicable in an initial meeting. There was then a period of a minimum of three weeks for the participants to reflect on the project and to make sure that their participation was willing and convenient. Participants signed consent forms prior to the kōrero where they were asked to respect the confidentiality of the other participants and also gave consent for their names to be used in the research [see Appendix 4 Consent Form]. However, I have decided to use pseudonyms throughout this thesis to ensure the protection of the organisations by whom the women are employed and the women themselves. There are instances in the quotes from the kōrero, included in this thesis, where the names of organisations and people have been removed to protect the identity and reputation of the individuals and the organisations.

Participant ownership of their kōrero and kete

As already discussed, I considered both the kete and the kōrero as taonga (treasures) that were entrusted to me to care for and from which to learn. The participants were given the freedom to reveal only as much from their kete that they felt comfortable and safe to share in the kōrero. The participants were given the opportunity to contact me if they had any questions or concerns after the kōrero, although this avenue was not utilised. At the conclusion of the research, the participants' kete were returned to them.

Conflicts of Interest

As already mentioned it was important to ensure that no participants had any conflicts of interest with myself as the researcher. I had not personally met any of the participants before this project began, and the organisation with whom I am employed has no usual interactions with the organisations of the respondents.



Chapter 4 Findings

As this was a multi method approach to research, there was data to be gathered from the stories of the participants in the kōrero as well as the materials and symbols that they had gathered in their kete during the initial period of reflection.

In this chapter I will begin by introducing the participants in each of the two conversations – Kōrero Tahi and Kōrero Rua – and provide a glimpse into the kete that they brought with them to the conversations.

I will then outline the findings of the two kōrero and the appropriate kete items – which I have gathered in the framework of the three themes that emerged from the data analysis. The first theme argues that in their kete is a personal community – made up of family, role models and mentors, and themselves. The second theme suggests that there is a purpose and belief framework that underpins their leadership approach and understanding, that is continually developed through reflective practices and a commitment to life long learning. The final theme makes visible issues of power that the women engage with continually in the not-for-profit sector – expressed in both a sense of power-fullness and power-lessness.

4.1 Kōrero and Kete profiles

This first section of the findings introduces the two kōrero and each of the participants and their kete. The information has been presented so that the reader can gather some of the context and the combined content of each kōrero as well as being introduced to what the participants brought to the research through their kete. In the chapters that follow, all direct quotes from the participants are in italics, while quotes from other literature is recorded in Cambria font. To remind the reader of the characteristics of the kōrero and the participants and their kete there is a fold-out summary of the profiles in Appendix 5: Kōrero and Participant profile summary.

4.1.1 Kōrero Tahi

Kōrero Tahi took place around a dining room table, on the morning of May 14, 2012.

As outlined in Chapter Three, the original intention was to have three participants but for personal reasons one person who had initially agreed to be a part of the research was unable to make this kōrero at the last minute, and was subsequently not able to join the second kōrero and so was unable to contribute to this project.

The women for this kōrero had responded to the initial invitation letter sent to organisations from details gathered from the Charities Register (Department of Internal Affairs, 2013).

During the kōrero two women took pleasure in discovering that they had quite a lot in common. Both women were thirty-one years of age. Both had held private sector employment in banks. Both had experience and specific interests in communications. Both were Chief Executives of organisations with paid staff teams of only 2-3 people, but were engaging with regional centres of volunteers nationwide.

One of the women in this kōrero works in an organisation in the 'People with disabilities' category and the other in the 'Promotion of volunteering' category, using the Charities Register classification (Department of Internal Affairs, 2013).

Along with the points of connection, the two women brought their own kete and their own perspectives to the kōrero that unfolded together.



Figure 2: Corrie's kete

Introducing Corrie:

Corrie was born in Palmerston North, and her parents still live in that city. She has one older sibling, who lives abroad.

It was important to Corrie to include elements in her kete and in the kōrero that speak of the history of volunteerism, by family and also in her own personal history. Throughout her work in the private sector she was volunteering in a variety of capacities – for example, on boards for not-for-profit organisations and facilitating the corporate volunteer programme at her workplace. Even as she works as an executive leader in a not-for-profit organisation, she continues to volunteer in at least three other associations and is a Justice of the Peace.

Corrie is a New Zealander of Asian ethnic origin. Her ethnicity is a key part of her identity as a person and a leader, and there were a number of items in her kete that related to this particular cultural heritage.

When the kōrero took place Corrie had worked as a not-for-profit executive leader for ten months. Corrie had previously worked in media and communications in the private sector, but at a leadership seminar she attended seven years earlier she realised that she wanted to be an executive leader in a not-for-profit organisation and in the proceeding years she took opportunities that would develop that possibility.

> *Corrie: And I think even a lot of my friends as well, have witnessed how I got to where I am, and I've always sort of been quite frank with them, saying, "I want to work for not-for-profit in a leadership role, this is what I'm going to do." And they would say, "you could earn so much more money in your comms' [communications role] as a contractor or something", and I would say, "I could but this is not what I really want to do."*

While Corrie is clear that the money is not as good as the private sector, she identified that she thought that she would be able to bring a wide range of capabilities to the not-for-profit role. Corrie was the only participant to discuss what she thought might be further in the future for her, and she was clear that not-for-profit was an important step to a further goal in the area of social enterprise – which is seen as having one foot in both private and not-for-profit sectors.

> *Corrie: I always wanted not-for-profit because, I guess my next step, I'm really keen to get into social enterprise…. I don't quite know what, but something that kind of marries the business stuff as well as the heart, community stuff.*

Some of the taonga in her kete included:

- Silver bangles
- A brochure from her organisation
- A momento from a breakfast event at which she was the key speaker
- Box of paper clips – all pink except one green
- Tiny pink scissors
- Her name badge from the "New Zealander of the Year" awards
- A thankyou card from a fellow not-for-profit female executive leader
- Earrings
- Picnic – mini chocolate bar
- A token from Japan
- A business card from a different volunteering context.

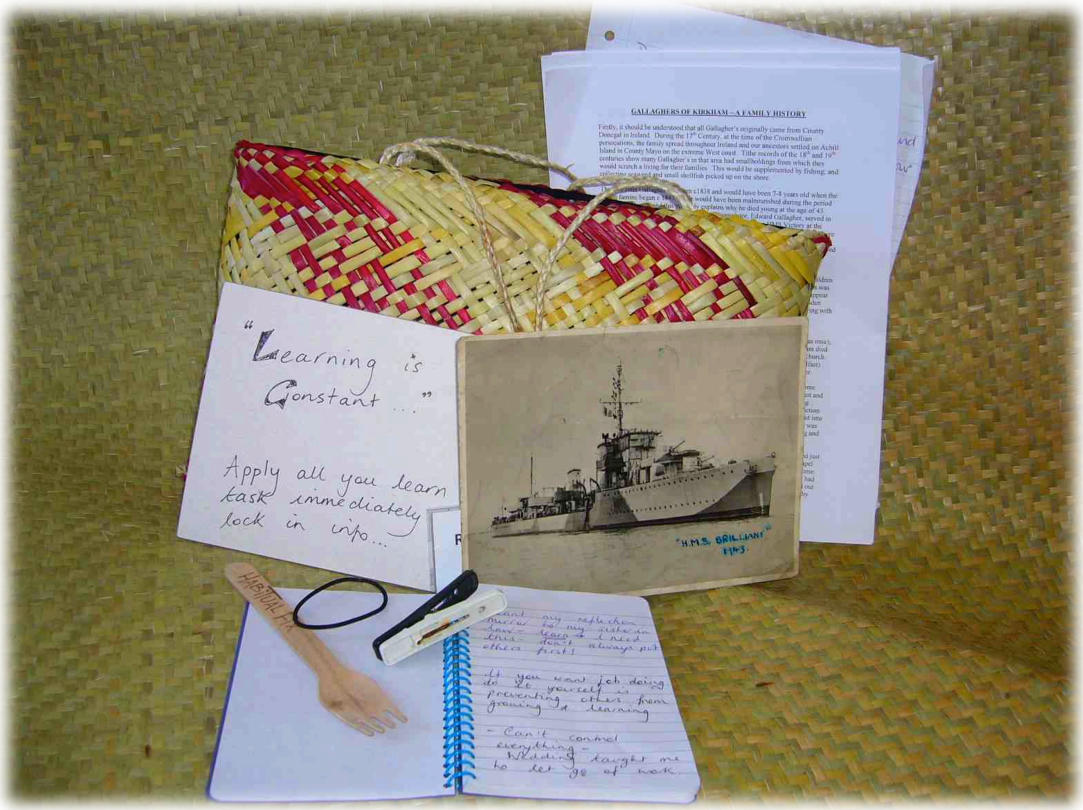


Figure 3: Ruby's kete

Introducing Ruby:

Ruby was born in England and migrated to New Zealand in 2003. She had recently had the opportunity to learn a lot more about her family history going back a number of generations, which had brought new knowledge and added to her understanding of her personal history and heritage. She had very recently married and this had provided an impetus for her family to travel out to New Zealand and she was able to spend some time with them in person, which had not been possible in recent years.

Ruby was not clear that the not-for-profit sector was where she wanted to be employed – rather this was the sector that provided an opportunity for her to continue the work she had begun in the private sector in media and communications. While she was working in a communications capacity, the organisation's National Director left and she fulfilled the role in a temporary capacity for a few months, then asked to be appointed permanently in the role. When the kōrero took place she had been in the National Director role for three and a half years.

While it had not been part of her life goals, Ruby has discovered a real sense of serendipity about her opportunities as a leader in the not-for-profit sector.

> *Ruby: I think once you have worked for a non profit, like I didn't plan on getting into non profit management, I think a role in a nonprofit, …sometimes it can be almost as corporate as a corporate role, but when you become the [Chief Executive] or the national director your role changes quite drastically in terms of what you get out of it and things like that. And once you've tasted being such an integral part of so many people's lives, never as much as you want to, but actually making a difference to how people live, rather than just crunching their bank accounts or what have you, there's a feeling that you probably don't want to be, personally I don't want to be without. I don't want to work for someone; I want to work for lots of people.*

Some of the taonga in her kete included:

- Quote on card – "Learning is Constant"
- Historical photo of HMS Brilliant from 1943
- Family history (recently gathered).
- Notebook with some written reflections
- A namebadge with her name and her organisation included
- A Peg
- A Hair tie
- A Fork – from Habitual Fix

4.1.2 Kōrero Rua

Kōrero Rua took place in a corporate space on the morning of June 7, 2012.

In a similar way to Kōrero Tahi, although the women had never met before the kōrero together, they found a number of points of commonality. All of the women in this kōrero were born into larger families (the smallest was four and the other two were families of nine and eleven children), all three shared personal histories of significant mobility in their early personal histories, and all now had children that they were parenting at different life stages.

Once again, utilising The Charities Register classifications, the three organisations that the women in this kōrero worked for covered the categories of 'education/training/research', 'people with disabilities', and 'social services' (Department of Internal Affairs, 2013).



Figure 4: Natalie's kete

Introducing Natalie:

Natalie is very proud of her 'Coaster' heritage – she was born in Reefton but attended ten different schools in ten years of schooling. She is the third of four female children. She has been married for twenty-eight years and she is also mother to four boys – all of whom she home-schooled over a period of sixteen years.

Natalie's employment journey in the social profit sector is almost entirely within the one organisation. She left school upon completing her School Certificate and initially worked in clerical and financial roles. She left the paid workforce at the age of eighteen, with the birth of her first child, and when she was able to re-enter the paid work environment she was able to get meaningful work with the organisation of which she is now the Chief Executive, that met her other life needs at the time. She has taken opportunities within the organisation - in both a paid and voluntary capacity – which has ultimately led to the opportunity for her to take up her current executive position.

Natalie: … I can remember saying to the Board when they were interviewing [for the new Chief Executive], because I was Deputy Chief Executive at that point, and I said to them, "look, I would like you to know upfront, I'm not going to think badly of you if you don't appoint me to the job and I'm not going to walk out the door if you don't appoint me to the job, so if there's somebody better out there I want you to employ them. But…if there's not somebody better out there (laugh),…

At the time of Kōrero Rua she had been in the Chief Executive role for one year.

Some of the taonga in her kete included:

- Family Tree on a card
- Promotional pin for her organisation
- Baby bootie
- Cross necklace
- Bag of Couscous
- Rock
- Paper Doll Chain on which was written names of mentors
- Empty box
- Notebook with written reflections



Figure 5: Marie's kete

Introducing Marie:

Marie was born in England but to parents who were New Zealand citizens. Her father was a Doctor and was in the United Kingdom to further his specialist studies and work experience throughout Marie's childhood years, which entailed living in a number of different cities for a few years at a time – including some time spent in Northern Ireland in the late 1960's/early 1970's during a period of significant civil unrest.
She is the fifth of eleven children in her family (ten of whom are girls). She is a mother to two adult children.

