

NGĀ TAONGA MŌHIOTANGA

Voices of kaumātua and early childhood education leaders

*Lesley Kay Rameka**

Brenda Eva Soutar†

Vanessa Anne Paki‡

Abstract

Mana and kaitiakitanga capture the relationships essential to Māori perceptions of wellbeing. These relationships reflect the interconnectedness and interdependence of humans with the people, places and things in their worlds, and the responsibilities associated with these relationships. Mana is critical for mokopuna, as is the requirement to action it, through kaitiakitanga (Marsden, 2003; Paul-Burke & Rameka, 2015). Kaitiakitanga recognises the place of humans, including mokopuna, to assume guardianship roles and responsibilities. The article reports on Phase 1 of a two-year Teaching and Learning Research Initiative research project, that aimed to explore ways that early childhood education (ECE) accords mokopuna opportunities to recognise mana and understand ways to attain mana through being kaitiaki of themselves, others and their environment, thereby contributing to a collective sense of wellbeing. In this phase, pūrākau collected from kaumātua and Māori ECE leaders were utilised to illuminate how mana and kaitiakitanga were traditionally upheld for the benefit and wellbeing of all.

Keywords

wellbeing, mana, kaitiakitanga, education, kaumātua, pūrākau

Introduction

Wellbeing, the state of being healthy and happy, is fundamental to an individual's ability to function and live well (Cram, 2014; Durie, 1998). From a holistic Māori worldview, mana and kaitiakitanga encapsulate the critical relationships fundamental to Māori understandings of wellbeing (Dobbs & Eruera, 2014). These relationships reflect the interconnectedness and interdependence of te tāngata, ngā atua, te whenua, te taiao and te reo (Ministry

of Education, 2017), and the responsibilities associated with these relationships. Mana at a basic level can be translated as “authority, control, influence, prestige, power, psychic force, effectual, binding, authoritative . . . and take effect” (Hemara, 2000, p. 68). It also has a deeper meaning of spiritual power and authority (Love, 2004). Mana is a crucial aspect of Māori perceptions of the world and of the self, with almost all activities linked to upholding and enhancing mana. All

* Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Tukorehe. Senior Research Fellow, Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research, Poutama Pounamu Education Research and Development Centre, University of Waikato, Tauranga, New Zealand. Email: lesley.rameka@waikato.ac.nz

† Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou. Director, Tautāwhi Ltd and Mana Tamariki, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

‡ Tainui, Taranaki. Senior Pouako/Teacher, Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand, Auckland, New Zealand.

mokopuna are born with an increment of mana from their parents and ancestors (Rameka, 2017). Understandings of mana are therefore critical to an understanding of the Māori person or child, and the Māori world. Furthermore, a Māori way of describing a person's worth is to speak of their mana (Shirres, 1997).

Recognition of mana in all its forms, is important for mokopuna, but mana requires actioning, through kaitiakitanga (Marsden, 2003; Paul-Burke & Rameka, 2015). "Tiaki" can be translated as "to look after, nurse, care, protect, conserve or save" (Moorfield, n.d.). Kaitiaki are agents that perform the task of kaitiakitanga (Paul-Burke & Rameka, 2015). The notions and practices of kaitiakitanga have developed over generations of use and active guardianship. Cultural connectivity encapsulates the values important for Māori to undertake activities in ways that are meaningful and pertinent to Māori. Connectivity is the basis on which te ao Māori is ordered, the organising principle of Māori knowledge, the source of genealogy, and the origin of all rights and obligations—including kaitiakitanga over the environment (Paul-Burke & Rameka, 2015; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011). Kaitiakitanga is about relationships and is as much spiritual and intellectual as it is physical and political (Royal, 1999). Kaitiakitanga acknowledges the role of people, including young mokopuna, to undertake active guardianship and responsibilities. Kaitiakitanga refers to the practical "doing". Through kaitiakitanga, mana can be enhanced (Reedy & Reedy, 2013).

