

# Chapter 7

## He pī, ka rere: Māori Early Career Academics in New Zealand Universities

Meegan Hall and Kathryn A. Sutherland

### Introduction

He manu hou ahau,  
he pī, ka rere.  
I am a young bird,  
a chick just learning to fly.

In 1983, Professor Hirini Moko Mead, the first professor of Māori studies at Victoria University of Wellington, gave a winter lecture at the University of Auckland about what he saw as the future for the field of Māori studies (Mead 1997). He used the above *whakatauki* (Māori proverb) to explain how he thought Māori studies was emerging gradually within the university environment, particularly compared to the other subjects being offered at the time. This chapter similarly likens the development of Māori academics within New Zealand universities to “young chicks”, learning to spread their wings and navigate the dual skies of the academy and the Māori communities to which they are held accountable. It reflects their flight paths, in which they are likely to encounter Western institutions that may not accommodate Indigenous knowledge (Morgan 2003) but in which inventiveness and new ideas come from sites of Māori and Western convergence (Durie 2004). Ultimately, it outlines the experiences, characteristics, and challenges of Māori early career academics working in New Zealand universities.

It is unrealistic to assume that there is *one* experience of being a Māori early career academic working at the cultural interface of the university environment, itself “a space of many shifting and complex intersections between different people with different histories, experiences, languages, agendas, aspirations and responses”

---

M. Hall • K.A. Sutherland (✉)  
Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand  
e-mail: [Meegan.Hall@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Meegan.Hall@vuw.ac.nz); [Kathryn.Sutherland@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Kathryn.Sutherland@vuw.ac.nz)

(Nakata 2007, p. 199). However, this chapter draws on data about Māori academics that was collected as part of a survey of early career academics in New Zealand and adds it to other research literature. In presenting this information, a number of commonalities and points of difference emerge between Māori and non-Māori early career academics. This chapter considers each of these thematically.

## Background

Māori are the Indigenous people of New Zealand and make up 15% of the national population (Statistics New Zealand 2015). They descend from East Polynesian ancestors who settled every inhabitable island in the Pacific, before finally reaching Aotearoa (the Māori name for New Zealand) circa 1350 AD (Anderson et al. 2014). Over the subsequent 400 years, they became Māori in New Zealand as they spread out across the country, exploring the landscape and resources while developing a language and set of cultural practices now recognised as distinctly Māori. They acquired, amongst other things, ideologies that helped to explain the world around them, and pedagogies that helped them to survive in their new environment. Their period of development in cultural isolation ended with the arrival of Captain Cook and his crew in 1769, and a new era of interaction with Pākehā (New Zealanders of European descent) and change began.

It took another 100 years post Cook's arrival for the first university to be established in New Zealand. As Chap. 2 describes, the University of Otago opened its doors in 1869 and was followed by other universities opening in Canterbury, Auckland, and Wellington. These early institutions, however, were not concerned with the higher education of or by Māori people. Māori scholar, Professor Sir Mason Durie, described how:

Intermittent Māori participation in universities began in the 1890s but generally with scant regard for learning preferences shaped by culture or by bodies of knowledge built on indigenous experience and indigenous ways of knowing. Nor was there previous involvement of Māori community leaders in university management or governance (Durie 2009, pp. 2–3).

There are, however, some notable exceptions to the picture of minimal Māori involvement with formal university education in this early period. Sir Apirana Ngata was the first Māori person to graduate from a university in 1893 and later went on to gain law and Master's degrees, an honorary LittD, and publish significant ethnological research (Sorrenson 1996b). His contemporary, Te Rangihiroa Peter Buck, trained to be a doctor at the University of Otago, graduating in 1904, before becoming the first Māori to work as an academic. He went on to garner a large international profile for his vast anthropological scholarship, both in New Zealand and abroad (Sorrenson 1996a). Both of these scholars have served as role models and set high expectations for Māori academics today.

The picture for Māori involvement in higher education in New Zealand has vastly changed over the last 150 years. Fifteen per cent of all Māori over the age of 15 years are now working towards a tertiary qualification (which is the highest par-

ticipation rate for an ethnic group in New Zealand), although, the rate for Māori aged between 18 and 24 and enrolled in bachelors and higher qualifications is just over 13% (Education Counts 2016). In addition, three *wānanga* (Māori tertiary education institutions) have been successfully established and are operating nationally in New Zealand. However, despite the trail blazing of Ngata and Buck, Māori are, as Chap. 3 noted, still under-represented in university academic appointments, and the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) rankings of Māori academics lagged behind non-Māori in the first two rounds (Adams 2008). The overall number of Māori academics working in New Zealand universities is still small compared to non-Māori, although this is difficult to gauge exactly as official figures are hard to locate and their accuracy is not guaranteed. One official report suggested that in 2006 there were 321 PBRF-eligible Māori academics working at universities in New Zealand (White and Grice 2008). Another reported that there were 309 (Çınlar and Dowse 2008). However, both reports agreed that the overall ethnic profile changed little from 2003 to 2006, with Māori academics making up just 6% of the total number of academics in New Zealand.

Gunstone (2008) noted that the majority of Australian Indigenous academics are clustered in their universities' Indigenous Centres. While there is no comparable data about this for Māori academics in New Zealand, a simple check of the eight university websites suggests that Māori academics are similarly clustered around Māori studies and Māori education units in New Zealand universities. The largest cohort of Māori academics is at the University of Auckland, which is not surprising given that it is also the largest university in New Zealand and is located in a city that has the biggest Māori population. Their figures for 2011 recorded 110 FTE (full time equivalent) Māori academic staff from a total pool of 2050 academic staff, equalling 5.4%. Despite this high FTE count, University of Auckland researchers have indicated that in order to gain parity with the staff:student ratio experienced by non-Māori academics, the University would need to employ a further 42 Māori academics (Manuel et al. 2011).