Marie is the eldest of all the participants in this research project and has also had probably the most diverse past work experience of all the participants – spanning from school bus driver, to accountant, from an initial training in physiotherapy. Her journey to leadership started with an accounts position in the private sector, included administrative roles in a school and a government department, before she took up an administrative role in a large not-for-profit organisation. From then she has continued

to work only in the not-for-profit sector, and she had a clear goal to aim for executive leadership roles within the not-for-profit sector and some of what she wanted to achieve while in those roles.

> *Marie: Because the thing is, and it sort of hooks into the social profit thing title too, is that, for me part of my passion in this sector is about helping organisations become business like. Not corporate but business like, and I'm quite clear in my head about the difference.*

At the time of Kōrero Rua she had been a Chief Executive of a not-for-profit organisation for three years.

Marie brought a single item in her kete to the conversation – a photo of her entire family when she was an adolescent, which she normally kept in her office. Her singular kete item emphasised its significance in communicating what was important to her self-concept of leadership. She contributed significant verbal taonga into the kōrero and still embraced the opportunity that was provided by this research, even though she did not contribute many symbolic taonga into the kōrero.



Figure 6: Julie's kete

Introducing Julie:

Julie was born in New Zealand but her parents are of Dutch descent and migrated to New Zealand after World War II in search of a better life for them and their family. Julie spent a majority of her childhood in the South Island but the family moved around every three years to a variety of New Zealand towns. Julie is the youngest of nine children.

Julie's journey into executive leadership of a not-for-profit organisation was the most recent of all the participants, as she had only been in the executive position for two months when this research took place. Julie was originally employed as a secondary school teacher and she described herself as a teacher by training. Her journey into executive leadership in a not-for-profit role had included an administrative managerial position with the organisation she was currently leading, and she had alternated between work roles in both the public and not-for-profit sectors over recent years.

She was originally intending to take a hiatus in her paid work pathway, when this opportunity came before her.

> *Julie: …[W]hen I was thinking about applying for this job, because it wasn't part of my plan,… I was contracting for a few months, just 'all care, no responsibility, have a life for a change', and I was going to be spending 2012 doing my OE, travelling, fabulous plans, …Then this job came up, the one job that could have derailed that, you know. So I was standing there, thinking over Christmas, "should I apply?" or "do I put my OE on hold again?" And in the end I thought, "what if I don't apply and some bloody wally gets it!"*

Some of the taonga in her kete included:

- Notebook
- 3 story cards and one story explanation card

4.2 What's in my kete?

The next section of the findings outlines the whenu, or threads of the data gathered in this research, which formed the basis for the discussion that follows in Chapter Five. The research question asked was "What is in your kete?" and was exploring what was the essence of leadership for the women, contributing their perspective through metaphor and conversation. After analysing the data from the kōrero and the kōrero, it became apparent that three themes emerged: Firstly, there was an extensive personal community in their kete; secondly, there was sense of purpose and a web of beliefs; and finally, there was power in their kete.

4.2.1 Personal Community

Family at the core

Both kōrero began by discussing that the most significant inspiration in their kete was the impact of family on them as leaders.

> *Natalie: It was interesting listening to you talk about your family and thinking, family are very key and the way you're brought up as a family, and the importance of parents, and siblings in the development of leadership skills. And opportunities for leadership too within a family…*

Both kōrero mentioned a number of family members who had influenced the women, even though they came from two or three generations before, and the women may have only met them rarely, or not at all. These figures were mentioned for their life long demonstration of a commitment to volunteering, community involvement and courage in the face of difficult circumstances. Ruby included a photo of the ship on which her grandfather served during the war and Natalie and Ruby both included genealogical information in their kete. A grandmother, who exemplified community serving and values in the way she related to her village neighbours, particularly inspired Corrie.

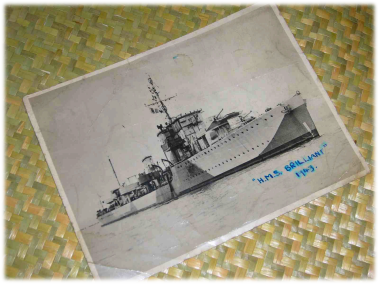


Figure 7: HMS Brilliant 1943, on which Ruby's grandfather served in WWII

Marie brought only one 'item' in her kete and that was a family photo that was over forty years old. This photo was something that she had in her office always and she drew a lot of rich meaning from its presence.

> *Marie: But I take great pleasure in making a difference and knowing that I can, and…the ability to influence the way people think. Once again this is the core of that* [pointing to her family photo].

The parental influence was considered by many of the women as the most influential. For some it was about an overall attitude to life, while for others it involved the modelling or resourcing in very specific work situations.

> *Ruby: … my dad's got a huge amount of business knowledge…. Whereas mum's sort of like the over-arching sort of inspiration for work ethic and, just sheer volume of what she did and took on, …"*

> *In Julie's notebook in her Kete: Mother – an incredible woman who loved unconditionally, disciplined fairly, behaved with honesty, integrity and authenticity and warmth, towards every person. She was absolutely a leader, but not in a paid formal sense in terms of job role. But people gravitated to her because she was caring, non-judgemental, solution focused, smart. She never stood in the spotlight herself – she was incredibly humble and her sphere was with family and community.*

> *Marie: But, what makes me who I am is this enormous family who have been wildly enquiring, and argumentative, and loving, and forgiving; and I think the forgiving thing is one of the things that we learned very early on.. and for me, what I bring with that, is now, I think that people matter most.*

The influence and inspiration of siblings seemed quite complex. For some there was an element of competition that impelled them forward in their development as leaders, while still being a support and a significant resource. All participants in Kōrero Rua talked of frequent relocation during childhood and adolescence, which echoes the research undertaken by Sinclair (Sinclair & Wilson, 2002). Some indicated that their immediate family played the role of friends as well as siblings, because the mobility led to few enduring friendships outside the family unit during this time.

> *Marie: So we learnt to deal with hard things really early. We learnt to say goodbye to friends, so I don't have that sort of history of girlfriends that I've known, and I suspect that's similar to you two because of your travels as well.*

A present implication of the earlier transience for many of the women was recognition of the impact this had on their search for mentors and support from others in the sector.

> *Natalie: … but one of the things that I don't do very well is talk about the problems or the difficulties, and I think part of it is having grown up having moved all the time - the family was the only constant source in your life and you didn't talk about troubles outside of the family…*

Learning from being a parent…

Kōrero Rua, which happened to include participants who were all parents of school age children or older, focused for some time on the richness of learning for leadership that came from their role and responsibilities as a parent.



Figure 8: A bootie represented learning from being a parent in Natalie's kete

> *Natalie: I look back on… the things that have enabled and developed leadership skills in me and the things that I draw on as a leader, and a lot of it relates back to parenting where I think you learn so much about leadership, and, in particular I think things like decision making and letting go and not being the centre of attention, making sacrifices for others, and putting the needs of your children ahead of your own needs and the needs of the wider family, ahead of your own needs.*

Other aspects of parenting that they found they drew on in their leadership roles in their organisations included coaching and mentoring skills, planning and budgeting, multi-tasking, the ability to bounce back from criticism, a realisation that the little jobs and the dirty jobs all need doing and that it may well have to be you who does them – that it is not primarily about hierarchy but community; a realisation that stress and boredom are both part of the natural territory for a leader; and an example of what servant leadership could look like.



Figure 9: Natalie's husband is represented as a rock

For Natalie another key support for her as a leader is her husband.

> *Natalie: I've got a fantastic husband, twenty eight years we've been together now, and he's my rock, and I can tell him anything and he's completely 100% safe, 100% of the time. That's the person I take it to when I don't have anyone*

else to take it to. I mean I'd actually love there to be a few others that are working in a similar position to me that I could have that sort of same sense, … I guess it builds over time and as you build trust relationships but I've never been around long enough to do anything.

Culture

For one of the participants culture was more of a focus than for the other women involved in this project. Corrie included bangles in her kete, which visually, and audibly, depicted the significance of her Asian heritage. One aspect of her culture was very visible to people that she met – through her skin colour and her name – but she also discussed the opportunities she encountered to subvert people's perceptions.



Figure 10: Bangles represent culture in Corrie's kete

Corrie: That's interesting because I, depending on my mood, if someone asks me where I'm from,… they're asking the Asian thing. If I'm in a bad mood I'll say, "oh I'm from Palmerston North".

Role models

Role models were helpful in providing examples of what to do or what not to do as leaders. The respondents identified that they had stored up learning from people who were complex characters. They were often able to identify both positive and negative learning experiences from the same person.

Ruby: …I guess you don't have to like someone for them to be of importance or of use in your life. Sometimes the best lessons are the ones we learn from unexpected quarters, aren't they?

Julie: …and so for me for some of the people stuff that has supported my development of leadership has been the incredible privilege of working with some incredible leaders over my career journey as well, and so, I've written quite a lot in my little notebook here about different people and about different bosses I've worked with.

Mentoring and professional networks

The respondents all spoke of looking for and utilising extra support people from outside their organisation to draw wisdom and perspective. They identified the importance of having peer as well as mentoring type relationships in their kete.

*Corrie: I haven't got **a** person, but similarly I've got a number of people that I go to for specialist knowledge, but they would be peers of people the same age as me, I haven't got so many, perhaps older than me.*

Ruby: [speaking of an informal mentor] …she just really puts everything into perspective for me and just helps me sort of take it down a level and look at it from more of an overarching point of view. But that's been invaluable, absolutely invaluable.

Corrie and Natalie have been instrumental in establishing a peer networking and support community for women in leadership. Julie had recently joined a specific small group of leaders, which she hoped would function as peer support for her in her new role. While there was general agreement that they sought peer and mentoring relationships to enrich their leadership, Marie also identified a level of honesty and vulnerability that went with those relationships with which some of the women wrestled.

Marie: And the other thing I was really interested in, was you [Natalie] were talking about having a fabulous network because I don't. I have dear friends and dear family, but I've always been, almost too proud to tell colleagues that I'm struggling.

Natalie: [when she first moved to Wellington and took up the Chief Executive role she]… decided that I had to build some networks because… it helps the whole - it smoothes the whole journey and opens doors for the organisation as well.

Leadership - born or made?

As well as reflecting on the formative nature of families, Kōrero Rua had some discussion that they thought leadership was about natural talents and abilities as well as something learned through opportunity and experience.

Marie: … We're all going to talk. One of the things that makes me a leader is I like to talk (laugh).

Natalie: And you can see it through your whole leadership journey. I look at other things that I've taken on, in much smaller scale leadership roles, but each time you take on a leadership role it changes how you are in that space...

Marie: … there must be something natural about us that actually means we're always filtering up to that level.

The impact of what you wear

In Kōrero Tahi there was some discussion around the strength drawn from what they wear in order to project an image of competence as well as establish their point of difference.

> *Corrie: It's funny those symbols of clothing and whether that's a theme with women's leadership or not, but I'm pretty conscious, if I'm going into particular meetings, about what I'm wearing… I've got my favourite red shoes and I think there's something about red…*
>
> *Ruby: …And I think it can be two things, it can be something to hide behind, you can almost mask yourself with these beautiful clothes or these bright clothes, or you can totally draw confidence from being in those bright clothes. Again it's an age thing, when you're younger you probably hide behind those clothes a bit, a bit of a mask, but as you get older you've got the confidence to actually, you wear your clothes, you're in them and they bring you an inner confidence that is portrayed rather than masking who you are.*

Work/Life balance

While tensions around work/life balance are not unique to the not-for-profit sector the women identified it as a significant issue for them. While some reflected that it may be due to the increased responsibility of their leadership role rather than the context itself, others identified the significance of their work to serve people in need and the enormity of the need compared to the availability of resources to meet that need as being something difficult to leave behind at the end of 'work'.

4.2.2 Purpose and Belief

The second theme, which gathers many of the whenu of the data, is that the women were grounded in a sense of purpose for working in the not-for-profit sector and that they had a belief framework about life and leadership.

Christian Faith as a foundation for leadership



Figure 11: A cross necklace represents Natalie's Christian faith

In Natalie's kete was the taonga of a cross necklace. This symbol was further explained in her notebook as to the significance of her faith as a source for her leadership. Firstly, it provided the model and principles

of the leadership theory that shaped her leadership – that of Servant Leadership. It provided a "*source of comfort/reflection in difficult situations; drive to give my best; patience; acceptance at those times when I fail (David, Moses, other great leaders failed but were still okay); A 'sense' of much being required (Luke 12:48 – to whom much is given much is required).*" Overall her faith provided a 'sense' that her leadership was part of a greater purpose and scheme. It gave Natalie a sense of perspective that *"Nothing I do is so important; it's who I am and how I handle myself that is. God is bigger than all (offers hope when it feels hopeless)."*

Personal mission statement

Kōrero Rua spent some time talking about phrases that they had formed over a period of time that they found helpful in times of difficulty or decision as leaders. As already discussed, Natalie grounded these phrases in her Christian Faith.