There is a noticeable gap in the literature regarding Māori theorising of mana and kaitiakitanga to support mokopuna. This article offers a window onto the interconnected and interdependent nature of Māori concepts of mana and kaitiakitanga. It aims to illuminate how mana and kaitiakitanga were traditionally upheld and utilised, and to highlight the potential of Māori pūrākau about mana, kaitiakitanga and aroha to enhance understandings of Māori wellbeing in contemporary early childhood education (ECE). The article firstly summarises the methodology employed in the research, including Kaupapa Māori methodology, pūrākau and wānanga. Secondly, pūrākau collected from kaumātua and Māori ECE leaders to illuminate how mana and kaitiakitanga were traditionally upheld and utilised for the benefit and wellbeing of all are presented. Thirdly, initial theoretical guidance for ECE teaching practice and pedagogy, developed from the shared understandings of kaitiakitanga, enhancing mana and

wellbeing, is outlined. Links to the New Zealand ECE curriculum framework, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017), are also made.

Method and methodology

The gathering of pūrākau from kaumātua and educational leaders was the focus of the first phase of *Te Whakapūmautia te Mana: Enhancing Mana through Kaitiakitanga* (2020–2021), a two-year project funded by the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative. The overall aim of the project was to explore the ways that ECE accords mokopuna opportunities to recognise mana and understand ways to accrue and attain mana through being kaitiaki of themselves, others and their environment, thereby contributing to a collective sense of wellbeing. The two-year project involved four phases of work. The first phase, *Kohikohinga Pūrākau* (2020), focused on gathering and analysing pūrākau about experiences, practices, knowledge, teaching and understandings of mana and kaitiakitanga, and determining how the findings could provide guidance and support for ECE kaiako. In the second phase, *Taunaki Puna Reo* (2020–2021), the analysed pūrākau and theoretical understandings were shared with kaiako in the three participating Māori-medium ECE services. Kaiako theorising and practices, developed through Phase 2, were shared with the three English-medium ECE services in the third phase, *Taunaki Auraki* (2021), providing a powerful foundation for pedagogical understandings and practice. Kaiako in the English-medium services are adding to the theoretical understandings through sharing their emerging knowledge, practices and understandings. The fourth phase, *Whanaketanga Ariā* (2021), will involve the analysis of data from all phases of the research. Each phase of the research built upon the last, and in *Whanaketanga Ariā* all aspects of the research will be brought together as a cohesive entity. The research questions were:

1. In what ways do/can mokopuna in ECE services enact mana and kaitiakitanga?
2. What does the enactment of mana and kaitiakitanga look like for both mokopuna and kaiako in ECE?
3. What are the people, tools, artefacts, processes and practices that contribute to enhancing mana and kaitiakitanga for mokopuna?

Kaupapa Māori theory, methodological principles, and understandings provide the cultural and ethical foundations for the project, locating

Māori ways of knowing, being and doing as central to the research design, process, analysis and intended outcomes (Berryman, 2008; Rameka, 2015). Kaupapa Māori has been described as perceiving the world from a Māori epistemological perspective and assuming the normalcy of Māori values, understandings and behaviours (Smith, 1992). Cultural understandings, knowledge and values are important contributing factors to thinking around ethics. These values are the foundations for ideas of ethicality, along with the universal concerns for social sensitivity, protection from harm, informed consent, and confidentiality. Māori concepts of ethicality and obligations are paramount when working in a Māori context. The research team are committed to Kaupapa Māori principles and practices and researching in ways that retain authenticity and adherence to Māori values and beliefs. As Māori researchers, our backgrounds and experiences embed us and our research within Māori contexts, communities and within the cultural values and understandings integral to those contexts, much of which are unspoken and often unconscious.

The research methods included *wānanga* with individuals and groups. Traditionally, *wānanga* were places of learning where important knowledge of oral traditions, lore and valued understandings were preserved and passed on. Today *wānanga* have been reinterpreted to represent understandings and practices that derive from Māori *tikanga*, including the interpretation and practising of Māori knowledge within contemporary contexts (Whaanga-Schollum et al., 2015). In the research, *wānanga* were framed as meetings with groups and individuals who worked on and supported the research goals. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions during 2020, no group *wānanga* with *kaumātua* and educational leaders were possible, and only a small number of *wānanga* were held in person. For this reason, the numbers of *kaumātua* and educational leaders who participated in the research decreased from the planned 20–25 to 15. Some were happy to write their own contributions. Furthermore, the planned *wānanga* had originally been centred in three specific regions, but more locations were used due to the availability of *kaumātua* and educational leaders as a result of ongoing health and safety concerns.