In the survey of early career academics on which this book is based, 6% of respondents identified as Māori. This equates with the 6% of Māori thought to make up the overall academic population in New Zealand, but, as noted in Chap. 3, is lower than the percentage of Māori in the overall New Zealand population. The respondents were drawn from all of the eight universities in New Zealand. Eighty per cent of the Māori respondents were female and only 20% were male. Just under half (48%) had completed a PhD degree, although an additional 24% were working towards a New Zealand or overseas doctorate. Nearly a third were based in the Māori knowledge and development academic area, and the others were spread across the fields of biological sciences, education, engineering, technology and architecture, health and medicine, humanities and law, social sciences, cultural studies, and journalism.

Of the Māori survey respondents, only 48.2% were under 40 years of age, compared to 55% for non-Māori respondents, suggesting that Māori early career academics may be slightly older than non-Māori. This finding is consistent with Kidman and Chu (2015) who concluded that Māori academics are more likely to come into their academic careers later than other academics, possibly resulting in

shorter academic career periods. As evidence, they cite the fact that the average age for Māori doctoral students is 49 years (Nana et al. 2010). This later start has led other Māori academics to surmise that Māori academic careers often follow a different path to those of other academics (Middleton and McKinley 2010). So, what is different about the trajectory of Māori academics starting out in New Zealand universities?

## Differences with Māori Academic Experiences

Previous research has suggested that Māori and other Indigenous academics have a different experience of academic life from their non-Indigenous colleagues (Page and Asmar 2008). Based on our survey responses and drawing on other published research literature, a number of differences are evident. First, the confidence levels of Māori early career academics are lower than for non-Māori, which may be explained by some of their cultural beliefs and backgrounds. Another point of difference is that the structures and communities with which Māori academics interact are more plentiful than for non-Māori academics. Not only must they interact with the university and the discipline, but they also account to their Māori cultural community. Similarly, their living situations and components of work-life balance are different, resulting in additional responsibilities and pressures for Māori early career academics. The national PBRF process has also been found to have some distinctive impacts on the Māori early career academic community, but some of that impact is mitigated by the relationships developed within the Māori academic community. In addition, their levels and range of service work vary, and mark a distinctive element to the experience of Māori early career academics. Finally, and possibly most significantly, Māori academics have reported experiences of racism and expectations to assimilate that are not shared by their non-Māori colleagues.

## Confidence Levels

Responses to our questionnaire show that Māori early career academics are less confident than non-Māori about their ability to perform in their roles. Only 72% of Māori respondents indicated that they were “very” or “fairly confident” about their abilities to conduct the research aspects of their roles, compared with 78% of non-Māori early career academics. Similarly, despite being more confident about their abilities to teach (79% of Māori respondents were “very” or “fairly confident”), Māori early career academics still lagged behind non-Māori respondents (87% of non-Māori respondents were “very” or “fairly confident”). Confidence to perform the role is considered to be an important variable in gauging early career success (Sutherland et al. 2013), so why do Māori academics seem to feel less confident than their non-Māori counterparts?

One possibility is that Māori early career academics can feel uncomfortable about the term “Māori academic” and find it difficult to accept. This may be linked to feelings of inauthenticity or of being “imposters”. In a recent study of Māori academics, interviewees admitted feeling inadequate, unprepared, lacking confidence, and they placed a strong emphasis on still being emerging (Hall 2014). The notion of being an “accidental academic” was recounted by interviewees, with many believing that they had fallen into their roles “by mistake”, been employed by chance or luck, or would not meet the required standard in the current employment climate (Hall 2014, p. 199). The interviewees talked about the different skills and knowledge they needed to acquire in order to function as an academic and, equally, the cultural expertise necessary for fulfilment of their academic roles as Māori. A picture emerged of both high expectations and excellence, alongside fears of inadequacy and failure. This often manifested in whether the interviewees perceived themselves as having attained the required academic and cultural standards, or not (Hall 2014).

Some scholars have written about the challenges that Māori academics face in relation to questions of their authenticity as Māori, particularly in relation to their own cultural competence (Mead 1996) and their notions of being ‘different’ from other academics (Irwin 1997). While the importance of authenticity is contested by Māori scholars, with some regarding it as irrelevant (Kukutai and Webber 2011) and others suggesting that it is vital (Te Hiwi 2007), they do agree that added pressure and strain can be placed on academics due to their identification as Māori (McKinley 2002; Kukutai and Webber 2011; Irwin 1997).

## Loyalty and Dual Accountability

Early career Māori academics in our survey felt similar levels of loyalty and satisfaction towards their academic units, universities, and department heads as non-Māori did. Both sets of respondents felt extreme loyalty and pride towards their discipline (90% Māori, 84% non-Māori) and profession (83% Māori, 88% non-Māori). They were less loyal towards their institutions (55% for both Māori and non-Māori). The one point of difference between Māori and non-Māori respondents was in relation to their sense of loyalty towards their colleagues; only 65% of Māori respondents agreed or strongly agreed, compared with 72% non-Māori. More information on all early career academics’ loyalties to their disciplines, profession, institutions, and colleagues can be found in Chap. 8.

What we were not able to explore were the other accountabilities and loyalties that many Māori academics can feel towards their Māori cultural communities. Traditionally, the Māori culture is organised into stratified social groupings based on lineage. Large groupings called *iwi* (tribes) are made up of people who descend from the same eponymous ancestor. *Iwi* are made up of smaller *hapū* (subtribes), which in turn are made up of *whānau* (extended family) groups. For many Māori

academics, their professional and personal obligations can be split between their disciplines/institutions and their *iwi/hapū/whānau*, which Hook (2008) has coined as the notion of dual accountability. In a related vein, Māori studies scholar Dr Godfrey Pohatu (1998, p. 329) argued that Māori university staff are *taonga* (treasures) because of their “dual edged accountability” both to their university and to their *iwi*. A similar point was made by Māori scholar, Arohia Durie (1995, p. 5), who suggested that the pressures of research and teaching at universities provide a unique challenge for Māori academics because of their “dual obligation” between serving Māori communities and meeting university standards.