Julie, in particular, had brought a number of these key sayings into something that she expressed as a "personal mission statement" which she wrote in her notebook in this format:

> *I've chosen*
> *this lifetime*
> *to live each day*
> *with integrity*
> *and as a great adventure,*
> *that I have much to learn and much to give*
> *knowing*
> *that the view is always worth the climb.*

Julie returned to her personal mission statement, in part or in whole, a number of times throughout the kōrero, indicating it was something that she found helpful in a number of different situations. Both Natalie and Marie picked up Julie's metaphor of climbing and tramping throughout the kōrero and used it to discuss the leadership meaning they attached to this image.

Marie had not formed such a clearly defined mission statement, but she had a number of pithy sayings that were guiding principles for her leadership.

Marie: Because my mantra, when I don't know what I'm going to do, is 'this is hard but it's never too hard'.

Marie: 'which part of the world is going to stop if this doesn't work'.

Marie: … I describe it as 'putting families in the middle of our decision making'…

Learning from mistakes

One key resource in all of their kete - revealed in Ruby, Julie, and Natalie's notebooks and in Julie's story cards, and throughout both kōrero - was the learning from mistakes they had made. While these experiences were difficult in the moment, they reflected on the learning that arose from these experiences as deep and abiding.

Marie: I made some really major mistakes… and it was based in arrogance and overconfidence. And that taught me very, very quickly in a very harsh way, that it's actually okay not to be perfect; … how it's influenced me is both to be more thoughtful about the consequences of actions, but it's also taught me that it's okay to make mistakes. The difference is that you can acknowledge them… rather than get defensive about the fact that I'm not perfect.

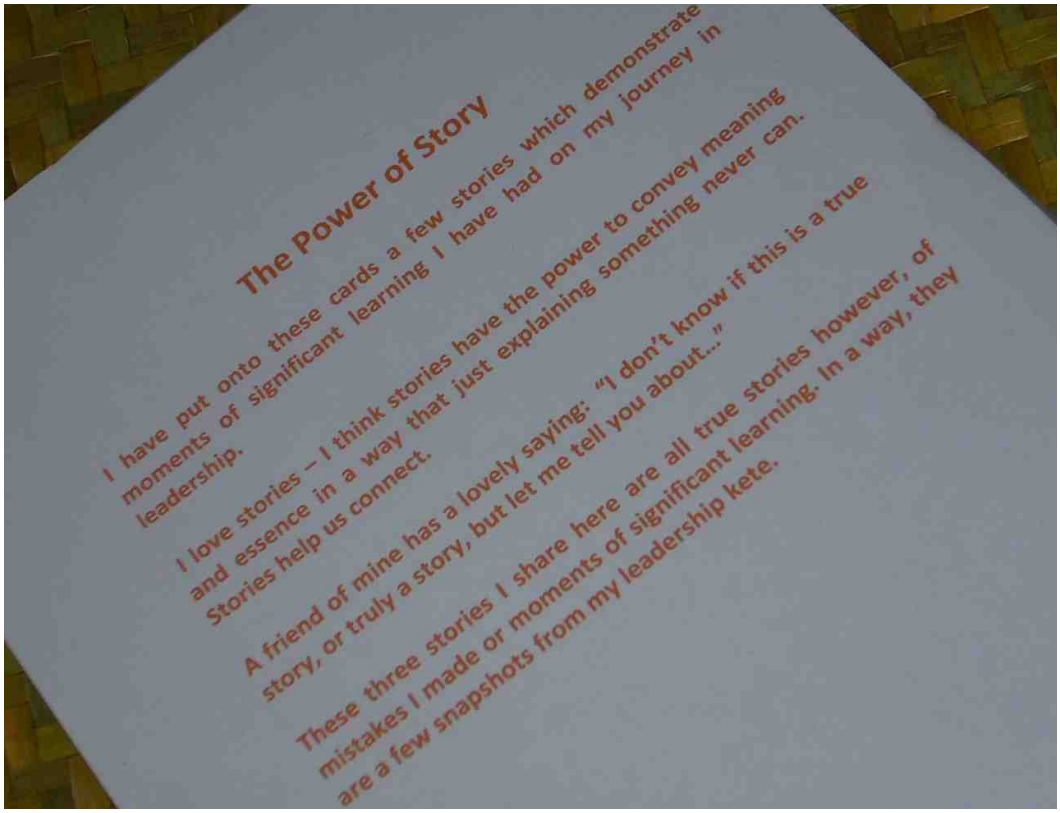


Figure 12: 'The Story Card' from Julie's kete

Julie: …So I'm sure they forgave me, I'm sure you know, it was a small thing, but, literally I felt nauseous for a year when I remembered that mistake and so

the clarity of that learning.... So that kind of learning moment stays with me all the time...

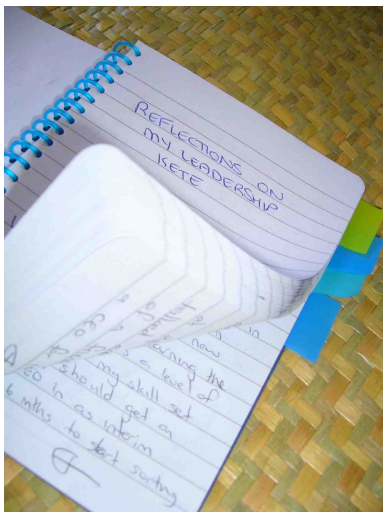


Figure 13: Notebook with Julie's reflections in her kete

Journaling/reflection

A recurring theme throughout the kōrero was an agreement on the importance of reflection as part of their fulfilment of their leadership role. While most identified the significant pressures on time and also on the mental calmness to undertake this task, they repeatedly saw it as valuable and insightful. How they went about this reflection or mental processing varied among the participants – from the use of a notebook, to a regular (or impromptu) walk sometime in the day, to conversation with specific people, to Corrie's use of more contemporary forms of social media such as Facebook.

The value that they placed on reflection helped them have a positive response to the research process of data gathering utilised by this project.

Ruby: This has been so valuable from like a personal point of view as well, … just hearing again all the similarities and I'm sure there's more that we can do for each other,… like more support and more opportunities we can afford each other as well. It's been really, really valuable to take part in as well, so thank you….I feel like I've been to counselling (laugh).

Julie: I've really enjoyed the process of the reflection.

Purpose

Along with the basic information about their employment journey into the not-for-profit sector, the women volunteered information about their motivations for working in the sector throughout the kōrero. While this also was not a specific question asked, various comments were made that pointed to the 'why' of leadership in the not-for-profit sector for the participants.

Perhaps the most common phrase in both kōrero in this regard was 'making a difference'.

Marie: I take great pleasure in making a difference…. Once again this is the core of that [pointing to her family photo].

Ruby: Hopefully I'm making a difference through my decisions every day as to the kind of care they get or the information or the support that they get with their illness. That's probably the most important I suppose.

Related to making a difference is the recognition that these women are committed to focusing on people above profit.

Julie: …it's the centricity of people, in terms of leadership and decision making and influencing and coaching and supporting and taking people on a journey, and all going together - that kind of cool stuff. And I absolutely hold a similar kind of articulation about what's the impact, what's the outcome and what's the process of how we care for people; how do I demonstrate care for people through that, so that even in the hard decisions you do the process with care and with integrity?

One other key appeal about working in the not-for-profit sector was the flexibility that the women identified was possible with their working conditions that they did not think would be as easy to find in the private sector. As part of both kōrero the women discussed how the flexibility in work hours gave them the opportunity to meet the needs of their extended family members.

4.2.3 Power

During the kōrero the direct use of the word "power" only occurred a few times. It was used once in relation to the power of decision-making, which was understood to be a key aspect of leadership. A second example was an animated discussion in Kōrero Tahi about the impact of what one wears, and whether they had the courage to wear red clothes, and other unique fashion choices, particularly when networking in environments they expected to be predominantly attended by men: *Ruby: I'm getting there but it's definitely a confidence and a power thing I think, the colours you wear*. The final occasion, where the language of power was used most explicitly, was voiced by Julie when she observed:

Julie: … in a tough time or the boring time or whatever, what bubbles up for me is the reminder that actually, I've chosen this. So I have agency and power in it.

Throughout the kōrero and in the contents of the kete was evidence that these women were wrestling with issues related to power and leadership – particularly as it applied to the not-for-profit organisational context.

Working in a team

An appeal, for these women, of leadership in the not-for-profit sector, is the camaraderie with colleagues that comes from working with people who go beyond their 'job description' to achieve common goals.

> *Corrie: [when discussing how her small office team all pitch in to help with a variety of administration tasks – such as the posting out of communications or preparation for events] …which I really enjoy because actually that builds incredible team culture. And mutual respect because actually we're all sitting around the table having to do that crazy task and under some ridiculous timeframe! And you don't get that in other sectors, in other businesses.*

All these women recognised that they had a wide range of abilities, which was helpful in meeting the demands of their leadership roles. But they also discussed the temptation to do things on their own when they actually had opportunities to empower others through sharing the workload. During the period of reflection prior to the kōrero Ruby initially wrote in her kete notebook…

> *Ruby: …"if you want a job doing you do it yourself", but then I came back to it later and I realised that, that's kind of preventing others from learning and growing as well. The more you do, the less you allow other people to explore what they're capable of.*

Confidence through what you are wearing

In Kōrero Tahi, Ruby and Corrie spent some time discussing the impact of what one chooses to wear. Their conversation around clothing styles and colours revealed some of their perception of the deeper meaning and impact from the fashion choices one makes on a daily basis.

> *Ruby: … it's definitely a confidence and a power thing I think, the colours you wear, you get the shoulder pads going on, and like the heels and automatically you're walking higher and your shoulders are back and you walk into a room like, look at me, I'm here to do business with you, …*

Importance of volunteering

There was an acknowledgement of volunteering as important and valued by the women in a number of items in their kete – including documents which highlighted their volunteer contributions even above the work they did in the private sector, and the expressions of gratitude to others in the sector – and throughout both kōrero.

> *Corrie: And it had all these sort of nice list of things that I did, but it's kind of like, it just reminds me, because the order of how they're listed, there's my volunteer work first and then my paid job…. So it kind of, like I put this in here because it really made me think about I lead as a person first and then, in my belief and stuff, and then I'm the organisation, and I think, in this sector that's so much more prominent than other sectors because, when I worked at the bank I was a banker and I there was lots of stuff that I couldn't say, even though I ran the staff foundation and the volunteer programme...*

Broad skill set

It is often said that someone may be "a jack of all trades, and a master of none", to describe a generalist without the strength of a specialist. Ruby described the broad skill base required as leaders of not-for-profit organisations as being *"a jack of all trades, and master of **many***". This idea was also picked up in Kōrero Rua:

> *Natalie: ..we talked about the fact that it requires, we think, probably a broader skills set because you actually don't have the luxury of purchasing in the skill sets to sit alongside, so your Chief Executive actually needs to have a multiple skills set rather than just one.*

Achievements and Ambition

In looking back over their journey of leadership the women identified that there was encouragement to be garnered from realising that they had experienced achievements in the past.

> *Julie: Flicking through that notebook is part of my way of reminding myself that I can achieve, that I can solve problems, that I faced and mastered challenges in the past and will do again – it helps me with the self-talk of positiveness. I think often women in particular are likely to think we aren't good enough to be leaders, that we can't do it. I certainly feel that self-doubt and concern that soon 'they' will figure out what a big fraud I am.*

Corrie celebrated some of the achievements in the past, but also looked forward to what was in her leadership journey ahead, when she discussed future dreams of working in a social enterprise role.

Leading in organisations with limited resources

A significant part of the kōrero was centred around the difficulties of leading organisations that are trying to meet significant social need, have high aspirations of social improvement, but are functioning with very limited resources.

> *Ruby: It doesn't matter how organised you are, with that volume of work to do, like there's no amount of diarising or outlook planning that you can possibly do that would keep you on top, so, more money and more staff would be great.*

What many expressed was even more concerning than present resourcing issues, was a vision of the future, with levels of contraction beyond even the current level, and this weighed heavily on the women as leaders.

Facing the challenge of funding

It was not surprising that the challenge of finding the financial resources to function as an organisation occupied a significant part of the kōrero. There were three key streams of funding for the organisations that the women in this study were involved with and each had unique challenges and complications.

Firstly, there were those who received government funding. Leaders of organisations where this was the primary source of funds, were acutely aware of the impact of the Global Financial Crisis on government funding decisions, and were concerned about the effect this would ultimately have on them. They discussed the uncertainty about the longer-term reliability of government funding for not-for-profits and the worry about whether alternative funding may need to be sourced without much notice. They also discussed how government funding was often tagged for particular purposes and communities and the challenge of how to respect that while trying to fund a whole organisation. For some there was the complexity that part of their organisational mission was advocacy to public sector organisations on behalf of disadvantaged clients, while at the same time the 'public purse' was a significant funding stream for them and that at times they recognised a tension to avoid 'biting the hand that feeds them'.

A second significant source of funding for many not-for profits is that of public donations. Organisations, which sought to maximise the benefit from this funding stream, placed particular demands on their leaders. There was a lot of emphasis placed on communication and care of the current donor community and high expectations of encouraging the existing donor base to be increasing their contribution to the cause. There was a lot of pressure to be creative and come up with new and fresh approaches to encourage new donors to contribute to the organisation, which at times gave rise to a sense of competitiveness with other not-for-profit organisations.