A *pūrākau* approach was utilised when working with *wānanga* participants (Elkington, 2011). *Pūrākau* are a collection of traditional oral narratives that contain “philosophical thought, epistemological constructs, cultural codes, and worldviews that are fundamental to our identity

as Māori” (Lee, 2009, p. 1). Lee makes the point that “*pūrākau*” is a term not usually associated with research methodology but with Māori myths and legends. She argues, however, that *pūrākau* “have relevance for today as they are constructed in various forms, contexts and media to better understand the experiences of our lives as Māori – including the research context” (Lee, 2009, p. 1). The collecting of *pūrākau* from *kaumātua* and educational leaders recognises the knowledge of traditional practices, understandings and values that *kaumātua* possess and how valuable these are for the development of ECE theory and practice.

Analysis of the data was undertaken by the *kairangahau* in conjunction with *kaiako* and *whānau*. A Kaupapa Māori approach to analysing data emphasises interpreting and understanding information that has been intertwined with *tikanga* Māori and Māori knowledge and understandings (Cunningham, 2000). The analysis was an iterative process that involved going back to the data and literature to fine-tune the analysis, theorise and develop strategies. Through thematic analysis it was possible to concentrate on identifying themes or patterns from the data in order to support meaning making and understandings (Welsh, 2002). A number of types of data were being gathered during the research including *pūrākau*, *kaiako* reflections and evaluations, notes from *kaiako* focus group interviews, *whānau* feedback and comments, *mokopuna* feedback, photos, and *mokopuna* assessments.

Results

As previously stated, this article reports the findings of the first phase of the research, *Kohikohinga Pūrākau*, which involved collecting *pūrākau* from *kaumātua* and Māori ECE experts on *mana* and how it was and can be enhanced through *kaitiakitanga*. The names of *kaikōrero* have been included for those *kaumātua* and education leaders who gave permission, and an *iwi* affiliation has been included for those who did not. The key themes that emerged from Phase 1 *pūrākau* are described individually below.

Aroha me manaakitanga / Love and respect

Almost all *kaumātua* and educational leaders stated that their learning was first and foremost about *aroha* and *manaakitanga*, rather than *mana* and *kaitiakitanga*. *Manaaki* is derived from the word “*mana*” and can be translated as “to entertain or befriend, to show respect, care, or kindness” (Patterson, 1992, p. 148). *Manaakitanga* is the enactment of *manaaki*. The expression of love,

caring, kindness and respect were important learnings for kaumātua and educational leaders. Kaumātua and educational leaders' pūrākau highlight that although "kaiakitanga" was not a word they commonly heard as mokopuna, the tenets of kaiakitanga were understood through activities such as gardening, gathering kai, gathering resources for weaving, and so on:

Mana and kaiakitanga? These are not words that I knew growing up. . . . We looked after everything around us because all things were tapu. The tapu of tangata is because of the mana that we have as people. (Aki Herewini)

One particular Māori concept that was said many times as I grew up was the notion of "aroha". That was one kupu that we all knew. We were taught to show aroha by caring for others, being kind, respectful and helping others whenever we could. (Christine Taare)

Tikanga practices of aroha and manaakitanga is instilled in our tamariki right from the start to care and respect each other. We believe that mana is a right of virtue for them and we try to sustain this through our teachings and modelling towards each other. (Tainui kaumātua/kuia)

Ā tōna wā / In their own time

The pūrākau were mainly focused on what kaumātua and educational leaders had been told by their parents, grandparents and whānau. Most said that because the terms "mana" and "kaiakitanga" were not utilised when they were growing up, they didn't recognise the wisdom that was being shared with them. They recalled that it was not until much later that they understood their learnings in terms of mana and kaiakitanga. A deeper understanding of childhood teachings developed when they reached adulthood or had their own mokopuna, as demonstrated in the following pūrākau of kaumātua and educational leaders:

I did not understand the meaning of kaiakitanga until I was much older.. but it was always around me . . . manaaki our whānau. (Tainui kaumātua/kuia)I taku rua-tekautanga i hoki mahara ki aua wā, ā. . . . Koirā te take o tana kōrero . . . kātahi ka taka te kapa . . . te māramatanga [When I was in my twenties, I remembered that time. . . . That was the reason she said that . . . then the penny dropped . . . the understandings]. (Manu Kawana)