This sense of pressure extends out into their relationships within the wider Māori community. Māori academics often speak of a complex set of additional responsibilities for those who are beholden to the communities from which they come. Some describe this as a duty or debt and hold themselves accountable to their *iwi* and *hapū*, particularly in relation to their research outputs and practices (Hall 2014). In their research, Mercier et al. (2011, pp. 87–88) found that “Māori academics felt the weight of expectations from many different quarters: including community, whānau, students, and the university”. For some Māori scholars, this duty to their people is viewed as something to be acknowledged and carried, often regardless of personal cost (Irwin 1997; Smith 1992). On the other hand, some Māori academics have hailed the positive connections that they have with their Māori communities, the access that gives them to *te ao Māori* (the Māori world), and the notion that their outputs and achievements are shared on behalf of the Māori collective and make an important contribution to Māori capability building and development (Hall 2014, p. 204).

The prominence, for Māori early career academics, of their Māori cultural identities has a number of impacts on the way they perceive themselves as academics. For example, Māori academics haven spoken about how their affinity to the Māori culture outweighs their disciplinary or institutional academic identities. They have also noted how “being Māori makes you different”, and how as Māori academics that can manifest in such extremes as high expectations not just to perform but to excel (in both Māori cultural and scholarly contexts), or low expectations in terms of ill-health and wellbeing (Hall 2014, p. 199).

One other element of Māori academic experience repeatedly raised in the literature is the importance of maintaining and enhancing connections with the Māori community and engaging in academic pursuits that are of benefit to them (Cram 1993; Ka'ai 1995; Mane 2009; Mead 1996). Māori academics write of how “genealogy, family and community connections” create a “long-standing history” that pre-dated and endured beyond the academic appointment or activity (Moeke-Pickering et al. 2006, p. 3). Villegas (2010, p. 252) concluded that scholars, particularly those engaged in *kaupapa Māori* (Māori research methodologies) work, were “not beholden to departments or disciplines” and instead had “responsibilities to other scholars and to Māori people”. Māori academic Simon Lambert (2007, p. 76) described how providing opportunities for Māori communities and Māori postgraduates to work together was an extension of “the concept of scaffolding to the area of cultural resilience”. He suggested that such an experience not only valued community

knowledge but also broadened the professional development of the Māori scholars involved. This may possibly explain why so many Māori survey respondents were actively engaged in their local research communities, as evidenced by the finding that 92.6% of them had been to one or more domestic conferences that year (compared with 78.1% for non-Māori). For Māori academics, their connection and obligation to their Māori communities appears to permeate their academic identity and experience.

## Family/Living Situations and Work-Life Balance

Significantly more of the Māori respondents in our survey reported living with family (52% for Māori and 35% for non-Māori). By contrast, 40% of non-Māori respondents lived with only their spouse/partner and no other dependents, whereas that figure was a much lower 24% for Māori. Another significant point of difference is that, of those early career academics who did have children (76% for Māori, 49% for non-Māori), Māori respondents reported having a lot more children. For example, 20% of the Māori respondents noted that they had five or more children, compared with 0.7% for non-Māori. What is the impact of such markedly different living arrangements?

For one of the Māori survey respondents, this created an imbalance in what the respondent described as “life work balance”: “I have too many kids doing too many activities with too many friends. So I struggle with balance for sure but I actually wish I had more time to work, research, write”. Kinship relationships outside of the university environment often emerge as being of great importance to Māori academics. *Whānau* expectations can have great influence on their career choices and purpose. From childhood experiences to family traditions, the impact of parents and extended family members is very clear on how and why the Māori academics are drawn to and undertake their academic roles. Despite gaining a sense of motivation from them, some Māori academics have admitted to feeling alienated from their families because of their work, and also note how family expectations create added pressure to perform to a high standard, both professionally and personally (Hall 2014, p. 204).

Some Māori scholars have written about the struggle to balance their various work responsibilities with their other commitments, noting the onerous workloads carried by many Māori academics because of the range of knowledge and skills that they bring to the role, particularly in teaching and research but also with pastoral care of students and other Māori community-related activities (Asmar and Page 2009; Kawharu 2010; Page and Asmar 2008; Webber 2009). These ideas have been reinforced in Māori academic case studies, with interviewees describing the many pressures that hold them back from their enjoyment of doing research and teaching (Hall 2014, p. 210).



## Peer Groups

Another interesting point of difference between Māori and non-Māori early career academics relates to their choice of peer groups. Most of our survey respondents (Māori and non-Māori) considered their peers to be colleagues in their department or discipline. One notable exception was 10% of the Māori respondents who shared that their peers were other Māori academics, not necessarily from their discipline or even from their institution.

This finding matches earlier research that found a propensity for Māori academics to find support and collegiality with other Māori, as well as or instead of from their disciplinary or academic unit colleagues (Hall 2014). For some Māori early career academics, this is about reaching out to Māori academic role models around them. Despite the diversity within the Māori academic cohort, Māori early career academics often enjoy strong collegiality within that community and find a sense of solidarity and belonging with others in the Māori academic community through a shared experience and purpose. Some have shared that they find value in connecting with other Māori academics for guidance, mentoring, and opportunities to learn from colleagues with different disciplinary backgrounds but a shared cultural worldview. The only challenge to these connections is that the relationships with other Māori academics can be difficult to maintain over geographical or disciplinary distance.

## Research Work and Impact of PBRF

Based on the responses in our survey, Māori early career academics are equally split over whether the PBRF has had a positive or negative impact on their lives. When asked if it had a strong or moderately negative impact on their academic experience, 31% agreed. The biggest cohort was the remaining 38% of respondents who thought that the PBRF had no or a neutral impact on them.

This finding is somewhat inconsistent with previously published work about Māori academics and the PBRF. Others have written about how the performance pressure placed on Māori academics extends into their PBRF research activity. In a report on the national PBRF process, White and Grice (2008, p. 6) found that a higher proportion of Māori research was “in areas of national importance and priority” but, on balance, it “receives lower quality scores because of, perhaps, the cultural characteristics of their research”. Exactly what they meant by “cultural characteristics” was not explained in the paper but the authors may have been alluding to the slower speed in which some Māori research can be produced, or the spheres in which it can be disseminated. Another review of the PBRF assessment process found that “Māori researchers are equitably assessed but disproportionately ‘new’ to research and have lower average outcomes” (Adams 2008, p. 8). Some of this disparity was attributed to the PBRF model itself, which does “not [...] respond



as readily to research that is less consonant with that scientific paradigm” (Adams 2008, p. 19). The reviewer concluded that a more inclusive PBRF system was needed, which was able to “encompass different modes of research (both basic and more applied, translational, policy-orientated and practitioner-related), different fields of research (including the social sciences, the humanities and creative arts) and different research cultures (including Māori and Pasifika)” (Adams 2008, p. 19).