A third key source of funding for not-for-profits, which impacted the nature and demands of leadership for the women in the kōrero, is in the area of trust funding. This source combines many of the difficulties of both government funding and public donations. Much of the funding from trusts is very specifically targeted and must be shown to be used solely within the given constraints or returned to the trust. This source of funding has a high administration cost – finding out about trusts, completing application forms, and providing specific information about the organisation, its needs and its outcomes in a way that give your organisation the best chance of receiving funding from trusts where applications far outweigh the disbursements. With the not-for-profits working with skeleton staff, the tasks related to funding were often carried by the executive leaders in these kōrero.

The pressure on not-for-profit leaders, in regards to funding, not only focused on how to get enough funding to meet the current needs, but a concern about the longer term sustainability of the cause, when funding only seems to be contracting.

> *Corrie: …oh I got my pink scissors too… because this is relevant for the funding. I was thinking that all get snipped, little bits at a time, and then at the end the blades will get worn eventually (laugh), and the scissors won't work…*



Figure 14: Pink scissors from Corrie's kete

Dealing with skill deficit

The women identified that there was often managerial expertise that they were lacking in their kete, and described a variety of ways of dealing with this deficiency. Some of the workplaces were able to provide support and resources to help the leaders gather the expertise they needed.

> *Natalie: The organisation were really good, when they appointed me they, well gave me access to the NZIM mentoring programme, and so I've got, I didn't want a social profit mentor I wanted a business mentor. I knew I needed to take the organisation down a different route and I needed a different style of thinking to what I would encounter in all of my other places,…*

Some of the women talked about the persistent negotiation needed to get the board to see the value of investing in their skill development – most particularly in the area of financial management – that resulted in their ability to undertake short courses at formal learning institutions while still performing their full role as leaders of complex organisations.

The demands to have the leadership role encompass so many different skills and tasks was also impacted by one of the other key concerns for the women – working with limited resources. Some women expressed that they were in a position to be able to 'buy in' expertise when the leadership considered it necessary while other women were confronted by the lack of money for this kind of situation.

> *Corrie: … some of the legal stuff that's happening at the moment,… it's way over my head, but I think… you've got to be the expert in everything. I'm trying to realise I don't need to be the expert in everything but I do need to know enough, or I need to pull in the people that know and get them to vouch for me, and if I'm not the expert there's no point in me trying to pretend I'm a lawyer because I'm not. ….*
>
> *Natalie: I have to be honest and have to say, our organisation is financially able to buy expertise, so that's my preferred starting point if the organisation needs it.*
>
> *Julie: And yet in that challenge [a plan for organisational restructure] there are massive pieces of expertise that we desperately need but we don't have the money to buy it…. And so I try to be very targeted about that spend but knowing that I have to spend it.*

While there is a plethora of leadership literature, which is designed to be a helpful resource for leaders, the women spent very little time talking about this as an element in their kete. Only two names - Stephen Covey and Jim Collins - were identified in Kōrero Rua, as providing insight that they felt was able to help them lead their organisations more effectively. Kōrero Rua found that Jim Collins' (2001) metaphor of 'the bus' (getting the right people on the bus going in the same direction) had usefulness and rich meaning for them in a number of different situations. They also found Stephen Covey's insights on balancing 'importance' and 'urgency' helpful in trying to prioritise what at times seemed an avalanche of tasks to do each day.

Lack of Confidence

Throughout the kōrero was a recurring discussion around the uncertainty that the women experienced in their leadership, which was variously described as '*undiscovered fraud syndrome'* and as the '*imposter syndrome*'.

> *Marie: Do you think we all suffer, that's a terrible generalisation, but my sisters and I talk about it a lot, from the undiscovered fraud syndrome?*
> *Natalie: Yeah, I think it's in my little notebook here somewhere.*
>
> *Julie: …that sense of being… hyper aware of our failings…*
>
> *Marie: … And for me it's part of the undiscovered fraud syndrome, that I worry about quite a lot, because… if I appear in any way weak, I'm not talking about vulnerable, that's a different thing, but weak, through lack of knowledge, or through lack of experience, or lack of seeing a way forward, then there is potential for others to see me as a failure,…*

Implications of working with passionate people

Both kōrero had discussion about the value and generosity of volunteers and others who served in the not-for-profit sector with almost evangelical passion. But the women identified that there was sometimes an ongoing tension between passion and 'professionalism', which presented a challenge for them in their leadership role. One of the kōrero raised the challenges around turning down volunteer offers of service, trying to get the best contribution from volunteers, and also how they might have to ask some loyal volunteers to change their relationship with the organisation.

> *Julie: … because people are connected to the cause and the vision, and because actually, to be frank, we generally don't pay as well as they might get at other*

places, there's also a real strong sense of entitlement of democracy, decision making...

Natalie: I think it's both the great thing and the great weakness of social profit centres - its that passion and that sense of ownership and I think it brings with it a unique set of leadership challenges, and it's around communication and convincing, and it's a convincing style of leadership and there is a lot of cajoling and a lot of walking alongside. I think the amount of communication we do as an organisation compared with our corporate brothers and sisters is absolutely enormous. And it consumes an enormous amount of time, and resources…

Working with a governance board

There was quite a lot of discussion centred on the complexity of working closely with a governance board – all of whom are volunteers. The small size of many of the not-for-profits meant that the relationship with the board was a key feature of all the women's leadership experiences.

There were a number of specific challenges identified in the kōrero in regards to not-for-profit boards. Women in both kōrero described the situation where members of the board (in an authority relationship with the Chief Executive) may also be members of the regional volunteer staff, with whom the leader has quite a different kind of authority relationship. As boards are reliant on people volunteering their time and service, some of the women identified that board membership turnover meant that the board may be effective support one year and then not in the following year. Another identified that the faithful contribution of some board members that came at a cost of fresh perspective and at times was an impediment to significant organisational change.

Ruby: I guess for me, the most interesting team that I have to work with, that I've never worked under or with before, is the Board. So I'd always been in a role where I had a manager to say, 'you need to do this, you need to do that', and when I'd done it and I'd done it well, they were like, 'well done, you know, good job, excellent work'. Whereas now, working for a Board, especially a Board which is made up of volunteers from different regions, they could literally have all the business experience in the world, or they could be a carpenter, or a florist, or a farmer, and they are my employer. …my Board's good, at the moment it's fantastic, but at the next AGM it could all change, and I've got different bosses every year…

Some of the women identified a blurring between the lines between governance and management in the not-for-profit sector. Some of the board members were also connected with key aspects of the organisation's funding which made the relationship delicate at times. Sometimes the leaders looked to board members to provide some much needed 'managerial expertise' to fill skill deficits as part of their contribution to the cause, which at times made for complex working relationships. There was also some discussion that as Chief Executives of their organisations, the Board functioned as their 'work supervisor' but that protecting the volunteer contribution of Board members was often considered of greater importance than effectively supporting the women in their leadership role.

Gendered and Ethnocentric environment - Feeling like you are the only one…

Both kōrero oscillated between celebrating and being concerned about being a minority (among the kōrero this was described either in terms of gender or ethnicity or age) in a variety of leadership contexts.

> *Corrie: … And then I stopped myself and I realised, actually in so many contexts of the work that I do, I am the green paperclip amongst the pink. And going back to my Asian culture, I go to lots of meetings and I'm the only Asian. Quite often I will be, pretty much every time, I will be the youngest.*
>
> *Every time I will probably be the one saying the least in the sector discussions bit of work. And however hard I try to not think that I'm different, that doesn't fly, so actually I have been learning to try and embrace it. I think this process has made me realise even more that I just need to embrace what it is and who I am, keep my name, keep explaining how to pronounce my name …*

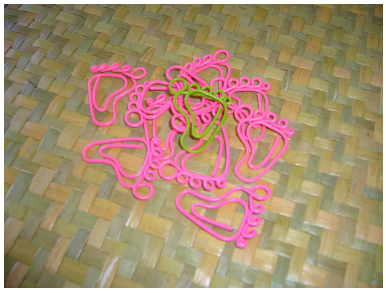


Figure 15: A green paperclip among the pink ones in Corrie's kete

Managerial courage

The women identified that they are working in a sector that is significantly shaped by volunteerism, and which is facing significant resourcing issues. Despite being leaders who are aware of their insecurity, and at times insufficiency to meet all the demands that being leaders of not-for-profits might bring, the women also talked about the importance of bearing responsibility for leadership in the midst of this complexity.

Natalie: At the end of the day, the responsibility or the burden that sits on your shoulders as a leader is to the existence of… the survival of the organisation. The mission of the organisation is important and worthwhile, and my role is to guard that into the future and to leave the organisation in a position that can continue into the future, and sometimes that is in disagreement with what people might personally want for themselves out of the organisation, and what might be of the greatest benefit, and I think at the end of the day that becomes the final yardstick really of a response.

Concluding comments

There was rich data gathered from the kete and the kōrero and I have attempted to faithfully identify the whenu or threads of meaning that made up the data, and have synthesised the data in a way that gives the reader a glimpse into the richness that is in the kete of the participants in this research.

Three themes have emerged from the whenu and now form the structure for the next chapter in which I discuss the observations and questions raised from this research data. I recognised that the limitations of time and scope in the data gathering process means that we have only scratched the surface of the rich meaning that is in the participants' kete and that their kete are much fuller than the three themes highlighted in this thesis. In the words of Ruby:

I feel like as you get older you become more comfortable with who you are, you become more comfortable with learning something from an experience, you don't just experience it for the experience, … you experience it and you take something away. And I think the older you get the fuller your kete gets.

In the next chapter, I will take the whenu of understanding, graciously and willingly shared by the participants from their bountiful kete, and weave them into the three themes that have emerged from the analysis thus far.



Chapter 5 Discussion from the Findings

The findings of this research show that the women believe that leadership in the not-for-profit sector is complex and demanding, but each woman brings a kete, full of taonga to their leadership role. One of the respondents themselves hinted at the three key themes that emerged from the kōrero when Corrie remarked: *I lead as a person first and then, in my belief and stuff, and then I'm the organisation.* In looking more carefully at all the women contributed to this research process, it is more appropriate to describe three key taonga that are in their kete as personal community, purpose and belief, and power.

Firstly, there is not just themselves as a person, but a whole community of relationships from which they are able to draw strength, sustenance and significance for their leadership responsibilities. This community stems from their earliest memories as members of a family through to the people that they remember along the journey of life. It is also a community that arises from the cultures with which the women identify.

Secondly, there is an understanding of purpose and there are belief frameworks that provide foundations for their understanding of leadership in the present. Some of these frameworks are more structured and coherent, while others appear to be more rudimentary and random at this stage in their leadership journey. For all the participants this theme is continually being shaped and honed, and is enriched by greater reflection or discussion when it is possible.

Thirdly, there is power in their kete. The power to choose; the power to influence; the power that comes from opportunity and ability; the power to learn and to serve. For all the power in their kete, they are also confronted by a sense of powerlessness – particularly in terms of personal and organisational limitations that challenge their ability to lead in the not-for-profit sector.

As I analysed the data further I found significant resonance in these three themes with some of the observations identified in Sinclair and Wilson's research (2002) and their themes of the roots of leadership, the routes to leadership, and the capabilities and strategies of leadership. The themes that Hanlen (2002) examined in reference to altruistic leaders in New Zealand find an echo here too. I recognise that my research involved a relatively small sample of five voices, and so I will incorporate conclusions and observations from these other pieces of research throughout this discussion where appropriate.

5.1 'What is in my kete?' – Personal community

When one looks at the leadership literature available the overwhelming focus is on the leader as an individual. In analysing the kete and the kōrero, I determined that what the women were revealing from their kete was more than just themselves, it was a whole web of relationships and interactions that stretch back many years before the present. Beginning from the earliest origins of their personality and identity, including the experiences they have had in life, through to later people with whom they have interacted or been inspired by along the way, all these relationships continue to be part of what enables these women to lead today.

Family

Traditionally when research on leadership introduces an examination of 'others' involved in leadership it discusses people such as followers, team members and mentors. However, the women in this research ALL began their discussion of what they carried with them as leaders, with family. While the women in this study talked primarily about family members that were closest to them – parents, children, and partners – the discussion also extended beyond these to historical members whom the participants had never met but whose impact and influence was still notable in their description of their leadership.

While family appeared to be the most significant influence on all the participants they often expressed embarrassment when talking about their family in the context of leadership. There was a sense of dismissiveness at times that the 'personal' family context would only have been of interest to the individual and not have interest beyond. *Marie: I don't want to bore you witless with my family, but this is actually what makes me a good leader.* But it seems clear from the kōrero that family is more than just an early influence but continues to shape, inspire, equip, encourage and support these women in their current journey of leadership.