It was only at dad's tangi when I started to understand that they were kaiaki of te reo me ōna tikanga [the language and its cultural practices], values for our iwi. . . . Listening to speakers also paying homage to my mother after her passing, I really gained an appreciation of the work they were doing and the esteem that they were held in. (Peter Jackson)

Waiho mā tō mahi e kōrero / Let your work speak for itself

Most kaumātua and educational leaders highlighted that understandings of wellbeing, mana and kaiakitanga were acquired through experience—by doing tasks that had been allocated to them. They were not taught directly; rather, deeper understandings were acquired over time, as they participated in activities. This focus on indirect, experiential teaching and learning is explained further in the pūrākau of kaumātua and educational leaders:

I believe that mana and kaiakitanga were actually being indirectly ingrained within our very being. (Christine Taare)

I grew up knowing that it was important to respect all things around me which included nurturing our rākau, caring for our ngāhere, respecting our moana, and looking after our whenua. (Arapera Card)

I wasn't aware that this was enacting mana. I was also unaware that I was growing up learning the role of a kaiaki. It sure did instil in me the deep understanding of the whakataukī "Tiaki i a Papatūānuku, ka tiaki a ia i a koe" ["Take care of Papatūānuku and she in turn will take care of you"]. (Arapera Card)

Whaiwāhi / Contribution

A common theme across the pūrākau was a strong sense of community and contribution. For example, a large number of pūrākau related to growing and gathering kai. There was a strong sense of community and contribution that was directly related to mana. It was important to nurture the māra, with the understanding that the māra would nurture you and your whānau and community. Whānau mana was directly related to the ability to feed the whānau and others. The following pūrākau underscores this sense of contribution:

[I remember] harvesting huge kūmara but never seeing them on their table because they were given

away. And manaaki for our whānau and maanaki for our whenua. I also remember how my grandparents were always out in the gardens looking after the māra. (Mari Ropata-Te Hei)

In the Waikato region, kaumātua and educational leaders also talked about their past and present changes growing up in the Kingitanga movement, in particular the changes, developments and pollution of the whenua. Kotahitanga and manaakitanga between people and whenua was a common thread throughout the pūrākau. As one participant stated: “My life is about the Kingitanga and the kaupapa of manaakitanga. Also, our awa must be protected and nurtured. It is the life force for all living things and our mana is part of our awa” (Tainui kaumātua/kuia).

He rā anō āpōpō / Another day tomorrow

Large numbers of pūrākau were about learning around preservation of what needed to be preserved and cared for—reo, tikanga and values, moana, taiao, whenua, kai and resources. Growing, gathering and sharing kai was a common theme throughout almost all pūrākau. The key concept was that if they looked after the garden, then the garden would look after them. Kaitiakitanga was a way of to ensure practices around growing, gathering and sharing kai were maintained, as highlighted in the following pūrākau:

We are also kaitiaki for our taiao and all the resources that have been gifted to us, such as our whakapapa, te reo, tikanga, values and all our cultural traditions. (Christine Taare)

We enjoyed what the moana had to offer us, but we were always told to take only what we needed as “he rā anō āpōpō”. (Manu Kawana)

The reason we moved our garden from one spot to another after a couple of seasons was to give the land time to rest because we had received so much food, and now she needed to rest and get her strength back. (Arapera Card)

Tōku Māoritanga / My Māori heritage

Kaumātua and educational leaders stated whānau had clear roles that supported kaitiakitanga in line with tikanga. Tikanga, or ways of doing, were not usually debatable. Tikanga and expectations were explained, and it was anticipated that there would be consequences if tikanga was breached. Although the language of communication was mainly English, underpinning the experience were

Māori values. The critical place of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and kawa is stressed in the following pūrākau:

Uncles would take their mother to harvest harakeke, pīngao and kiekie, but only she harvested because she was the expert weaver. (Manu Kawana)

If you couldn’t look after them [the practices], then there was serious consequences. (Rihi Te Nana)

We all are born with mana, and it’s how we support our next generation of rangatahi in our reo and tikanga to lead our iwi and to care for our kaumātua. (Peter Jackson)