Unquestionably, the advent of the PBRF process has provided some additional research challenges and opportunities for Māori academics. Critics of the system have been particularly scathing of its lack of recognition for Māori research topics and practices (Roa et al. 2009; Tawhai et al. 2004). In fact, one article listed 14 different problems for Māori-related research that stemmed from the PBRF process, including its outputs over outcomes focus, its encouragement of publication in “international” journals, and its emphasis on self-promotion (Roa et al. 2009). The PBRF-related and other research pressures on Māori academics are a significant dimension of the Māori early career academic experience.

Māori academics have previously shared about their love of research, the intellectual stimulation that they gain from it, and their commitment to “making a difference” through their contribution to Māori-related research outputs in particular (Hall 2014). Other Māori academics have written about how their research enabled them to make meaningful contributions to Māori knowledge and understanding (Mead 1997; Stewart-Harawira 2007). However, they have also noted research-related pressures, such as the dual requirements of, for example, working with both Pākehā and Māori methodologies, the burden to leave an academic legacy and the duty to produce research that can make a positive, transformational contribution to Māori society (Hall 2014). Asmar et al. (2009, p. 156) gathered feedback from Māori academics about their research experience and found that, “overall Māori participants perceived a lack of institutional recognition for their work and research”.

## Teaching Workload

As described in Chap. 4, all respondents were asked to indicate what percentage of their time was spent on teaching related activities. Māori early career academics’ answers varied from 0 to 80% but the average value was 34.31%. In addition, 61% of respondents reported that they taught three or more courses a year, with one person revealing that s/he taught seven courses per year.

Teaching workload is an issue that has been lamented by Māori academics in the past. Webber (2009, p. 3) shared her experience that, “the teaching workload associated with being one of few Māori academics in the ‘mainstream’ university programmes can be exhausting”. In previous research, Māori academics have admitted to a range of teaching-related challenges, such as their difficulties in evaluating the effectiveness of their programmes, their lack of formal teaching and course design training, their struggle with Māori teaching pedagogies, their heavy teaching

workloads, their need to keep up with changing technology, and the pressure to counter racism or misinformation about Māori in their classrooms (Hall 2014, p. 201).

For some Māori early career academics there can be a challenge to teach using pedagogies they feel are culturally inappropriate. Some authors have previously discussed alternative Māori pedagogies and teaching practices suitable for higher education contexts (Addis et al. 2011; Ka'ai 2005, 2008; Morrison 1999; Roa and Tuauipiki 2005). Others have canvassed the challenges that Indigenous academics often face when they teach Indigenous subjects within universities (Jaime 2008; Nakata et al. 2012). When a group of lecturers at Victoria University of Wellington came together in 2009 to discuss their various pedagogies they found that they shared two main commonalities (Hall 2014, p. 68). The first was that the Māori academics involved in the study all pitched their teaching *to* their Māori students (or at least with their Māori students in mind). They believed this raised the status of Māori knowledge, put the Māori students at the centre, front loaded the information (and put the onus on the other students to catch up), took a pro-Māori standpoint, and recognised that the way Māori academics teach deeply influences their students. This approach manifested in course design, course content selection and even teacher disposition.

Their other common finding was that the Māori academics involved in the project all taught *for* the Māori community – not in a direct sense but rather as a form of cultural accountability that went beyond the immediacy of student retention and achievement within the course and related more to the future impact and contribution of Māori graduates. Māori academics are often concerned about whether Māori students meet the standards and requirements of the Māori community. They see it as their job to produce graduates who contribute positively to Māori society. They want to be proud of the calibre of students that they put back in the community and of the contribution that those students are making.

## Levels of Service Work

While our survey did not explore in depth the service experiences of Māori early career academics, previous research compared the experiences of Māori and Indigenous Australian academics and concluded that both continue to face challenges and carry service obligations in addition to those of their non-Indigenous colleagues (Asmar et al. 2009). For example, Māori academics have been found to make a valuable contribution to the recruitment, retention and achievement of Māori students, which continues to be a significant issue for all New Zealand universities (Airini et al. 2010; Callister 2009; Coxhead 2006; Ross 2008). Other research concluded that Māori academics, besides giving academic support, often “help to establish a whānau environment in the University and act as role models for students” (Gallhofer et al. 1999, p. 790).

Māori academics themselves have described their extra responsibilities, such as giving “the Māori perspective” on any Māori matter, addressing “potential problems with difficult Māori subjects or ethics” (Kukutai and Webber 2011, p. 6) and providing “pastoral care, extensive academic support and being a welcoming confidant who is identifiably Māori” (Nikora et al. 2002, pp. 21–22). They also note a complex set of additional responsibilities carried by Māori academics, particularly for those who take on representative roles within their institutions, such as serving on committees and review panels, often at the expense of their own research and teaching. This is seen both as making a positive contribution on behalf of Māori but also limiting their opportunities for research (which has a negative impact on career progression), advanced intellectual exchange, and academic skills development (Hall 2014).

## Experiences of Racism and Assimilation

Perhaps the biggest difference in the experiences of Māori and non-Māori early career academics relates to their encounters with structurally ingrained racism and expectations of assimilation. While some authors have emphasised the way that Māori academics have maintained *tikanga Māori* (Māori cultural practices) within the university context, others have written about how the academy has worked to subvert or marginalise Māori academics. They describe the difficulties of trying to maintain cultural integrity and not compromise on their cultural beliefs (Hook 2008; Irwin 1997; Mikaere 1998; Page and Asmar 2008; Ratima 2008; Smith 2000) often leading to a sense of isolation or loneliness. Villegas (2010, p. 103) reports that, rather than seeing improvement in universities, her Māori academic interviewees thought that “racism has become more intense”. Some of the prejudice manifested in the form of microaggressions, such as “subtle snubs” or “hidden messages of derogation” (Sue 2010, p. 109). Mead (1996, p. 118) provides examples of the “day-to-day smaller struggles over the way the university answers the phone or people type Māori words or greet Māori visitors” and Jefferies (1997, p. 133) gives a list of problems for Māori working in a ‘Pākehā institution’ that includes “maintaining, justifying or expanding their programmes due to gatekeeping against, and marginalisation of, Māori staff and kaupapa Māori within their organisations”. McKinley (2002, p. 113) writes about Māori scientists who hide their Māori ethnicity for fear of adverse consequences for their careers. In their research, Kidman and Chu (2015) found that 25 of their 29 Māori academic interviewees reported having witnessed or experienced racial or gender discrimination in universities.