As seen in the findings of this research, family have impacted these leaders in a large number of different ways. Family have had an influence on ***why*** the women have chosen to work in the not-for-profit sector. During Kōrero Tahi there was some time spent talking about examples of family members who have dedicated themselves to volunteer work in a variety of different ways. For example, there were fond reflections of a grandmother who is committed to the well being of a whole village, which continues to inspire Corrie today.

Family was identified as having a key influence on ***what*** leadership means for the participants. For the participants family has taught them that leadership is about courage in the face of difficulty (as seen in the example of early pioneering ancestors), caring without expecting reward, continual loving and repeated forgiving in the face of dealing with imperfect human beings, recognising it will involve both stress and boredom, involving a willingness to do the 'dirty jobs' that no one else wants to do, and not being the centre but giving oneself for the benefit of others. In Kōrero Rua there was some discussion around natural tendencies to speak, to influence, and to lead, but they also talked about how family had taught them that leadership was as much about a continual learning process as it was about natural giftedness.

Closely tied to the 'what of leadership' for the participants is the '***how'*** of leadership and family was the first point of reference for both kōrero in this regard. It is in the family context that first 'lessons in leadership' occurred – with siblings, or by watching their parents. For those who are parents themselves this is clearly a rich leadership

learning experience, that echoed many aspects in the complex context of leadership in the not-for-profit environment – the demand to be multi-skilled, working with limited resources, leading people who sometimes do not want to be led, and dealing with encouragements and disappointments. Family can be people that leaders turn to for professional and personal advice and expertise. Families are places where character and values are shaped.

One element that did not arise in the kōrero, that I wondered might come up, was whether family would significantly influence the '**who'** and the '**where'** of not-for-profit leadership – would family circumstances have introduced the women to a particular organisation and influenced the choice of which organisation for which they worked. This appeared to be a greater factor in the stories of volunteer leaders in Hanlen's study (2002), but does not seem to be have been a strong a factor for those in paid employment in the sector.

As part of their discussion about their families, the women discussed a number of different interactions with their siblings. This focus adds to the understanding that is being explored by Sinclair, throughout a number of her books, in which she identifies birth order as being a factor in leadership – but not always in the ways that we might expect (Sinclair, 2007; Sinclair & Wilson, 2002). A common perception is that those born first in a family are more likely to end up in leadership roles in business, politics and society (Mant, 1983). But in Sinclair and Wilson's research, and for all the members of these kōrero, the leaders contributing were not first born in their family.

> Coming second or third in largish families builds particular skills in two obvious ways. First, parental attention cannot be assumed as it can for first-borns – it has to be earned and shared. Later-borns cannot rely on their position in the family to be respected and heard and they don't have the vested interest in hierarchy that first-born children have (Sinclair & Wilson, 2002, p. 33).

Sinclair and Wilson's research also identified that those who are not born first in the family, and especially those in larger families (which was the experience of at least two of the women in this research), tend to negotiate alliances and learn to compete without alienating their siblings, which develop skills that are useful in the current employment environment.

Culture

Family are an important part of the wider discussion around culture and its influence on leadership. Cultural heritage was important to all women as they volunteered information about their ethnicity as part of their introduction to each other at the start of the kōrero.

Corrie recognised both the opportunities and the challenges that her unique cultural heritage contributed to her leadership, as discussed in the findings, and in the inclusion of a green paperclip among a container of pink paperclips. Her cultural heritage opened up opportunities to stand out from the crowd in communal settings, but also meant that she was confronted by other people's stereotypes and expectations. Corrie usually embraced her sense of difference but the conversations recognised that 'being different' was a challenge to her leadership at times.

Throughout the kōrero there was no link made between any specific leadership strength or approaches that they could attribute to their cultural particularity although the research points to culture having significant influence on leadership values and practices (House & Javidan, 2004). It was not possible to conclude how carefully the women had reflected on the extent to which their cultural particularity impacted their particular leadership approach or practices.

Childhood

In the process of introducing themselves to each other in the initial stages of Kōrero Rua, the three women participating discovered one of the many things they had in common was that during their childhood each of their families had moved around a lot and that each of their childhoods was marked by significant social and geographical dislocation.

Sinclair and Wilson (2002) have identified the significance of childhood experiences, whether they are perceived as being positive or negative experiences, as being significantly formative for shaping one's approach to leadership.

> Backgrounds and experiences add the ability to forge on alone or even against the odds. Combined with strong values against injustice and faith in fairness, or simply a very practical mindset about the importance of capturing good contributions from people, this produces an enthusiasm for promoting the interests of others. In practical terms, these leaders are ready to challenge discrimination and to take risks on their own behalf and on behalf of others. This requires what has been described as a sort of moral courage that might set them apart, or elicit criticism or even attack from others (Sinclair & Wilson, 2002, p. 56).

Models, Mentors, and Peers

While family was clearly the most significant community that the women discussed in their kōrero it was not the only community that they mentioned and valued in their kete; there was also significant discussion about mentors – both intergenerational and peer – as well as various role models they had witnessed over the course of their life.

While parents are the first models and family provide the context for our first lessons in leadership, along the way in life we come across other people who we consider models for us in leadership. In each notebook included in their kete, in the paper doll chain in Natalie's kete, and in both kōrero, there was evidence of particular people who had been formative in the participants' understanding of leadership. For these respondents they have been people they had met from past organisational contexts, people they would consider friends and others they would not, and people they had witnessed exercising leadership in other contexts. It would not have been unexpected to consider people with whom there is no relationship as role models (often through the media or history that we learn about through biographies) although the only example of this in the kōrero was the person of Jesus, which will be discussed more fully in the next section.

It was clear from the kōrero that the women were as willing to learn from 'bad' examples as much as they were from 'good' examples, and also understood that they might find instances of both of these categories in the one person. They embraced the fact that people are complex creatures who do not always get things right and that there is value in learning what you can even from people that you dislike and also that people who you admire may not always make the best choices as leaders.

Mentoring was a significant focus in both kōrero. While there was general agreement in both kōrero that mentors could be of great benefit, not all of them could specify a current 'mentor' in their lives. One participant described the value of their mentor (who was an older woman in another not-for-profit organisation) even though there appeared to be no formal arrangement (i.e. regular planned meetings) and I do not think that the mentor would have even known that she was considered as such by the participant in this research. The mentoring appeared to occur through conversations that happened at a network meeting of women chief executives in the social assistance sector. There was some discussion of the difficulties around finding a suitable mentor who might be available and accessible given the very real constraints around time and money that the women worked with every day.

Related to mentoring, both kōrero discussed the significance of peer relationships or professional support networks. All five participants were involved in groups of this nature. Two were involved in a network of Chief Executives of not-for-profit organisations in a similar field – health and disability services – although one of the participants in this network also felt as though she lacked significant peer support. Two had been part of initiating an informal women's networking group, that meets for breakfast once and month, has a few evening events throughout the year, maintains discussion threads on LinkedIn, and is advocating for more research into women's leadership in the not-for-profit sector. Julie, who was relatively new to the Chief Executive role, had just recently joined a more formal support network group, which she saw as very important for her in her new role.

Kōrero Rua spent some time discussing peer relationships and mutually sharing and caring for each other. However Marie identified that while she was keen to help others, she struggled to ask for help for herself. Both kōrero talked about times when it was difficult to find someone who they could turn to for support and guidance in their leadership.

The significance of the mentoring and peer relationships was not just expressed in terms of supporting them as leaders but also in terms of being a gift to the

organisation. The organisations benefited from the relationships, and expertise of these people and the women obviously valued these relationships in that they made efforts to spend the time and space to maintain these relationships.

Themselves

While it seems obvious to write, the women's kōrero reflected that they brought themselves to their leadership role. It is not just who they are in relation to others in their lives but also their whole physical being in their work.

There were elements in the kōrero that echoed the nature versus nurture debate in leadership (De Neve, et al., 2012). The kōrero reflected a perspective that it is likely to be both. They spoke often of the 'learning' that happened about leadership. But the findings hinted that they believed that they may have natural abilities and tendencies which predisposed them to leadership – particularly in the areas of communication, planning, service, concern for others, and the tendency to be a bit 'bossy'.

Body

Part of bringing themselves to the leadership role is the bringing of their physical body. At various stages during the kōrero they mentioned the demands of leadership on their physical well-being. This a theme that is being developed by Sinclair (2005, 2007) in her ongoing research and discovery.

> In my experience of leadership development, encouraging people to be in their bodies more consciously changes their mindset towards themselves and others. It can foster a capacity to read and feel more empathically what is going on for others as well as for oneself. Body consciousness in leadership can also promote connection with others in the moment, rather than being preoccupied with worries about the future or regret for the past. Working with a sense of one's own body is a reminder of mortality and a check on feelings of invincibility and hubris. Awareness of bodily symptoms such as bowed posture or shallow breathing allows leaders to come into the present, to pay attention to others, to notice where they themselves 'are' physically and mentally, and to put issues into perspective (Sinclair, 2007, p. 110).

The women in this research were aware of the physicality of their work and talked about a number of strategies to care for their physical well-being in their role. Julie talked about the '*dog effect',* which is the daily requirement to take her two dogs for a

walk, which is an important way to help maintain her physical fitness and also provided space for mental reflection from the day which she valued highly.

Corrie and Ruby talked about a sense of bringing themselves to leadership from a different perspective when they discussed the effect that the choice of clothes that they wore impacted how they might be perceived by others in an organisational environment and also how they felt about their own confidence in a work context. The impact of the physical was deeply felt by the women in the kōrero who worked in organisations that served in the health and disability sector, bringing a greater sense of awareness of how physical ability can affect life and the way one might be perceived by others.

Conclusions

While it is not unusual to discuss the influence of family on a leader's development, and it is clear that family have influenced the women in these kōrero, I believe that the women were trying to voice a deeper significance of their community – primarily through the family – on their leadership role and understanding. Through the use of the symbols in their kete – such as a rock (to speak about a partner), or to the language of "*my children are my grounding*", the women in these kōrero were trying to express something beyond just influence. Family continue to feed, to shape, to inspire, to moderate, and to motivate these women in leadership.

This theme would have resonance for leadership within a Māori context as it connects with the key concepts of whakapapa and whānaunatanga. For Māori, whānau and whakapapa are more significant than just influences but are the key way that people are connected to one another in community identity. It is through family connectedness throughout generations that one is connected with the land and with the rest of humanity. One of the participants mentioned her *tūrangawaewae* (place to stand) as being in the West Coast but I would also argue that for the participants their family are a key aspect of their tūrangawaewae.

If family is so important to these women leaders how can family be better considered in the work context? When one considers much of the material discussed by the participants it is in the context of talking about a 'work/life' balance. These two key aspects are set in opposition to one another. Family and personal history are considered part of the 'life' side of the equation and are usually kept 'outside' the work environment. Even in much of the research around the inequities for women in the private sector, family is considered a 'negative' factor to be negotiated – for example, finding flexible work conditions to accommodate needs of family, the time out of the employment environment to have children, the focus in the work context to experience promotion being jeopardised by competing loyalties at home.

There may be difficulty in reimagining the way family and personal history are incorporated more meaningfully into the organisational context as the discussions at times juxtaposed the concepts of professional and personal. All the women expressed a commitment to be 'professional' in the workplace and there was no conviction that family was part of that aspect of leadership. Shamir and Eilam (2005) argue that authenticity in leadership arises out of reflection on one's life stories and actually enables leaders to meet the energy, resolve, and persistence the role demands.

One corollary of the significance of family means that even someone who is 'new' to leadership roles is likely to have a rich resource of learning in their kete from being part of a family and whatever they have learnt in life up until this point. Shamir and Eilam (2005) encourage a guided reflective process on "life stories" as part of leadership development, as they provide the leader with knowledge about their deeply held values and convictions which will be reflected in their leadership approach and behaviours. This was reflected throughout the kōrero and gave rise to the second theme that arose from the data, which is the significance of beliefs and a sense of purpose in the women's kete.

5.2 'What is in my kete?' – Purpose and Belief

Along with the support and strength that comes from a community, the women expressed in many different ways that what was in their kete was a belief framework about life and leadership, and a purpose for choosing to work in a leadership capacity in the not-for-profit sector.

A lot of leadership literature today focuses on the outworking of leadership in particular contexts – for example biographies and 'how-to' books on leadership. But leadership historically belonged in the school of humanities and philosophy rather than commerce and business. This is because leadership is foundationally a set of values and assumptions, out of which arise actions and choices that are exercised in organisational and other contexts.

> I use the concept of implicit leadership theories (ILT's) to assist in making connection between one's personal history and beliefs about leadership. These are pictures or templates in our minds of what leadership looks like and who can do it (Sinclair, 2007, p. 64).

Throughout both kōrero, the women described elements of the values and beliefs that are in their kete, which they recognised were foundational for their self-understanding of leadership. Comments made resonated with a number of different theories and models of leadership, which provide insight into their framework of leadership. A number of the women revealed aspects of their personal belief systems that they felt impacted their leadership. The women also expressed a clear sense of purpose for their work in the not-for-profit sector, which was crucial to their leadership in the organisational context. Through the kōrero and in the kete included in the research there were examples of the importance of reflection and a commitment to life-long learning as key to developing and strengthening their belief frameworks.