Mana is kaitiakitanga and kaitiakitanga is mana. . . . It’s how one enacts them through our reo and tikanga. (Tainui kaumātua/kuia)

The knowledge for our Māori world has always been there, but I believe we all have to seek it out and learn our ancestral knowledge so that we can then fully live it ourselves and share it with our tamariki and future generations of mokopuna. (Christine Taare)

Wairuatanga / Spiritual connectedness

Tapu and noa are interconnected with mana and kaitiakitanga. Keeping safe and understanding what you could and couldn’t do were important. Involvement in activities at the marae came with instructions about how to keep safe. This is directly related to tapu and noa, and not trampling mana. It is also linked to a deep-seated connectedness, or feeling or sense of the land, nga wairua, whānau, whatumanawa and moana. Participants’ understandings and “lived” experiences of the spiritual world, growing up “as Māori” and the importance of kaitiakitanga to safety and holistic wellbeing were common themes in the pūrākau:

Regular visits to the river to attend to the wairua and connect to the other realm. (Rihi Te Nana)

The midwife did a karanga when my nephew was crowning. Wow, that gave my nephew mana that was felt by everyone in the room. Not only does the mana of the mother grow while she is hapū, but at the birth of her baby straight away comes with a mana that only the gods could give this pēpi. (Aki Herewini)

Hoki ki tō maunga kia pupuhia koe i ngā hau o Tawhirimatea! [Go home to your mountain and let the winds of Tawhirimatea blow through your

hair!] This is where our mana came from, and it is there we keep our mana strong. Respectful of all things tapu. (Tainui kaumātua/kuia)

Whakatipuranga tūpuna / Intergenerational transmission

Many of the kaumātua and educational leaders grew up with one or both grandparents living with them. Grandparents passed on teachings about weaving, gardening, spirituality and Māori ways of doing. Often it was the grandparents who explained expectations, as in the following pūrākau:

My grandmother would take me into the ngāhere and teach me about the different properties of some of the plants. I learnt from a young age how to tiaki our whenua. (Tainui kaumātua/kuia)

My grandmother valued what came from Papatūānuku. Once a priest asked her to go to church and she replied, “My garden is my church”. . . . She did more doing than talking. (Rihi Te Nana)

On arriving at the marae his grandparents would explain, “Me pēnei, me pērā, kua e pēnei, kua e pērā” . . . nā reira i mōhio mātou . . . me whai ana tohutohu kei raruraru” [“Do this, do that, don’t do this, don’t do that” . . . and so we learnt . . . follow instructions or there may be problems]. (Manu Kawana)

He rangatiratanga hūmārie / Humility in leadership

When exploring the characteristics of mana in kaitiakitanga, there was recognition that kaumātua are kaitiaki of te reo and tikanga in each iwi. Kaumātua are knowledge keepers of each iwi but having knowledge must be accompanied by humility. Their mana was linked to knowledge, around tikanga, reo and kawa of their iwi, but alongside that was humility. This was demonstrated in the respectful way that kaumātua communicated with others. It was not about maintaining their own mana but was more related to the maintaining the mana of te reo, tikanga, marae and community.

I also have seen the next generation of kaumātua and kaihautū taking their place as kaitiaki of te reo me ona tikanga [the language and its cultural practices] for our iwi. . . . *The characteristic that all*

of these people possess is mana. . . . I think mana is knowledge about the kawa and tikanga of your iwi and that of the mana whenua but alongside that it is the humility that these people possess. They don’t force their beliefs and practices on others. They are all fluent Māori speakers but it is their respectful manner for others and also for the role that they have as leaders, speakers, figureheads and the keepers of the knowledge for the respective iwi. (Peter Jackson)

Discussion

The above themes from the pūrākau of the kaumātua and educational leaders were analysed in terms of what theoretical guidance they offer for ECE teaching practice and pedagogy in relation to kaitiakitanga, enhancing mana and wellbeing. Four key theoretical premises have been articulated from the pūrākau themes, and these are discussed individually below. Links to the New Zealand ECE curriculum framework, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017), are also made in this section.