For Irwin (1997, p. 59), the idea of assimilating “into the dominant culture (Pākehā and male) of the university” was “not an acceptable option”. She described the pressure to “assimilate” to the university environment and the “cultural bias” and inequity she faced as not just a Māori person but also as a woman (Irwin 1997, p. 59). She also criticised non-Māori scholars for their inability to theorise “how

Māori and women – Māori women particularly – can become ‘successful’ and still maintain their cultural integrity and integrity in the education system” (Irwin 1997, p. 59).

Hook (2008, p. 4) reinforced the notion of the pressure on Māori to assimilate into the university environment, and explained that Māori and Pākehā worldviews are “about as far apart as any two world views can get” so “for Māori engaging in employment or study in a mainstream university there are numerous compromises necessary in order to succeed”. He warned that if a Māori person does appear to change their behaviour to better fit the university environment,

this does not mean that Māori have “seen the light” and now embrace all that Pākehā hold near and dear. Within the university setting the struggle to interweave two world views is sometimes difficult and underpins some of the struggle. The point is that Māori have to absorb two world views, but Pākehā have only to absorb one (Hook 2008, p. 4).

Hook suggests that while “the common ground seems to entail the willingness of Māori to learn to understand the Pākehā point of view, perhaps a greater understanding of Māori perspectives might also be of value” (2008, p. 4).

However, Māori postgraduate Andrea Morrison (2000) pointed in her thesis to the difficulties that present themselves in trying to create Māori space in a university environment. She reiterated a point made by Mead (1996) that most Māori academics work in departments as the minority voice. As Mead explained:

Many are employed because they are Māori, but are expected to teach Māori perspectives on topics that continue to reflect the theoretical interests of Pākehā. Reprioritising and “bringing to the centre” topics which may interest Māori represents the “special battleground” mentioned by Fanon. In present-day terms this battleground is spatial. It is about theoretical spaces, pedagogical spaces, and structural spaces. It is also about culture, history and power, about making sense of, transforming, struggling against, the institutions within which we work (Mead 1996, p. 116).

Cheryl Smith (2000, p. 50) extended this idea by acknowledging that alongside “claims for separate space being made by Māori” there was also a challenge for Māori academics “to more strongly bring forward into our work and lived reality, the epistemologies that we so often put to one side as separate spheres or relegate to formalised ritual”. Thus the call for Māori space within university environments should be understood as moving beyond physical structures to include theoretical, pedagogical, and structural spaces necessary to better nurture and support Māori early career academics and Māori scholarship. However, some authors have warned of the additional pressures placed on Māori academics to protect the Māori culture and counter processes and acts of racism (Alton-Lee 2006; Coxhead 2006; White et al. 2009).

The relationships that often cause Māori academics the most difficulty and stress are with their non-Māori colleagues within the university environment. While many Māori academics have experiences of supportive, collegial non-Māori academics who provide mentorship and care, they can also face instances of misunderstanding and racism. This manifests most prominently in cultural and social isolation but also occurs in the form of academic elitism, the undervaluing of Māori research, and

being taken advantage of by non-Māori colleagues (Hall 2014, p. 205). Due to concerns over job security, some Māori academics are less willing to confront this bias than others. Those who do confront institutional racism describe the difficult battle that they face and the distrust and missed opportunities that are generated. The negative impact perpetuated by the employment of only a small number of Māori academics, which forces them into ‘lone’ and ‘token’ Māori academic roles, ensures that they have limited ability to influence the university environment (Hall 2014, pp. 205–206).

## Implications

While, for the most part, Māori early career academics have a similar experience of working in academia to non-Māori, this chapter has outlined some key points of difference. These differences have a range of consequential implications for Māori early career academics and the New Zealand higher education sector more broadly. For example, the measures of success for Māori early career academics may be different from non-Māori, there are Treaty of Waitangi implications to consider, and there may be differences in the kinds of support that could or should be made available to Māori starting out in academic careers.

### *Māori Measures of Academic Success*

If we are to accept that the general measures of success in academia are a combination of research productivity, overall satisfaction, and high levels of confidence in teaching and research (Sutherland et al. 2013), that begs the question, do the same notions of success apply to Māori academics? While their responses to our survey would indicate that many of those factors resonate with Māori early career academics, the research literature suggests a slightly varied measure of success.

Being Māori means that many Māori academics instinctively see academia through a different lens, with a set of distinctive worldviews and values that have the potential to add to the university environment. They value core Māori concepts such as *manaakitanga* (hospitality), *whanaungatanga* (kinship relationships), *tuakana* and *teina* roles (the relationship between an older/more experienced mentor (*tuakana*) and younger/less competent learner (*teina*)), and regret the minimal recognition of these concepts within academic institutions. Even the Māori cultural propensity towards humility, epitomised in the *whakatauki* (proverb) “*Kāore te kumara e kōrero mō tōna ake reka*” (The *kumara*<sup>1</sup> does not say how sweet it is) is something, in Māori terms, to be respected and modelled but is often seen as a limi-

---

<sup>1</sup> Sweet potato.

tation on Māori academics when applying for or being granted an academic promotion. Similarly, strong relationships with their wider Māori communities and Māori students, and being able to uphold the *mana* (reputation) of their families, is thought to be of great importance for many Māori academics but remains invisible to many of their colleagues.

