Taupaenui
Māori Positive Ageing

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

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Public Health

At Massey University, Palmerston North,
New Zealand

William John Werahiko Edwards
Taranaki, Ngāruahine, Tāngahoe, Pakakohi, Ngāti Ruanui

2010

HE MIHI

Nau mai e te ao awatea

Ūhia mai tō hā ki tēnei mouri ora

Hurihia te pō uriuri te pō hāngū ki tua

Kei te tuhi kei te rarama

Ura mai te rā![1]

Tēnei te mihi o tēnei uri o Taranaki ki ngā matakanapa o rātou mā.

Nau mai, tau mai e rarau ki tēnei kaupapa mō ngā pahake.

E tika ana te kōrero

Ka whati te tī,

Ka wana te tī,

Ka rito te tī.

Tēnā koutou, kia ora mai tātou katoa.

Will Edwards

[1] From the karakia pure '*Te hā oranga nui*' a greeting to the morning sun and the new day, composed by Huirangi Waikerepuru (Taranaki).

ABSTRACT

The global phenomenon of population ageing has major ramifications for societies and governments around the world. In New Zealand, efforts to address the impacts of population ageing have centred on the Government's Positive Ageing Strategy.

This is a thesis about positive ageing as viewed through Māori eyes. It has been informed by the memories and aspirations of older Māori who have lived through challenging times but have emerged with qualities that enable them to enjoy older age and to contribute to their own whānau, Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) and Te Ao Whānui (wider society).

The thesis is philosophically located at the interface between Western science and mātauranga Māori, an Indigenous inquiry paradigm. It is argued that Western science and mātauranga Māori are relevant to research in the contemporary context, and reflect the realities of older Māori who live in both Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Whānui. The study used research techniques that draw on Western science (literature review), mātauranga Māori (review of 42 Māori proverbs) and both inquiry paradigms simultaneously (qualitative study with 20 older Māori people).

The research found that Māori positive ageing can be characterised by a two dimensional concept that incorporates a process dimension and an outcome dimension. The process dimension is consistent with a lifecourse perspective and therefore recognises that ageing is a life-long process where circumstances encountered during life may impact cumulatively and manifest in old age. The outcome dimension can be described in terms of complementary 'universal' and Māori specific outcome domains. The universal outcome domains are encapsulated in the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy and more recently are expressed in the Positive Ageing Indicators 2007 Report. The Māori-specific outcome domains identified in this Study are: kaitiakitanga – stewardship; whanaungatanga – connectedness; taketuku – transmission; tākoha – contribution; takatū – adaptability; and, tino rangatiratanga – self-determination. The overarching outcome domain is taupaenui – realised potential.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, to the individuals who agreed to be part of this Study. Thank you for sharing your stories, experiences and perceptions - often on matters close to the heart. It has been a humbling experience to have interviewed you and spent many hours reviewing recordings and analysing transcripts in an attempt to enable your voices to be heard in this thesis and beyond.

Professor Mason Durie it has again been a privilege to be supervised by you. Thank you for your positivity, clarity of thought, humour and patience over the years. Professor Chris Cunningham for your support of myself and the many other doctoral students at Te Pūmanawa Hauora.

To Uncle Pue (Barry) Whakaruru, Aunty Mākere Wano, and Te Rau Oriwa Davis for the kind of support and reassurance that comes from 'home'. Thank you for the guidance to navigate the tricky ground between the university and the Māori community; Te Ao Whānui and Taranaki.

To Te Ahu, Wawaro, Neville and Tarewa my gratitude for being there as whānau and my home away from home, even when I was distracted with other kaupapa.

To Darryn for your encouragement and sharing your specialist Māori language knowledge. Maureen, for your support in many ways over the course of this project. Berryl, Marley, Kelly and Kaye thanks for all your help. My gratitude to Leslie at Te Pūmanawa Hauora, your level headed advice at a critical time during my PhD is much appreciated. Also thanks to Helen Fergusson, Keri Ratima and Tina Ratima for your help in the final phase.

To my whānau you have been an unwavering source of strength and love. Dad, thank you for your constant and practical support. You are a fantastic role model and a good man. Mākere, Patina, Kris, Hinerangi and Kiwa, and Mariana I have been astounded by the lengths you have all gone to in helping me along this journey. My love also to Pihama and Carole, Ana, Brian, and whānau for the support and encouragement from afar. To my nieces and nephews that have so often added light and inspiration to this journey.

To my daughters Te Raunatanga and Taiharuru, I'm looking forward to being more present to you both and not away in PhD land in mind and/or body.

Mihi - for your love, endurance, strength and patience (yes patience), and just plain hard work on so many fronts. The fact you only once mentioned the word 'divorce' in a sentence containing 'if you don't get that thesis finished soon' is amazing.

I would like to also acknowledge Te Pūmanawa Hauora, whose support through a Doctoral Fellowship made this thesis possible and to the Health Research Council of New Zealand for support through an Emerging Researchers Grant.