Leadership Theories

Transformational Leadership

One can see elements of the ''Four I's" of transformational leadership - idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual

consideration - scattered through much of the kōrero and one could argue that the transactional elements of leadership caused the most angst for the women – such as applying to trusts for funding, completing compliance documentation and the like.

One element common to a lot of the transformational leadership models, that was not a clearly evident in the kōrero, concerns the element in the Kouzes' and Posner's (1995) model of 'inspiring a shared vision'. Much of the 'visionary' or future-focused conversation was negatively framed - discussion of future financial uncertainty, concern about future governmental policy, the ever-increasing need of the community they served. The woman who was leading in an educational not-for-profit organisation was the only one to speak positively about the strategic vision of that organisation. There appeared to be considerable difficulties with communally engaging with vision, in a context of a diverse 'clientele' and also working with volunteers and regional centres across the nation. Is there a different way that vision is framed, communicated and shared in the not-for-profit sector? Does the sector need transformational leaders as described by Avolio and Gardner below or is there a different way to understand transformational leaders and leadership in the not-for-profit sector?

> Transformational leaders … they may be able to transform others and organizations, through a powerful, positive vision, an intellectually stimulating idea, attention to uplifting the needs of followers and by having a clear sense of purpose (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 330).

Authentic Leadership

Building on the strong theme of the importance of family, are the participants seeking a leadership model that reflects some of the recent thinking around authentic leadership? There is significant congruence between the kōrero and the following description of authentic leaders.

> We believe the key distinction is that authentic leaders are anchored by their own deep sense of self; they know where they stand on important issues, values and beliefs. With that base they stay their course and convey to others, oftentimes through actions, not just words, what they represent in terms of principles, values and ethics (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 329).

However both kōrero echoed some of the concerns raised about authentic leadership in the workplace – particularly where 'accomplishing a valued task/objective' is to

"*make a difference*" in people's lives.

> They will pursue 'an integrated set of goals that reflect personal standards of conduct', will be 'intrinsically motivated' so that they 'often become so engrossed in their work that they are motivated solely by a sense of curiosity, a thirst for learning, and the satisfaction that comes from accomplishing a valued task/objective', resulting in 'the total immersion of the self at work' (Gardner, et al., 2005, p. 355).

Both kōrero reflected elements of a number of the interpretations of authentic leadership models – a desire to be original, genuine, have consistent values in both their personal and organisational contexts, to lead from the breadth of their skills and giftings, with integrity and transparency (Gardner, et al., 2011; Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

Servant Leadership and Christian Faith

The framework of servant leadership appeared to fit quite easily within the not-for-profit sector. There was discussion around the willingness to serve others, often behind the scenes, they are focused on the needs of others, and are open about the need for reflection and coherency in the approach to all of their lives – which are all strong advocates for the six dimensions servant leadership (Sendjaya, et al., 2008).

One participant specifically attributed the beliefs that underpinned their commitment to a servant leadership approach as being based in her Christian faith. In her notebook, Natalie had recorded how her Christian faith was both foundational and formational in her leadership – it provided an ethical framework and vision, it assisted with reflection and self-awareness, it offered emotional and intellectual support in difficult times, it gave numerous models of the best and worst of leadership from which to learn, it imparted a wider perspective and purpose for all of life (including work and leadership).

> *Natalie: a 'sense' of my leadership is part of a much bigger picture. Nothing I do is so important; its who I am and how I handle myself that is. God is bigger than all (offers hope when it feels hopeless).*

Relational Leadership

The themes that are at the heart of the relational leadership discourse were also strong in the kōrero - particularly cooperation, and mentoring. Working in the not-for-profit sector, which has a high value and reliance on volunteers, naturally includes a broad encouragement of participation by many in the vision and activities of the organisations that these women lead, and an idealism of sharing power and equipping and energising others to contribute to the work of the organisation (Rosener, 1990). Despite the strong relational nature of the sector, the kōrero hinted that the women were seeking more depth and understanding in how, and if, relational leadership could contribute more to their work contexts. Recent research is exploring this more fully, and is shedding light on some of the possibilities inherent in developing a stronger relational leadership approach but also some of the risks.

> The findings from this research can assist leaders in understanding that the affinity that builds between relational leaders and followers results in positive work environments, can also be a source for public sphere friendship, and might bring fun into the workplace. Leading relationally also has some inherent risks, such as the possibility that professional boundaries could be affected (Fredericks, 2009, p. 196).

The desire for more peer and mentoring support, improvements in their working relationship with board, volunteers and funders, and advocacy on behalf of those that they served are all aspects of the women in this research's work that could be enriched and understood more fully with more research in this area.

Personal philosophy

All the participants disclosed principles, sayings, convictions, and aspirations that guided them in life generally, but that also specifically applied to their approach to leadership. One woman outlined her belief framework in terms of her Christian faith, while other participants described their belief framework in terms of a collection of commitments they had formed over time.

Julie was the clearest about summarising some key aspects of her approach to leadership and life in a coherent and cogent manner, which she described as a personal mission statement, and which she wrote in her notebook in this way:

I have chosen
this lifetime
to live each day
with integrity
and as a great adventure
in which I have much to learn and much to give
knowing
that the view is always worth the climb

Each statement above had specific meaning and application to much of what she did as a leader – in her organisation and in her family and in life generally. In a similar way to Natalie and her Christian faith, this personal mission statement contributed to her ethical framework and vision, assisted with reflection and self-awareness, and provided a perspective and purpose for all of life (including work and leadership). To this mission statement Julie has spent much time reflecting and recording some of the lessons she had learnt from people and experiences throughout her life.

Significance of the Not-for-profit Sector

Throughout the kōrero the women often made comments that pointed to their understanding and commitment to the purpose of the work that they do in the not-for-profit sector. The repeated refrains of "*making a difference*" - for individuals as well as for the betterment of society - the value of giving, the priority of others above oneself, the building of community around a cause, all reinforce the sense of purpose for the women working in this sector.

It is not surprising that the women have in their kete, a strong sense of purpose about the work that they do, as there are often motivations and rewards that have attracted them to these positions despite the challenging work conditions and the lower pay than they could receive in the profit sector (Bond, et al., 2008; Fine, 2009).

The importance of Learning and Reflection

While the women had belief frameworks in their kete, these frameworks were not fixed, historical items but dynamic and always being developed as they encountered more people, experiences, and understanding as they went through life. This was possible because of their universal commitment to seek learning from wherever

possible and by prioritising the discipline of reflection - for example, in Julie's story cards, in Ruby's card that read "Learning is constant", and in the conversation around learning from situations and others whenever possible.

Learning from others has already been discussed in relation to role models and mentors. Trying to identify the key learning from specific situations was also a key aspect of the kōrero. It was learning that occurred from what went wrong as much as from what went right. They openly and honestly shared some of the mistakes that they have made in leadership along the way. They reflected that the mistakes may have been made out of arrogance, overconfidence, or thoughtlessness in the first instance, but since then they have learned from these mistakes which have led them to be more thoughtful about the consequences of actions as well as more gracious towards others who also make mistakes.

I believe that I have also demonstrated that the reflection and learning process undertaken as part of this research by way of metaphor was considered helpful and interesting for the participants. Even though the metaphor of the kete was not part of any participant's particular cultural heritage it was an image and concept to which the women easily responded. They introduced a variety of metaphors throughout the kōrero – including such examples as tramping in the bush and Collins' (2001) metaphor of the 'bus' – and every item that was included in their kete made a metaphoric contribution to the discussion. The strength of using metaphors, and inviting response by way of metaphor, is not just to make communication and information more interesting, but it assists in making visible the invisible constructs in our society and in our understanding (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). I argue that this research points to the advantages of using metaphor to assist in bringing to the surface that which is deeply embedded in our belief framework.

Each participant was aware of the importance of reflection as a key practice and a rich resource for their leadership. The findings showed that the opportunity and encouragement to reflect was expressed as an enticement and a reward for undertaking this research project. Despite the perceived value and insight gained from

reflection, the women voiced the difficulties in finding time to reflect and the pressure of the pragmatic and the immediate response that often crowded the aspiration of the considered and reflective response in their leadership responsibilities.

Conclusions

I have argued that, along with their personal community, the women have a framework of beliefs and a sense of purpose and conviction that is part of the essence of their leadership. This taonga in their kete is strengthened and developed by an ongoing commitment to learning and reflectiveness.

Māori model of wholeness – Te Whare Tapa Whā

While I have argued that the kōrero indicate both personal community and belief and purpose are key resources in the women's kete, I am not arguing that they are two completely distinct concepts. Even from what is outlined above there is overlap between the themes – for example the lessons learned from family and mentors, and the belief that is passed on from others and built on by continual learning and interaction with others. I argue that these two themes resonate with the indigenous model of well-being developed by Mason Durie (2004) - the theme of community incorporates the two sides of the house described as the human body (taha tinana) and human relationships (taha whānau), and the theme of belief and purpose incorporates the two sides of spirituality (taha wairua), intellect and emotions (taha hinengaro). Not only does the model provide a rich insight and challenge about how to develop a model of wholeness in leadership, it also provides a helpful metaphor for leaders to describe and reflect on some of the strengths and weaknesses, the hopes and the vision, and the areas of improvement for developing leaders. While a full discussion of the wealth of understanding that might be learnt from application of the model to leadership is beyond the scope of this thesis, I would recommend it as a significant focus for further research.

This yearning for wholeness is not unique to Māori but has also been argued to be a desire that is commonly expressed by women in different contexts.

> These women want to embrace all the pieces of the self in some ultimate sense of the whole – daughter, friend, mother, lover, nurturer, thinker, artist, advocate. They want to avoid what they perceive to be a short coming in many men – the tendency to compartmentalise thought and feeling, home and work, self and other. In women, there is an impetus to try to deal with life, internal and external, in all its complexities (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1987, p. 137).

The encouragement to bring a fresh sense of wholeness – both in terms of personal community and beliefs - to leadership in organisational contexts needs to be considered within the context of the final theme that emerged from the data, and that is that there is a complex concept of power in their kete.

5.3 'What's in my kete?' – power

The first two themes to arise out of the kōrero of what was in the participants' kete, community and belief, were readily visible in the kōrero and in the symbolic offerings in their kete. However the third theme, which I interpret from their interactions and offerings, was not as immediately obvious but underpinned a significant amount of both kōrero, and that is that in their kete is power.

This theme was expressed most explicitly by Julie when she observed

> *… in a tough time or the boring time… is the reminder that actually, I've chosen this. So I have agency and power in it.*

This statement prompted me to examine how power and agency were part of the research and I realised that there was interplay of language of power-fullness and power-lessness running through a significant portion of the kōrero, especially when the women were talking about what leadership meant when it was exercised in the specific context of not-for-profit organisations.

While the explicit use of the language of power was not very evident in the kōrero this was not surprising to me as a researcher. The dominant discourses were of service, servant leadership, and being focused on others rather than oneself, and it is not always obvious how to express the way power plays into these discourses.

> One reason for the neglect of power [in the leadership discussion] is that it has been seen as distasteful, corrupting influence in leadership. … The questions of

> how one finds enough power to act and do leadership differently seems to me to be at the core of leadership. Most leaders find that the formal authority that may come with a role cannot be relied upon. Additional sources of power and influence must be drawn upon, including personal charisma and strengths in communication, networks or contacts, professional credibility, and so on (Sinclair, 2007, pp. 75, 76).

Power is clearly concerned with the activity and control that leaders exercise but I argue that power is more than that. Power is about understanding what we have – for example privilege, opportunity, choice, and ability. I argue that we exercise power as much by what we do not do as what we do. Power can also be seen in terms of the way we lead, as Hanlen observes about the women in leadership she researched:

> They are expected to be efficient and effective, decisive and strong and simultaneously demonstrate care, nurture, support and understand family considerations. This can either be seen as a woman's advantage or alternatively as a double bind which places unrealistic expectations upon women leaders (Hanlen, 2002, p. 104).

Understanding the power that is in each of our kete is a deeply complex concept, and would be worthy of an entire thesis on its own, and so what follows here is an attempt to bring visibility to some of the ways in which I have identified the participants wrestled with the question of power throughout the kōrero.

What follows is a glimpse at some of the aspects of leadership where I argue the kōrero acknowledge the power that they had, so in a sense they are 'power-full', and then examines some of the times where the women expressed some concern or frustrations at feeling as though they did not have power, and were confronted with questions about how to respond to a sense of 'power-lessness'.

Power-fullness

> Leaders need to recognise and own the power they do have because of structurally determined power relations. Many of us have privilege – for example, I have the privilege of whiteness… I have had access to education and relative economic security. These structural endowments have equipped me with the capacity to be articulate and assertive. In working with power, it is important not to assume that the power which flows from privilege is available to everyone (Sinclair, 2007, p. 89).