Overall satisfaction with their academic career is certainly a key factor for Māori academic success, but the causes of that satisfaction may vary. For example, some Māori academics have recounted the happiness that they draw from their career choice, and describe how much they love going to work each day. Other have shared how academic work offers a chance of “personal transformation” to an extent not possible for relatives and friends in more limited work roles (Hall 2014). However, a strong call has been made from Māori academics that they want to be Māori *and* academics with integrity. This means different things for different people but includes being able to work for and with Māori communities, and being able to maintain Māori worldviews and observe Māori customs and practices. At the same time, they want to be good scholars who produce critical, well-informed research, deliver excellent teaching that engages students, and meet all of the expectations of their academic institutions. For example, they not only want to succeed in the PBRF process but they also want to meet the high standards set by their *tipuna* (ancestors) (Hall 2014). That balancing act can be difficult to achieve when Western values predominate within an academic discipline or institution. As Mikaere (1998, p. 13) observed, “[i]t is extraordinarily difficult to maintain any degree of integrity as an indigenous person within an institution which requires such daily compromise”.

A challenge faced by many Māori academics is finding and maintaining the space within their universities to be Māori and be academics and to do both well, with integrity and credibility. Not every Māori academic needs or wants to be able to stand as comfortably on the *paepae* (Māori orator’s platform) as they do at the lectern and vice versa. But for those who do, and such a dual function is a common goal for Māori academics, a way is needed to make that not only possible but desirable (and rewarded) within their academic institutions.

### ***Treaty of Waitangi Implications***

The Treaty of Waitangi is often described as the founding document of New Zealand (New Zealand History n.d.) and has come to be regarded as forming a partnership (albeit a contested one) between Māori and the British Crown. A set of principles drawn from the Treaty has since been integrated into New Zealand educational policy and legislation (Department of Justice 1989). This has manifested in a requirement for tertiary institutions to meet a distinct set of Māori-related obligations and goals. On a national scale, the New Zealand Tertiary Education Strategy calls for tertiary providers to “improve their support and encouragement of Māori participation and achievement” (Tertiary Education Commission 2014, p. 13). Māori

students were identified by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) as a priority group for the 5 years to 2019, which is a testament to the government's interest in Māori achievement in tertiary study in New Zealand.

The government focus on increasing Māori tertiary students has a number of implications for all early career academics, but particularly for those who are Māori. On the one hand, it supports the need to hire more Māori academics, as noted in the TES indicators of success (Tertiary Education Commission 2014, p. 13). The expectation is that the Māori academics will act as role models, particularly for Māori students, and use culturally responsive teaching practices. On the other hand, it puts enormous pressure on the limited number of Māori academic appointments, particularly early career, to provide not only academic support but also cultural, pastoral, spiritual, and even social support as the Māori students transition into the university environment. Some Māori scholars have denounced this as a structural issue that needs addressing urgently. They argue that university structures should become more Māori-centred, thereby gaining greater alignment with the principles of *tikanga Māori* (Māori cultural practices) (Hook 2010; Robust 2007). Others suggest that being Māori-centred does not go far enough and that universities need to provide both physical and metaphorical space for Māori (Johnston 2001; Mead 1996; Morrison 2000; Royal 2012; Smith 2000; Smith 2011).

### ***Implications for the Development of Māori Early Career Academics***

Against this background of distinctive Māori measures of success and institutional (as well as personal) pressures and challenges, it is clear that Māori early career academics are likely to need different kinds of academic development support. For example, they need support that is consistent with Māori principles but able to be applied in a Western university context. They also need their support to accommodate the imbrication and tensioning between the different dimensions of Māori academic experiences, Indigenous norms and the university context.

A culturally appropriate academic development programme for Māori early career academics needs not just to align with the values of their Western institutions, but also be informed by Māori knowledge, skills, experiences, and belief systems. Such a programme would take account of four dimensions that are central to the experiences of Māori academics:

- *Tuakiritanga* (their identity as Māori, as academics and as Māori academics);
- *Pūkengatanga* (the academic and cultural skills necessary for them to perform their roles well);
- *Whanaungatanga* (the relationships that they have to navigate, honour, and cultivate in order to achieve their goals); and
- *Tikanga* (the Māori cultural values and practices that guide their behaviour and are important in their performance as Māori academics).



Each of these separate areas is an important aspect for the academic development of Māori early career academics, but they also interconnect and overlap to reflect the holistic nature of Māori academic work. Their development programme also needs to be cognisant of the dual accountability, dual obligations, and dual scholarship expected of Māori academics.

## Conclusion

In the same winter lecture back in 1980 in which he likened Māori studies to a young chick learning to fly, Professor Hirini Mead also noted how “change is occurring all around us and sometimes we hardly notice that there is progress” (Mead 1997, p. 21). The same could be said of the experience of Māori early career academics. In the beginning of their careers, there seems to be so much to learn and do and the challenges of balancing academic and Māori expectations can seem quite overwhelming. Not only is there pressure, as for all early career academics, to meet their employing institutions’ expectations (and the external pressures of PBRF), but there are also the heavy expectations of the Māori community to realise. In addition, our survey suggests that their confidence levels are likely to be lower than non-Māori early career academics, and they are more likely to have more dependents; therefore, their components of work-life balance are likely to be different. Over time though, resilient Māori academics will learn to handle the dual accountability, increased service loads and experiences of racism and assimilation. Many will come to realise the importance of *tikanga Māori*, those values and practices that derive from Māori culture, and develop their own ways to embed them in their academic practice. Ultimately, they find their own ways to embody what Māori scholar Sir Hugh Kawharu once said: “You can be an academic Māori or a Māori academic. To be a Māori academic always has far greater demands” (Kawharu 2010).

## References

- Adams, J. (2008). *Strategic review of the Performance-Based Research Fund: The assessment process*. Wellington: Tertiary Education Commission.
- Adds, P., Hall, M., Higgins, R., & Higgins, T. (2011). Ask the posts of our house: Using cultural spaces to encourage quality learning in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 16(5), 541–551.
- Airini, Brown, D., Curtis, E., Johnson, O., Luatua, F., O’Shea, M., Rakena, T., Reynolds, G., Sauni, P., Smith, A., Su’ a Huirua, T., Tarawa, M., & Ulugia-Pua, M. (2010). Success for all: Improving Māori and Pasifika student success in degree-level studies. Wellington: Teaching & Learning Research Initiative. <http://www.tlri.org.nz/tlri-research/research-completed/post-school-sector/success-all-improving-maori-and-pasifika-student>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Alton-Lee, A. (2006). How teaching influences learning: Implications for educational researchers, teachers, teacher educators and policy makers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(5), 612–626.