PREFACE

This preface provides a brief background about me as a Māori researcher and also describes the conventions I have followed in the presentation of this thesis.

In Chapter Three I mention the 'experiential learning' that researchers bring to their work. It is therefore necessary to provide a brief explanation regarding my background, especially as it relates to interaction with older Māori in both my personal and professional life.

I grew up on whānau land just outside the small South Taranaki town of Hawera. As I identified myself at the beginning of this thesis as descending from Taranaki, I have grown up in my own tribal region. Throughout my life I have had regular exposure and interaction with older Māori people. During my childhood all three of my surviving grandparents lived locally, two of them were Māori. As a family we frequently spent time with our grandparents. My two Māori grandparents one paternal, one maternal were both native speakers of the Māori language. However neither of them spoke Māori to us, which was not unusual at the time.

Our family also spent a lot of time involved in the Māori community in South Taranaki. This would sometimes be at Oeo marae where my father was heavily involved in activities. More frequently though, we would go to Māori Mission Mass at Hoani Pāpita followed by Araukuku Māori Catholic kapa haka practices. We would have hui and live-ins at Ngarongo marae in preparation for the annual Catholic Hui Aranga held every Easter. There were always older people there to guide us and teach us in those times. My sisters and I, along with a select group of our generation, were asked (made) to spend time learning waiata tawhito (ancient songs, some dating back centuries) from our tribal region. We would frequently have to go to one auntie's home in particular on Sunday afternoons and learn waiata. This practice continued while I was away at boarding school as a teenager. We (my sisters more so than I) would be expected to take part in hui, tangihanga and ceremonies where the various waiata tawhito would be performed.

I remember various elders we had been regularly involved with as children leading our whānau on various excursions outside of our tribal area. The reasons for these trips ranged from tangihanga, unveilings, weddings and other matters of tribal business. I recall them

accompanying our whānau to my siblings' university Māori graduation ceremonies and later to my first graduation in 1992. Reciting the waiata we had learnt in their sitting rooms and at marae, I began to develop a greater understanding of the importance of Māori identity, knowing my history and knowing what differentiates me from other Māori and indeed other people generally. Most of those elders have now passed on, leaving very few culturally skilled older Māori to fulfil formal cultural roles in my home region. I spent 1993-1995 completing a total immersion Māori language degree initially in Taranaki, then in Waikato.

As an adult male speaker of the Māori language I have been required to fulfil formal roles in Māori settings that would normally be ascribed to kaumātua. This is quite a common occurrence for males and females of my generation in Taranaki. For me this has required negotiation with the remaining elders about how to assert myself in areas where I may have requisite cultural knowledge while maintaining the mana of elders who may not have had the opportunity to learn to speak Māori. These types of experiences in my own tribal region provide a basis for cultural learning that cumulatively inform a Māori analysis, and provide a lens through which data is analysed.

My first full time job as a researcher was as a research assistant on the Oranga Kaumātua Study that was based at Te Pūmanawa Hauora, a Māori health research centre at Massey University in 1996. Alongside basic research tasks, a key role involved providing assistance in the recruitment and liaison with 10 Māori communities from throughout the country. The recruitment involved presenting information to groups of older Māori and asking them if they as a group would like to be involved with the research. I also assisted in the training of 70 peer interviewers, that is, community-based older Māori who would interview the participants from within their community. During the dissemination of findings I accompanied two elders and presented the findings to various hui of participants and their whānau. Following completion of that project and after five years of working on a Māori language resource research programme I was approached to work on the follow-up Oranga Kaumātua Study which began in 2004. As part of that research project I worked with older Māori in the five study regions.

At a national level I spent three years as a member of the Kaitiaki Group (Māori reference group) for Te Rau Hinengaro, the New Zealand Mental Health Survey. In that group I was the only member that was not a kaumātua. The Kaitiaki Group's role was to advise on the

appropriateness and acceptability to older Māori people of key aspects of the study including recruitment of regions and participants, data collection and management and dissemination of findings. My role involved acting as a liaison between the kaumātua and the research team. This required me to be able to work simultaneously with psychiatrists, epidemiologists statisticians and community based older Māori cultural experts. The experiences I have had professionally also affect my subjectivity and the analysis I bring to this Study regarding Māori positive ageing.

Conventions

I have included translations of Māori words in the text where necessary and also have provided a comprehensive glossary of Māori terms used in the thesis.

In some sections of the qualitative data chapters square brackets '[ ]'have been used to insert comments, translations or pseudonyms. Comments have been inserted to assist clarity, and translation from Māori to English has been provided to make this study accessible to a wider audience. Pseudonyms have been used to replace people's names or small place names to protect the anonymity of participants. Also in the chapters concerning proverbs and qualitative data Arabic numerals have been used to label all of the proverbs and participants including those labelled one to nine. This has been done for consistency of appearance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES