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Whānau Whānui:

Investigating the Plausibility of an Organisational Model

Based on Customary Whānau Values

A Thesis presented for the Degree of

Master of Philosophy

Māori Studies

Massey University, Palmerston North

New Zealand



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Taranaki Whānau Whānui

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Karakia tīmatatanga – *Beginning incantation*¹

Tukua te wairua kia rere ki ngā taumata
Hai ārahi i ā tātou mahi
Me tā tātou whai i ngā tikanga a rātou mā
Kia mau kia ita
Kia kore ai e ngaro
Kia pupuri
Kia whakamaua
Kia tina! TINA!
Hui e! TĀIKI E!

~~~~~

*Allow one's spirit to exercise its potential*

*To guide us in our work as well as in our pursuit of our ancestral traditions*

*Take hold and preserve it*

*Ensure it is never lost*

*Hold fast.*

*Secure it.*

*Be steadfast! STEADFAST!*

*Draw together! AFFIRM!*

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<sup>1</sup> Watermark sourced from Free Tattoo Downloads (n.d.).

## Ngākau atu – *Dedication*

This thesis is dedicated to several important members of my family/whānau.

Firstly, my maternal grandparents, Ngārape “Bernie” Tuuta and Joan Tuuta (nee Twiss), who gave me my second home, a home where I learnt the meaning of unconditional love. A handsome Chatham Island Māori man and a beautiful Irish woman who fell in love as youngsters at the Sumner School for Deaf in Christchurch, and who remained completely in love for the duration of their lives. They are the finest example of a bicultural partnership that I have ever encountered. *You lived your lives for those you loved, and those you loved remember. May you both forever rest in peace.*

Additionally, the ‘Wharenuī Model’ that is designed and developed in this thesis is specifically dedicated in love and honour to my Grandad Ngārape Tuuta. Grandad studied long and hard to become a Master Builder. I have many happy memories of being with him on building sites as he created new homes for people, and being at his side as he pottered at home, utilising his gift of being able to build or fix anything. I remember his attention to detail; his dedication to ensuring joinery was perfectly aligned, creating many a masterpiece. *“Grandad, I too have built a home, a Wharenuī to house the awesome community of your great-grandson’s primary school. I hope and pray I have done you justice, and you are well pleased with the alignment of the framework!”*

I also dedicate this thesis to my parents, Russel Foster and Judy Foster (nee Tuuta), who live in Fernside, North Canterbury, the area where I grew up and went to school; the happiest days of my life. My parents nurtured a loving family home based on core moral values and principles that continue to guide me in life today. *I love you Mum and Dad. I hope I may love my own children with the same unselfish focus as you both love me.*

Last, but by no means least, I dedicate this thesis to my two sons, Tyrone and Renata, and my two grandsons, Tyson and Max. The most precious jewels I will ever have around my neck are the arms of my children and grandchildren. While you all may only wish to hold my hand for a short time, you will all hold my heart for always ☺ Aroha Tino Nui! XOXOXOXO

**Waiata - “Karanga (Call from my heart)” by Taisha. YouTube link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?x-yt-cl=85114404&x-yt-ts=1422579428&v=JFotE3AYqy4>.

## Mihimihi - Acknowledgements



**He whaikorōria ki te Atua i runga rawa**

*Glory to the God most high*

**Mau ngā rongō ki runga i te mata o te whenua**

*Peace on earth*

**He whakaaro pai ki ngā tāngata katoa**

*Goodwill to all mankind*

*(Luke 2:14)<sup>2</sup>.*

The three white albatross feathers, as seen on the front cover and above, are named a 'Raukura' and symbolise a peaceful/passive resistance movement. The concept of the Raukura originates from Parihaka, a community in South Taranaki, New Zealand. The legacy and philosophy of this peaceful resistance movement was led by **Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kākahi**, two prophets and visionary leaders of Parihaka. Peaceful resistance was started by Te Whiti and Tohu in direct opposition to the confiscation of Māori land by the New Zealand Government in the 1800's. Peaceful resistance is a unique type of Māori leadership, pre-dating that of India's legendary Mahatma Gandhi (S. Kātene, 2010). It is still practiced by Parihaka descendants today and the Author's intention is this thesis will be a small contribution towards this movement.

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<sup>2</sup> "Traditionally, the Raukura was worn either as a single feather resting upon the head or in the hand of the bearer, or as a crest on the chest area of a garment. It is also worn as a plume of three feathers in the hair which capture the meaning of this Bible passage. The Raukura is a symbol of remembrance for the deeds of the Māori ancestors who vehemently resisted the Crown via peaceful opposition. It is a symbol which continues to guide the Māori people today with wisdom and hope for a peaceful co-existence" (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust; 2012, para.5).

The case study for this thesis was undertaken in the Author's hometown of Whakatū/Nelson, New Zealand. Nelson has many links to Parihaka, Taranaki, and the land wars of the 1800's. For example, in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, members of two Taranaki iwi (tribes), Te Āti Awa and Ngāti Tama, settled in Nelson and other areas of Te Tau Ihu/the Top of the South Island. And in 1860, approximately 1200 Pākehā (European) refugees arrived to settle in Nelson after fleeing the Taranaki land wars, and descendants still live in Nelson today (Stephens, 2012).

As detailed by Stephens (2012), in 1866 Te Whiti and Tohu established a pacifist settlement for disposed Māori in Parihaka, after the Government had confiscated all of Te Āti Awa's land in 1865. Māori from Nelson and Te Tau Ihu were amongst those who settled there. In October 1881, approximately 200 volunteer militia departed from Nelson to join more than 1400 armed soldiers who together stormed Parihaka on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1881. Te Whiti and Tohu were arrested, although the Parihaka community had offered no resistance, and Parihaka was destroyed by the troops. In July 1882, "Te Whiti and Tohu were held under 'honourable restraint' at various South Island locations before arriving in Nelson in July 1882, where they remained under house arrest in Nile Street" (Stephens; 2012, para.18). Te Whiti and Tohu were finally returned to Parihaka in 1883, and the community was rebuilt.

### Waiata "Parihaka" and educational slideshow "Remember Parihaka"<sup>3</sup>:

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9N4PaQZSWPQ>

~~~~~

I also wish to acknowledge **Dr Margaret Forster**, my research supervisor at Massey University, Palmerston North Campus, for her unfaltering support and wise advice throughout the duration of my research and writing my thesis. *Margaret, you have been instrumental in helping me reach new heights with my study skills and abilities. You have been the wind beneath me while I have been learning to fly, and the net to gently catch me when I fell. You 'get' me. I feel I can be myself when I am talking things over with you, and you have taken me seriously when I have shared the messages from my tūpuna in my moemoeā. I could not imagine a better match for a research supervisor.*

³ Slideshow presentation compiled by teacher Christine McDonald for her Year 8 and 9 classes at an Auckland School. Further information and credits available at the YouTube link provided.

Whakarāpopototanga – *Abstract*

This thesis incorporates a case study investigation into the plausibility of an organisational model based on customary whānau values. The thesis title of ‘Whānau Whānui’ represents the case study organisation, Victory Primary School (VPS) in Whakatū/Nelson, Aotearoa-New Zealand, and its ‘whānau whānui’ – a broad grouping of people with a common kaupapa (*mission*). An innovative combination of methods is used to display the results of this case study. These methods include: a pūrākau (*story*), whakataukī (proverbs), visual images, audio-visual aides in the form of YouTube links to waiata (*songs*), and a comprehensive description of a Māori pōwhiri (*customary rituals of encounter*) framework, all alongside an academic writing style that is perhaps more expected for a thesis document.

The pūrākau was primarily employed to represent VPS operating in an ideal state. The words “*times past will be used to inform the present, and the desired state is not set somewhere in the future but is present from the outset”*, gives the rationale for why the pūrākau is included; as a regular reminder of the ideal state to aim towards. The heart of the pūrākau is a story of connections, between people and the natural world, between customs and innovations. It is about dealing with a changing world by holding onto time-honoured values. It is about reclaiming heritage and continuing with the responsibilities of being kaitiaki (*guardians*) of the world’s resources so they are sustainable for the future.

At its base, the use of a Te Āti Awa (*a local Māori tribe of Whakatū/Nelson*) pōwhiri framework for both the research project and the resulting thesis is to promote peaceful conflict resolution by increasing intercultural and interracial understandings in the New Zealand context. Components of the pōwhiri are also evident in the research project as it was conducted. For example, karakia (*incantations*) were employed to provoke spiritual guidance and protection. The raukura (*three albatross feathers*) image on the front cover represents the taki (*challenge dart*) laid down in the wero (*challenge*), symbolising peaceful intent. Examples of kōkōhu/koha (*contributions*) are woven throughout the research project, including trust given to the researcher by the VPS Principal and Board of Trustees (BoT), and the contribution of kōrero (*oral discourse*) and knowledge from participants.

There is a mix of Māori analysis methods used for the data, including analysing interview data by drawing on Māori customs of teaching/learning through face-to-face kōrero, and following the natural flow of the pōwhiri process as analysis progresses. It is also imperative to keep returning to the image of the waka hourua (*double-hulled voyaging canoe*) in the introductory pūrākau to remain focused on the ideal outcome to aim towards. I.e. a community based on Te Tiriti o Waitangi (*The Treaty of Waitangi*), where the waka hourua consists of the hull of the tāngata whenua (*indigenous people of the land*) being firmly woven together with the hull of the subsequent settlers, and the unifying connections being ngā whanonga pono a te Māori (*central Māori values and principles*).

It is evident that VPS is currently in a period of transformation and change and the new Principal is assisting the BoT with the process of reviewing and updating VPS policies and procedures. VPS is also in the process of updating the School's curriculum, with the next stage involving the critical work of reviewing the values of VPS to consider whether they accurately reflect expectations for teaching and learning, and to embed the newly developed cycle for curriculum review and reporting to the Education Review Office (ERO).