The choice to work in leadership in the Not-for-profit sector

As Julie spelled out in her comments that opened this section, and as I have already outlined in the descriptions of how the women came to their role of leadership in the not-for-profit sector, the choice to work in the sector is an example of the exercise of power. There are varying motivations and journeys into leadership and each motivation would engage with issues of power differently. Four of the five participants clearly communicated that they were working in the not-for-profit sector by choice. They were aware that this choice came with lower financial reward than would be likely in the private sector, but there were different rewards which are described in the next section. The choice was grounded in the two earlier themes of personal community and belief and purpose, and was made as part of wider reflection on what was important for them in their work and what they wanted to do as their occupation.

The opportunity they have to make a difference in people's lives

As already outlined the phrase that was most commonly used in the kōrero to describe why they were working in their roles and organisations was attributed to the opportunity to '*make a difference'* in others' lives. Exploring the power dynamic in the relationship with the people who are helped by the work that they do was expressed by Ruby, "*I don't want to work for 'someone', I want to work for lots of people".* The people she worked 'for' were the people who benefited from the work of the organisation and the volunteers that contribute to that work, rather than seeing the governance board as her 'boss' in the type of hierarchical employment structures more common in the private sector.

Empowering others

While the women were not as verbal about their own power, they often spoke of the opportunity they had in their leadership roles to empower others. Ruby remarked at one stage, "*the more you do the less you allow other people to explore what they are capable of*." The commitment to 'share power' with others and to 'empower' those who need more power and care, would be an aspect of what is trying to be captured by the phrase "Social Profit". In the not-for-profit sector there were opportunities for the focus of this empowerment to be the clients, the communities that surround the

clients, the extensive team of volunteers who want to contribute to society positively, a governance board, and for some a team of colleagues. The opportunity to empower others also echoes the findings of Hanlen's research.

> The findings suggested that these women considered themselves in a privileged position, with the responsibility to ensure that unpaid work and volunteer skill was recognized, respected and celebrated. This altruistic behaviour was aimed at helping others without direct benefit to themselves (Hanlen, 2002, p. 105).

Broad skills and abilities

The women tacitly acknowledged that there was power in their kete that arose from their broad range of skills and abilities that were well utilised in the not-for-profit sector. Corrie acknowledged an attraction of working in leadership in the not-for-profit sector was that "*I felt like I would be good at the Jack of all trades*". Even in the twist that Kōrero Tahi put on an old saying - 'Jack of all trades and master of many' rather than the traditional 'Jack of all trades and master of none' – was used by the women to acknowledge that they felt that they brought a high level of skill in a wide range of areas to their leadership responsibilities. There is power that comes with both natural talent and skills that have been developed over time, and this was recognised by the women in this research.

Choice of leadership approach

During both kōrero, the women communicated that they felt that they had opportunity to choose what would be their leadership approach. Natalie indicated a freedom in her leadership role to lead from a servant leadership model shaped by her Christian values. Other comments suggested that there was the opportunity to apply leadership beliefs and principles in the organisational context, even though this was a simple commitment.

Power in their organisational environments

There is the opportunity to exercise power in contributing to, or potentially having significant influence on, the ongoing culture and values of the organisations in which the women were executive leaders – related to such factors as small management teams, wide-ranging job descriptions, and volunteer governance boards.

In much of the research around power (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1995; Olsson & Stirton, 1996) there is a focus on the organisational structures to perpetuate power-fullness and power-lessness – in visible and invisible ways. Fine (2009) argues that "organizations both represent and reproduce the gender and power relations that exist in the larger society (p. 182). In a sector that is considered more embracing of women than others in society, it would be interesting to explore further whether women feel more able to exercise power in their organisational environments to model different leadership approaches, as outlined in the second theme of this thesis (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Reinhold, 2005).

Learning

If there is power in the opportunity to acquire a broad range of skills throughout life – often through education and other leadership development opportunities – the women understood that working as leaders in the not-for-profit sector would continue to give them such opportunities. The findings show that learning was a core commitment of all the women, and also a key opportunity of their leadership role. Throughout the items included in the various kete – for example, Natalie's 'box of opportunity'; the lessons learnt that were recorded in the notebooks; and the refrain "Learning is constant" in Ruby's kete – and consequently throughout both kōrero, was recognition that one of the key rewards of their work, and indeed in life generally, was the opportunity to learn. I argue that learning is power, as it leads to a greater sense of what one can do, how one can do it, why one might do it, and greater insight into what might be the consequences of what one does.

Achievement and ambition

As outlined in more detail in the first theme, there is power in the past. Looking back over the people that have enriched your life, and reflecting on past experiences, all contribute a powerful resource in the present. While the women used the language of learning in this context a lot, there were a few glimpses of the discourse around power when they tried to explain things in terms of past success or achievement.

Marie and Corrie tried to vocalise a sense of power in what might be an expression of power by planning for the future – particularly in terms of ambition. Marie acknowledged that it is not very common to hear this kind of language spoken so clearly, but both had a powerful sense of continuing on in leadership, beyond the role in which they are currently employed.

My argument is that power that comes from recognising what else is in your kete – particularly in the two themes covered earlier in this thesis of community and belief and purpose – as well as recognising that you have opportunities to add more to your kete, particularly through an openness to learning from every moment.

Power-lessness

While I have made the argument that the women actually voiced a number of different ways in which their kete was power-full, the kōrero also highlighted a number of areas where the women were struggling and that in many ways they felt power-less. My observation is that many of the areas where they were power-full are also the same areas where the women wrestled with perceived power-lessness.

Limitations of resourcing

One of the most common topics of conversation among people who work in the not-for-profit sector concerns the lack of funding, and the daily difficulty to try and source more funding to achieve the organisational goals. But the presenting issue only scratches the surface of the wider issue of finding resources of many kinds – for example, money, people, time, and knowledge – to meet the very real needs and the positive aspirations for our society to care for all members in our communities. The women spent considerable time throughout the kōrero discussing the feelings of power-lessness that resulted from a realisation of how poorly they felt their work was resourced and the responsibility to try and achieve the most social benefit from the resources that they had available. This is exacerbated for the women when they compared their sector to other sectors in society, which may be perceived as benefitting individuals more than society as a whole. As one organisation described it:

"[we] move mountains on a miniscule budget instead of maintaining inertia at exorbitant expense"(Pringle & Collins, 1996, p. 419).

Working with government

A key player in the discussions around resourcing the not-for-profit sector is the government, and most of the kōrero in this research conveyed a feeling of power-lessness in terms of engaging with government – whether it be in contracting for services, advocating with the government to act on behalf of others, meeting legal and bureaucratic expectations, experiencing insecurity about future supply of government funding, and uncertainty about the direction that government policy would take in the coming years and how that might affect the whole not-for-profit sector as well as the organisations they were leading.

Skill and expertise deficits

A key example of a perception of power-fullness and power-lessness in the not-for-profit sector, is tied up in the phrase used by Ruby and Corrie of "Jack of all trades and master of many." While there was a recognition of the power that came from the leaders' ability in a wide range of areas, they also expressed some sense of power-lessness in that the nature of executive leadership in the not-for-profit sector often demanded an even greater range of skills than the leaders were able to contribute. This was particularly felt by leaders with small staff teams, who were most cognisant of financial restraints and retractions in their areas of work. Research shows that women often disqualify themselves from even taking up leadership roles because of a lack of confidence (Eagly & Carli, 2007). A number of comments were made through both kōrero which acknowledged that they were often most aware of what aspects of leadership they were not yet able to do, rather than focus on all that they already contributed to the role and creatively seek ways to add the extra skills and expertise needed.

Increasing need

As I observed earlier, I was surprised that there was little talk of the future of their work in the visionary way identified by many leadership theorists, but the majority of

the talk of the future was laced with concern and uncertainty – primarily based in the uncertainty surrounding future financing for what was perceived as the ever increasing needs of society and individuals. Even when this was framed in terms of opportunity, there was an expressed power-lessness to make significant progress in the face of all that could be done.

> *Julie: My other reflection on this is that I need to also stop looking too far ahead. When I look at the size of the mountain we have to climb (or perhaps the depth of the chasm we have to avoid) it feels overwhelming. When I look at the next step only, what I need to do today or this week – then that is do-able.*

Working with volunteers

As I mentioned above, working with a large community of volunteers, often across the entire country, is a valued avenue of empowering many people to contribute to the collective good (Hanlen, 2002), and is often a crucial element in meeting the needs in society that are the particular focus of not-for-profit organisations. However, the kōrero highlighted some of the complexity in understanding relationships of power that exist in contexts of high volunteerism. Both kōrero demonstrated that the women believed that volunteers make significant gifts to society – particularly by contributing their time, presence and expertise – without financial reward, but those volunteers may have high hopes and expectations of democracy, influence, gratitude, communication, and achievement within the organisation. It is often the 'paid' leadership that is expected to meet these volunteer expectations, and the women acknowledge many instances where this contributed to significant perceptions of power-lessness.

Gendered and ethnocentric environment

Many might assume that the not-for-profit sector was more positively gendered to the advantage of women, than the private sector, and that women in the not-for-profit environment would perceive their contribution as part of the 'majority' (Baines, et al., 2012; Kolb, et al., 2010). During the kōrero there was an interesting paradox for the participants between celebrating the opportunities and value given to women in the not-for-profit sector, and still feeling like the 'only one' – usually in contexts outside the organisation. The reality is that while women made up between 75-85% of the

not-for-profit workforce in one study (Baines, et al., 2012, p. 370), men still held around 50% of executive leadership positions (in the countries where this statistic was available), and this was even more marked when only the larger not-for-profit organisations were considered.

There was also some acknowledgement that leadership in the not-for-profit sector in New Zealand is dominated by people of Pākehā cultural identity, and so for the participant who identified as being of Asian ethnic identity, she expressed instances of power-fullness as well as power-lessness related to being 'the only one' in many work contexts.

Conclusions

While I have considered the kōrero in terms of expressions of power-fullness and power-lessness, I do not believe it is a matter of identifying where they have power and where they do not, but identifying the power dynamic in leadership and exploring, perhaps in the company of others, how power that does exist can be used for the benefit of others.

> [T]he learning for me was not to wallow in powerlessness, but rather to work with the tension built into these more complex understandings of power: to not expect unfettered agency and to resist illusions of grandiosity while also seeing that one can be powerful towards meaningful and liberating ends, often in surprising ways (Sinclair, 2007, p. 79).

I am arguing that the women in this research project had significant power in their kete. I believe that where there was felt powerlessness it was primarily a frustration at being confronted with limitations that affected their ability to exercise the power that they do have in their kete for the benefit of the organisation, the cause, and for the benefit of society as a whole. Throughout the kōrero they disclosed that they understood in part that they had enjoyed privilege and opportunities that many people did not. They actively sought to learn in all circumstances which gave them power that was not experienced by those who lived an unexamined life. Throughout the kōrero was a commitment to use whatever power they had for the benefit of others.

My observation is that there is scope for much greater understanding of the power dynamic within the unique context of the not-for-profit sector and to hear more about how it is experienced by women in leadership in this sector. I argue that there is not adequate language to describe the power dynamic at play in the not-for-profit sector in a way that resonates with the other values and theories that dominate the discourse in this sector. I agree with Sinclair's focus on the importance of greater understanding of power and the potential positive outcomes of exploring this aspect even further.

> Leaders also need to explore their own feelings of powerlessness and what stops them being courageous. .... My experience is that any practice of leading differently needs to be prefaced with a structural and more nuanced understanding of power. We are not helping any leaders – men or women – by expecting that doing leadership differently is simply a matter of choosing to act and exercise power differently. People's power to act, even as leaders, is always constrained by forces that are visible to them and those that are hidden, structured into circumstances of birth, race, class – or those that are banished from consciousness. Developing a deeper understanding of power – its structural and personal determinants – is crucial to leaders. It is not until we 'see' the power relations around us and including us that we are, even temporarily, released to work more empathically with others, imagining better ways to lead and live together (Sinclair, 2007, p. 89).



Chapter 6 Conclusion

The objective for this project was to explore what is the essence of leadership for women who have executive leadership roles in not-for-profit organisations. This research sought to assist women in discovering what is unique to their path in life and leadership and how that has resulted in a bountiful 'kete' from which they can draw strength, wisdom, encouragement, and vision for their leadership, now and in the future. It gave a fresh approach to describing what is formational and foundational for these women's understanding of leadership, and particularly how they understand these convictions shaped their current organisational role.

The overall findings of the literature have shown that while much has been written about leadership there is little that is specifically exploring the uniqueness and the particular phenomenon of the leadership in the not-for-profit sector. This is even more so for the situation for female leaders as we are relying on perception more than statistics, and assumptions more than researched experience. I believe the literature review showed that the research into personal community and history and its relationship to leadership values and practices is only scratching the surface of what could be understood. Chapter two showed that there is much about the current research in the broad area of transformational leadership theories – including examination of leadership from servant, authentic, or relational leadership lenses to identify just a few - that provides helpful insight for women in leadership of not-for-profit organisations. However, I believe that there is still significant scope for examining what are some of the unique characteristics of leadership in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, and particularly whether there are opportunities in Aotearoa/New Zealand to develop leadership values and organisation cultures that are non-exclusive, culturally authentic, and are shaped by altruistic community values.