- Anderson, A., Binney, J., & Harris, A. (2014). *Tangata whenua: An illustrated history*. Wellington: Bridget William Books.
- Asmar, C., & Page, S. (2009). Sources of satisfaction and stress among Indigenous academic teachers: Findings from a national Australian study. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 29(3), 387–401.
- Asmar, C., Mercier, O. R., & Page, S. (2009). “You do it from your core”: Priorities, perceptions and practices of research among Indigenous academics in Australian and New Zealand universities. In A. Brew & L. Lucas (Eds.), *Academic Research and Researchers* (pp. 146–160). Maidenhead: McGraw Hill.
- Callister, P. (2009). *Which tertiary institutions are educating young, low-skill Māori men? A research note*. Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies.
- Çinlar, N., & Dowse, J. (2008). *Human resource trends in the tertiary academic workforce: A working paper contributing to the independent strategic review of the Performance-Based Research Fund*. Wellington: Tertiary Education Commission.
- Coxhead, C. (2006). *Assisting Indigenous students to succeed: Let’s start by giving them a safe learning environment*. A presentation at the Australasian Law Teachers Association (ALTA) Annual Conference – Legal Knowledge: Learning, Communicating and Doing, Victoria University, Melbourne.
- Cram, F. (1993). *Ethics in Māori research: A working paper*. A presentation at the Cultural Justice and Ethics Symposium held at the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Psychological Society, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Department of Justice. (1989). *Principles for crown action on the Treaty of Waitangi*. Wellington: Department of Justice.
- Durie, A. (1995). Kia Hiwa Rā: Challenges for Māori academics in changing times. *He Pukenga Kōrero*, 1(1), 1–9.
- Durie, M. (2004). Exploring the interface between science and Indigenous knowledge. In *5th APEC Research and Development Leaders Forum*. Christchurch.
- Durie, M. (2009). *Towards social cohesion: The indigenisation of higher education in New Zealand*. In Vice Chancellor’s forum: How far are universities changing and shaping our world? Kuala Lumpur. <http://www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/node/418>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Education Counts. (2016). *Profile & trends New Zealand’s annual tertiary education enrolments 2015*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Gallhofer, S., Haslam, J., Nam Kim, S., & Mariu, S. (1999). Attracting and retaining Maori students in Accounting: Issues, experiences and ways forward. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 10, 773–807.
- Gunstone, A. (2008). Australian university approaches to Indigenous policy. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 37, 103–108.
- Hall, M. (2014). *Rethinking Māori academic development*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington.
- Hook, G. (2008). Cultural relativism and academic freedom within the universities of New Zealand. *MAI Review*, 1, 5. <http://web.its.auckland.ac.nz/ojs.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/viewFile/83/111>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Hook, G. (2010). A national Māori university. *MAI Review*, 2. <http://web.its.auckland.ac.nz/ojs.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/view/296/481>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Irwin, K. (1997). Becoming an academic: Contradictions and dilemmas of a Māori feminist. In S. Middleton & A. Jones (Eds.), *Women and education in Aotearoa 2* (pp. 52–67). Auckland: Auckland University Press/Bridget Williams Books.
- Jaime, A. (2008). Native women: Decolonization and transcendence of identity. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 10(2), 1–13.
- Jefferies, R. (1997). *Maori participation in tertiary education: Barriers and strategies to overcome them*. Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri.
- Johnston, P. (2001). “Watch this spot and whose in it”: Creating space for Indigenous educators? *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 26(1).

- Ka'ai, T. (1995). *Te tātari i te kaupapa*. PhD thesis. Hamilton: University of Waikato.
- Ka'ai, T. (2005). *Indigenising the academy: Indigenous scholars as agents of change*. A presentation at the 3rd Annual Hawai'i International Conference on Education, Honolulu, HI
- Ka'ai, T. (2008). *The role of marae in tertiary education institutions*. Te Kaharoa, 1. <https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/tekaharoa/index.php/tekaharoa/article/view/142>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Kawharu, M. (2010, 16 April). *Presentation about community and Iwi relationships from a Māori woman academic's perspective*. Paper presented at the MANU AO Leadership Wānanga, The University of Auckland, Auckland.
- Kidman, J., & Chu, C. (2015). *Māori scholars and the university*. Auckland: Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga. <http://www.maramatanga.ac.nz/sites/default/files/project-reports/Kidman%20Chu%20Fernandez%20Abella-%20Maori%20Scholars%20Final%20report%202015.pdf>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Kukutai, T., & Webber, M. (2011). Navigating the “space between”: Authenticity and identity in ‘Māori’ social science. *Sociology*, 26, 4–20.
- Lambert, S. (2007). *Māori writing retreats: Advancing Māori postgraduates*. Paper presented at the Association of Tertiary Learning Advisors of Aotearoa New Zealand Conference 2006, Auckland.
- Mane, J. (2009). Kaupapa Māori: A community approach. *MAI Review*, 3. <http://www.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/viewFile/243/282>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Manuel, R., Dunphy, C., & Hema, G. (2011). *Tuākana learning community: Enhancing academic success for Māori and Pasifika students*. A presentation at HERDSA 2011: Higher Education on the Edge, Gold Coast, Australia.
- McKinley, E. (2002). Brown bodies in white coats: Maori women scientists and identity. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 9(3), 109–116.
- Mead, L. T. (1996). *Ngā aho o te kākahu mātauranga: The multiple layers of struggle by Māori in education*. Auckland: University of Auckland.
- Mead, S. M. (1997). *Landmarks, bridges and visions: Aspects of Maori culture*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Mercier, O. R., Asmar, C., & Page, S. (2011). An academic occupation: Mobilisation, sit-in, speaking out and confrontation in the experiences of Māori academics. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 40, 81–91.
- Middleton, S., & McKinley, E. (2010). The gown and the korowai: Māori doctoral students and the spatial organisation of academic knowledge. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 29(3), 229–243.
- Mikaere, A. (1998). Taku titiro: Viewpoint: Rhetoric, reality and recrimination: Striving to fulfill the bicultural commitment at Waikato Law School. *He Pūkenga Kōrero: A Journal of Māori Studies*, 3(2), 4–14.
- Moeke-Pickering, T., Hardy, S., Maniwabi, S., Mawhiney, A., Faries, E., Gibson-van Marrewijk, K., Tobias, N., & Taitoko, M. (2006). Keeping our fire alive: Towards decolonising research in the academic setting. *WINHEC (World Indigenous Higher Education Consortium) Journal*.
- Morgan, D.L. (2003). Appropriation, appreciation, accommodation: Indigenous wisdoms and knowledges in higher education. In M. Bray (Ed.), *Comparative education: Continuing traditions, new challenges, and new paradigms* (pp. 35–49). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Morrison, A. (1999). *Space for Māori in tertiary institutions: Exploring two sites at the University of Auckland*. Master's thesis. Auckland: University of Auckland.
- Morrison, A. (2000). *Space for Māori in tertiary institutions*. A presentation at the Fourth Pacific Rim-First Year in Higher Education Conference: Creating Futures for a New Millennium, Queensland University of Technology, Australia.
- Nakata, M. (2007). *Disciplining the savages, savaging the disciplines*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Nakata, M., Nakata, V., Keech, S., & Bolt, R. (2012). Decolonial goals and pedagogies for Indigenous Studies. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1(1), 120–140.