Currently, the intended meaning of the VPS vision is not clear and needs to be defined to see if it is capable of providing a future focus for the VPS mission. The te reo Māori translations of the VPS name, vision and mission need to be accurate and appropriate. The VPS hammerhead shark image and the four chosen 'values' that couple with this image *do not* appear to relate to the vision, mission, or culture of VPS at all. One idea is that the harakeke image currently used by Ngā Mana Kākano o Te Wairepō (*the VPS bilingual unit*) would be a more suitable image for the whole of VPS to use.

The Treaty of Waitangi is stated in the VPS Charter 2015 as one of the seven school-wide 'principles'. However, Te Tiriti o Waitangi is *not* a principle and should not be confused with the other 'principles' of VPS. Te Tiriti requires specific and focused attention in the VPS Charter and school operations in order to uphold its mana and help embed it in the School. It was also suggested that three of the remaining six 'principles' are renamed to become: Kōtahitanga (*an inclusive community*); Ekea te taumata i te Ako (*increasing teaching and learning competencies*); and Kaitiakitanga (*guardianship*), so they align better with both the VPS strategic goals and ERO reporting requirements. In turn, this alignment should flow

through to VPS policy, practice, and curriculum alignment in Māori and English mediums. It also appears input from the six mana whenua iwi and hapū (*local tribes and sub-tribes*), and the wider hapori (*community*) has *not* been sought to assist with the design and development of the VPS curriculum. As right holders, hapū, iwi and the hapori are entitled to have a say as to whether VPS programmes are actually in line with collective aspirations for their tamariki (*children*) and whānau (*families*).

The main structure of a wharenuī (*Māori meeting house*) was used to consider the main components of VPS, including the school-wide principles represented as Pou (*pillars*), and to provide an outline towards the building of a potential model for the organisation, namely a 'Wharenuī Model'. The sequence these Pou are encountered matches the sequence of events that unfold during the pōwhiri rituals of encounter, and this is deliberate given that the Wharenuī Model for VPS aims at achieving whanaungatanga (connections, reciprocal relationships) just as a pōwhiri does.

Firstly, the Kōtahitanga Pou representing the unique VPS identity where members of the community feel they belong to a respectful, inclusive whānau whānui. The next Pou encountered is Eke te taumata i te Ako, which includes student achievement – a major concern since it is currently well below national standards. This Pou also supports the heke (*rafters of the wharenuī*), representing Māori and English Mediums.

The Pou of Kaitiakitanga indicates VPS is not only responsible for being mindful of reciprocal relationships within VPS, but must also consider how actions affect the mana of other people and ecosystems as an interconnected whole. While many learning opportunities are provided to children that focus on local content, and specific initiatives focus on conservation and care of the natural environment, evidence of power-sharing and productive partnerships with the six mana whenua iwi is currently lacking. The remaining Pou, being Rangatiratanga (*leadership, governance, management*), Manaakitanga (*hospitality, respect, caring, support*), and Whanaungatanga (*connections, reciprocal relationships*) represent the remaining Pou/principles in the Wharenuī Model for VPS. The VPS maxim is then placed as the floor of the Wharenuī Model in recognition of the assertion by VPS that *everybody matters*.

The very foundation of the Wharenuui Model for VPS is Te Tiriti o Waitangi. With a continual focus on Te Tiriti throughout this thesis, the intention for VPS was to help increase equitable access to education, and improve cultural competencies. Having Te Tiriti as the VPS foundation will assist with creating the basis for power-sharing and productive partnerships with whānau, hapū, mana whenua iwi and the wider hapori. This will ultimately serve to raise achievements of students *and* teachers, and provide a solid platform for success in life.

The identified core values of VPS, being Wairua, Aroha, Mouri and Mana (*Spirit, Caring, Vitality, and Respect*), align with, and provide the missing part of the VPS Wharenuui Model; collectively representing the mouri stone (*kaitiaki/guardian*) of the Wharenuui and all it stands for. The VPS Wharenuui Model and its associated values and principles could be considered for adoption by the BoT of VPS, in conjunction with its community. All learners, whānau, iwi, educators, and leaders have skills, knowledge and resources that can contribute to strengthening VPS. Raising student achievement is everybody's business.

This research project has been innovative in its design and has included the development of a unique organisational model as part of the findings, i.e. the Wharenuui Model. The Author believes the Wharenuui Model also has the potential to be adapted for other organisations in New Zealand wishing to operate in alignment with core whānau values and principles. Additionally, its adaptability may not be restricted to the New Zealand context. It could also be capable of being adapted to suit values and principles of other cultures and countries, meaning it has international relevance. The Author intends to continue exploring these possibilities through further research as part of her study towards achieving a Doctorate of Philosophy (Māori Studies). The findings in this Master's thesis provide a sound theoretical base from which to launch this plan.

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