This research has been continually shaped and grounded in the metaphor and Māori understanding of the kete – including the initial research concept and development; to assist the participant reflection prior to the kōrero; as a focus on the days of the kōrero; as something that helped shape the data analysis process; and finally as a key concept to communicate the key findings and perhaps serve as an ongoing metaphor for uncovering ongoing understanding from this research. The primary concept of the kete has hopefully been complemented by the use of the kōrero or focused group conversation as a method of gathering data, which has valued the message and meaning that has been gathered collectively and relationally rather than individually or in isolation from others with some commonality of experience. I believe that this research demonstrated women discussing leadership that did not seek to define how one gender exercises their leadership in antithetical ways to the other, but opened up opportunity for these women to reveal their valuable and particular perspectives on leadership.

I believe that knowledge and *matauranga* (understanding) that started in reflection, was made visible in the artefacts and conversation, and has since been analysed as whenu or threads of meaning that have emerged as key themes from the data, have now become taonga that have been given by the participants to the discourse of leadership.

The first taonga in their kete was their community. Leadership is often framed in terms of the individual leader, but these women spoke passionately about the community that they lead from on a daily basis – family, mentors, culture, themselves. This research has shown that family is more than just a significant influence; it is core to these women's ongoing inspiration and strength as leaders. Life histories and family are not just trifling anecdotes or to be considered as extraneous to the work context, or at worst seen to be in competition for a leader's time, focus and energy. This research showed that the women desired to have their family, significant mentors, and particular heritage at the heart of their ongoing self-concept of leadership, and potentially be more valued, strengthened, and integrated with their organisational roles.

The second taonga in the participants' kete is their clear sense of purpose in their work in the not-for-profit sector and their belief frameworks that underpin their leadership approach and commitments. The research showed a consciousness and strong commitment to the value and significance of the not-for-profit sector, and a clear sense of purpose for the women to exercise leadership in this sector for the benefit of others. What was not as clear in the findings, which was significantly different from Hanlen's (2002) research, was a particular sense of purpose to exercise leadership in a *particular organisation.* What I believe was unclear from the research is how extensively these belief frameworks are able to transform their leadership practices and organisational cultures – for example how might servant leadership commitments transform the relationship between the Board Chair and the Chief Executive of not-for-profit organisations, and is it possible to openly discuss these values and aspirations in the organisational environment so that there is great resonance between leadership values and organisational policy and culture?

The final taonga is the realisation that there is power in their kete. While there are many challenges in the demands of leadership in the not-for-profit sector, the significance of reflecting on power dynamic and how to exercise that power for the benefit of others is crucial to understanding leadership in the context of not-for-profits.

I argue that this research demonstrated a significant cohesion between the first two taonga that was in their kete – for example personal community clearly impacted their beliefs, and their purposes and beliefs strengthened their commitment and appreciation of family. However, I believe there was greater disconnect between the third taonga and the first two taonga, and that power exists uncomfortably in their kete. I have attempted to show how the women communicated a number of ways in which they were very power-full (particularly in terms of ability, opportunity, choice, and heritage), yet there were significant aspects of the leadership role in executive not-for-profit leadership that evoked a clear sense of power-lessness (particularly in relationship to meeting ever increasing social need with ever-decreasing resources, in

a complex context that relied heavily on volunteerism). I believe that there is significant scope to explore whether the taonga of personal community and purpose and belief may provide fresh ways to engage with the issues of power in leadership.

Concluding questions:

As I indicated earlier, the exploratory nature of this research means that it has provoked more questions rather than provided definitive answers. Some of the many ongoing questions I have are:

- If personal community, and particularly family, are of such central significance to leaders, are there ways to integrate and improve the recognition of these realities into the organisational environment – for example in recruitment, appointments, work conditions, supervision, team building or leadership development?
- How do organisations help leaders reflect on the influence of their unique cultural heritage in their leadership roles and the appreciation and inclusion of other cultural heritages into the organisational culture?
- How can the not-for-profit sector strengthen and develop peer and professional networks, as well as mentoring opportunities, to be part of ongoing learning and support for leaders?
- Can organisations explore how they care for the physical well-being of their personnel – not just their professional or their intellectual development?
- Could personal life histories be incorporated into organisational cultures of reflection and supervision to bring greater insight into leadership values and approaches?
- Do organisational cultures have reflection and learning opportunities integrated into its staff support and leadership development processes?
- Is it possible to reframe the concept of work/life balance so that family is not considered in opposition to the exercise of leadership in the workplace?
- Is not-for-profit leadership significantly different from leadership in other sectors and contexts?

- How might a metaphorical approach to leadership - whether they be linguistic or tangible metaphors – be researched and utilised to bring more visibility to leadership assumptions, motivations, and values?
- Is there greater learning and understanding possible by more comprehensive research of the essence of leadership using the kete as the primary metaphor and method?
- Does Te Whare Tapa Whā model of wholeness (and potentially other models grounded in indigenous values) offer fresh ways of exploring leadership development and support?

This research has shown that women leaders of not-for-profit organisations have a unique perspective to add to our general understanding of leadership and that there may be a lot more to be understood about the unique challenges of leadership in this sector than we currently know.

I believe that this research poses the key question, which echoes those posed by Sinclair (2005, 2007), 'Is it possible to understand and do leadership differently, that liberates leaders, organisations, and all those who benefit from leadership, in a way that has integrity and coherency with personal and community values?' In particular does not-for-profit leadership provide a context where women can lead in a different way and create organisational environments that are different from those approaches and structures that have traditionally been seen to limit the opportunities for some members in our society?

While there is considerable rich understanding that already exists in each persons' kete, some of it known and some of it yet to be uncovered, I also believe that there is much more that we can learn together to strengthen our understanding of leadership and the opportunities to collectively exercise leadership for the betterment of all of society.

I conclude this thesis with two whakataukī (proverbs) to shape and inspire further exploration of the essence for women in leadership of not-for-profit organisations.

Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora tātou katoa

with your food basket and my food basket we all will be fed.

Whaowhia te kete mātauranga

Fill the basket with understanding.



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Appendices

APPENDIX 1 Ethics approval

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

16 November 2011

Valerie Goold
89 Black Rock Road
Newlands
WELLINGTON 6037

Dear Valerie

Re: Peeking in the Kete

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 4 November 2011.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

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

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

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 above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.*
>
> *If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz".*

Please note that 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 provide a full application to 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

J. O'Neill

John G O'Neill (Professor)
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Director (Research Ethics)

cc Dr Marg Gilling
School of Educational Studies
PN900

Mrs Roseanne MacGillivray
Graduate School of Education
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Assoc Prof Chris Freyberg, Acting HoS
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APPENDIX 2 Letter of Invitation

March 16, 2012

Organisation name
Postal Address
Wellington

Kia Ora

I am writing to invite someone from your organization to be a participant in a Masters Thesis research project, focusing on women in leadership of not-for profit organizations.

This research project, entitled “Drawing from the Kete”, seeks to ascertain how women understand their leadership role and what resources women draw on to fulfill their responsibilities.

Your organization has initially been identified through your registration on the ‘Charities Commission Register’ as having possible candidates for this research project.

If you think that you might like to participate, or if you know of a woman in your organization who might like to participate, then I encourage you to read the accompanying Information Sheet to better understand the project and what might be expected of a participant.

The key elements of the ideal participant are:

- a woman
- in a leadership role
- in a not-for-profit organization
- who is based in Wellington
- who wants to be part of this project

If you, or someone you know, is keen to participate please contact me by **March 30**, 2012. If you have any questions you would like to ask before committing please feel free to contact me also.

I appreciate that any possible candidate is likely to be a very busy person but I hope that participants in this research project will find the experience meaningful and enjoyable. Feel free to read on, or to pass this on to someone who might be able to participate in this research opportunity.

Thank you for considering this opportunity and I wish you well in your work.

Nāku, nā

Val Goold
Email: val@tscf.org.nz

APPENDIX 3 "Drawing from the Kete" Information Sheet

Kia Ora
My name is Val Goold and I am undertaking a thesis towards a Masters in Education (majoring in Adult Education). I am interested in exploring more about the experience of leadership for women within the not-for-profit sector.

This project is entitled "Drawing from the Kete". To understand the journey and experience of leadership more fully I am seeking to use the framework of the 'kete' (basket), which is a key concept in Māori culture. The 'kete' has its conceptual beginnings in the Māori understanding of the 'three baskets of knowledge' that were given to Tāne (the progenitor of humanity), which forms a key aspect in Te Ao Māori (the Māori worldview). From this has further developed a concept of the 'kete' as a basket of knowledge that we all carry with us through life.

I believe that all people have a 'kete', into which is added, and drawn from, their beliefs, values, skills, and influences to journey through life. My purpose is to listen to participants as they describe what is in their 'kete', and what they draw from, to fulfill their role as leaders, so that we might learn a little more about the depth and breadth of the sources that are important to leaders in the New Zealand context. I have chosen to narrow the possible participants in this research project to a smaller group, who may have some shared experiences, and so the focus is on women who are in leadership of not-for-profit organizations.

I am of Pākehā and of Māori descent (Rangitāne o Wairau) and I hope to reflect this bi-cultural heritage throughout this research project. I am a woman working in a senior leadership role within the not-for-profit organization 'Tertiary Students Christian Fellowship', and have the privilege of completing the Masters part-time as part of my desire to understand the environment in which I work more effectively.

The intended process of this research is in three stages:
Initially I will meet with each of the selected participants, so that they will be given a chance to meet me in person. At this time I will give each participant an actual flax kete. Contained within this kete will be some items (for example, a notebook) that may provide some stimulus for the participant to reflect on their own 'basket of knowledge' (participants will be free to use as much or as little of the stimulus material as suits them). Participants will then be invited to spend around a month reflecting on what is in their 'kete' and what they draw from it in order to lead. Participants are encouraged to add to the provided items with items of their own, which will help them understand their own basket of knowledge and perhaps assist them to communicate their insights later in the process.

The second part is to gather a small group of participants (between three and five members, as well as myself) to spend half a day, in Wellington, discussing together what is in our 'ketes'. Participants will be able to meet other female leaders in the not-for-profit sector, in an hospitable environment, and are encouraged to bring their ketes with them. I suspect that when we meet and begin to talk together there will be even more insights gathered than when we were reflecting on our own, and I hope that the conversation will be energizing and encouraging for all involved. The group conversation will be recorded to help me listen and interpret the wealth that I believe will be shared in that context.

The final part of the research is then for me to distil what I have heard and learnt from the conversations we have shared together. I am asking participants to loan me what they have gathered in their kete, to assist me in the analysis of the research. Access to the ketes and their contents will only be available to myself and my research supervisors, Dr marg gilling and Gloria Slater. There will be opportunity for participants to provide clarity or further input, if they want to, as the research is written. At the conclusion of my analysis I will be returning the kete to participants for them to keep. I will be giving each participant the opportunity to check the interpretation and conclusions I have made from their kete and our conversations together, before the thesis is submitted.

I acknowledge that each person's kete is a taonga (treasure) and I will endeavour to respect the participants and their contributions in this way throughout this whole process.

To summarise the expectations of participants in this research project:
At a minimum there will be:

- An initial meeting with me before Easter – to receive your kete and discuss the process.
- Approximately one month of reflection - in whatever way suits the participant best.
- One block of time, of approximately three hours duration, in which to have discussion together as a small group, to be held in Wellington, at a mutually agreed date in early May.
- One follow-up conversation at the conclusion of the research project (around October) so that their kete can be returned to them and a final opportunity for the participant to give consent to the material used in the thesis.

Beyond that commitment participants are invited to have follow-up conversations, individually with me or in a small group context, if they would like.

Participant's Rights
If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- participate in the discussion as much or as little as you like;
- withdraw from the study (by the end of April);
- 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;

If you are a woman, involved in a leadership role within a not-for-profit organization, I warmly invite you to participate in this research project. If you would like to participate please contact me
by **March 30th**, 2012.

Kia Ora

Val Goold

Contacts
If you have any questions at any time throughout this research project you are welcome to contact:

The Researcher: Val Goold,
Email: val@tscf.org.nz

Researcher's supervisors: Dr marg gilling
Phone: (04) 801 5799 ext 62523
Email: M.Gilling@massey.ac.nz

Gloria Slater
Phone: (06) 356 9099 ext 8841
Email: G.R.Slater@massey.ac.nz

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

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz".

APPENDIX 4 **Consent form**

"Drawing from the Kete"

FOCUSED CONVERSATION PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree not to disclose anything discussed in the Focused Conversation.

I agree/do not agree to the conversation(s) being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have data placed in an official archive.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: ..... **Date:** .....

Full Name - printed .....

The Researcher: Val Goold,
Email: val@tscf.org.nz

Researcher's supervisors: Dr marg gilling
Phone: (04) 801 5799 ext 62523
Email: M.Gilling@massey.ac.nz

Gloria Slater
Phone: (06) 356 9099 ext 8841
Email: G.R.Slater@massey.ac.nz



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