- Nana, G., Stokes, F., & Lynn, A. (2010). *Academic workforce planning: Towards 2020. Report to Universities New Zealand Human Resources Committee Steering Group*. Wellington: Universities New Zealand.
- New Zealand History (n.d.). *The Treaty in brief*. <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/treaty/the-treaty-in-brief>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Nikora, L., Levy, M., Henry, J., & Whangapirita, L. (2002). *Addressing the recruitment and retention of Maori students in tertiary education institutions: A literature review*. Prepared for the Ministry of Health: Māori & Psychology Research Unit, University of Waikato.
- Page, S., & Asmar, C. (2008). Beneath the teaching iceberg: Exposing the hidden support dimensions of Indigenous academic work. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 37 (Suppl.), 109–117.
- Pohatu, G. (1998). *The university, Maori studies and Treaty praxis*. PhD thesis. Dunedin: University of Otago.
- Ratima, M. (2008). Making space for kaupapa Māori within the academy. *MAI Review*, 1.
- Roa, T., & Tuapiki, J. (2005). Tikanga Tainui; Tikanga Whare Wananga. *He Puna Kōrero*, 6(2).
- Roa, T., Beggs, J. R., Williams, J., & Moller, H. (2009). New Zealand's Performance Based Research Funding (PBRF) model undermines Māori research. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 39(4), 233–238.
- Robust, T. (2007). Developing Indigenous infrastructure in the university: Another era or another error? *MAI Review*, 1. <http://www.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/view/31>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- Ross, C. (2008). *Culturally relevant peer support for Māori and Pasifika student engagement, retention and success*. Wellington: Ako Aotearoa.
- Royal, T. C. (2012). Politics and knowledge: Kaupapa Maori and matauranga Maori. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 47(2), 30–37.
- Smith, L.T. (1992). *Ko taku ko ta te Maori: The dilemma of a Maori academic*. A presentation at the NZARE/AARE Joint Conference, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia.
- Smith, C. (2000). Straying beyond the boundaries of belief: Māori epistemologies inside the curriculum. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 32(1), 43–51.
- Smith, G. H. (2011). *MANU AO seminar – Transforming education*. Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington.
- Sorenson, M. (1996a). Buck, Peter Henry. In *The dictionary of New Zealand biography, Te Ara the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Wellington: Ministry of Culture and Heritage.
- Sorenson, M. (1996b). Ngata, Apirana Turupa. In *The dictionary of New Zealand biography, Te Ara the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Wellington: Ministry for Culture and Heritage.
- Statistics New Zealand. (2015). *New Zealand census 2013: Major ethnic groups in New Zealand*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.
- Stewart-Harawira, M. (2007). Practicing Indigenous feminism: Resistance to imperialism. In J. Green (Ed.), *Making space for indigenous feminisms*. Fernwood: Zed Books.
- Sue, D. W. (Ed.). (2010). *Microaggressions and marginality: Manifestations, dynamics, and impact*. Hoboken: Wiley.
- Sutherland, K. A., Wilson, M., & Williams, P. (2013). *Success in Academia? The experiences of early career academics in New Zealand universities*. Wellington: Ako Aotearoa.
- Tawhai, V., Pihera, K., & Bruce-Ferguson, P. (2004). *Does the PBRF need reshaping? A new Māori educational institution's perspective*. A presentation at the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) Conference, Sarawak.
- Te Hiwi, E. (2007). Disrupted spaces: Racism and the lived experience of Māori identity formation. In *Proceedings of the 2007 National Māori and Pacific Psychologies Symposium*. Hamilton.
- Tertiary Education Commission. (2014). *Tertiary education strategy 2014–2019*. Wellington: Tertiary Education Commission.
- Villegas, M. (2010). *500 Māori PhDs in five years: Insights from a successful Indigenous higher education initiative*. Doctor of education thesis. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

- Webber, M. (2009). The multiple selves and realities of a Māori researcher. *MAI Review*, 1. <http://www.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/view/195>. Accessed 6 Apr 2017.
- White, P., & Grice, J. (2008). *Participation and performance by Māori and Pacific peoples researchers in the Performance-Based Research Fund, 2003–2006: A working paper contributing to the strategic review of the Performance-Based Research Fund*. Wellington: Tertiary Education Commission.
- White, H., Oxenham, T., Tahana, M., Williams, K., & Matthews, K. (2009). Ma te huruhuru ka rere te manu: How can language and literacy be optimised for Maori learner success? In *Education counts*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.