Te rongo ā tinana / Experiencing and connecting physically

The first key theoretical premise that emerged from Phase 1 is the need for mokopuna to engage with and experience their worlds, and the contexts in which they function, including whenua, tāngata, reo and tikanga, taiao and atua. What is clear from the pūrākau is that learning about kaitiakitanga and mana is experiential. There was little overt teaching; instead, understandings were acquired and deepened over time, through participating in activities. Being in the environment, observing, following instructions, taking part, and engaging in activities and tasks was key to learning.

From an ECE perspective, a focus on the context of learning within the ECE service and in environments external to the service is critical. For mokopuna to experience and engage in their worlds, they must be regularly exposed to a wide range of contexts, experiences, artefacts, cultural tools, processes and practices. *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017) makes a number of statements that support the importance of mokopuna being able to experience and engage in their worlds, including:

This strand is about supporting infants, toddlers and young children to explore, learn from, respect and make sense of the world. Their exploration

involves all aspects of the environment: natural, social, physical, spiritual and human-made. (p. 46)

Children experience an environment where: They develop working theories for making sense of the natural, social, physical and material worlds. (p. 25)

Despite most ECE services taking mokopuna on outings into their communities, regular and ongoing opportunities to access their worlds—allowing mokopuna to interact with the people, languages, values, resources and cultural norms and expectations fundamental to their worlds and the entities that inhabit them—are less common. In order to extend the learning contexts and environments that are available to mokopuna, kaiako must widen their mindsets and understandings of what constitutes an ECE learning environment, and what is required for mokopuna to grow their knowledge and understandings of their worlds, including the Māori world.

Te rongo ā hinengaro / Experiencing and connecting intellectually

The second theoretical premise is that in order for mokopuna to take on kaitiaki roles of any description, they must first develop the required knowledge and understandings of their worlds, and how they operate. Kaumātua and educational leaders made the point that this learning was not understood at the time; rather, understandings became clear over time, as they were immersed in the activities and expectations of their natural, social, physical, material and spiritual worlds. Intergenerational teaching and learning, the sharing of traditional knowledge, tribal narratives, cultural expertise and practices, and keeping oneself safe both physically and spiritually were all important features of the teaching experienced by kaumātua and educational leaders.

What the pūrākau highlight for ECE is that learning in and about the environment must be supported by knowledgeable, capable and committed kaiako who are able to facilitate the required learnings with mokopuna. Appropriate content knowledge and pedagogical expertise are critical to this transmission of both new and traditional knowledges, as is the ability to notice recognise and respond in appropriate ways to further support the learning. *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017) reflects the importance of mokopuna developing knowledge of their worlds:

Children construct knowledge as they make meaning of their world. Knowledge is cultural, social and

material. It draws on cultural, aesthetic, historical, social, scientific, technological, mathematical and geographical information. (p. 22)

Children have opportunities to develop knowledge about the patterns and diversity to be found in the natural world. For example, they observe how animals and plants grow and what they need for their wellbeing. (p. 49)

Over time and with guidance and encouragement, children become increasingly capable of making sense of their worlds by generating and refining working theories. (p. 47)

Along with a presence in, and interactions and familiarity with, their worlds, kaiako need to understand how to utilise learning resources such as whakapapa, tribal teachings and histories, pūrākau and waiata, as well as books, pictures, posters and focused discussions to support mokopuna learning. What is clear is the need for appropriate resources and professional support for teachers who may not have the required knowledges to fulfil this premise.

Te rongo ā ngākau / Experiencing and connecting emotionally

The third key theoretical premise is the need for mokopuna to develop an affinity with and a connectedness to their worlds, especially a spiritual and emotional connectedness. Central to affinity and connectedness development is identification with their worlds, a sense of belonging and personal and collective identity with their worlds. This is achieved through learning about one's place in the world—one's whakapapa, tribal history, cultural ways of knowing, being and doing, karakia related to the worlds and reo associated with the contexts. From this learning comes a sense of being part of their worlds, belonging to their worlds, rather than being a separate entity from their worlds. *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017) highlights the importance of knowing the child holistically and offering guidance on how their sense of connectedness and affinity to their worlds can be supported in practice:

Children know they belong and have a sense of connection to others and the environment. Children's relationship to Papatūānuku is based on whakapapa respect and aroha. (p. 31) Respect is shown for Māori views of the world, the natural environment, and the child's connection through time to whenua, atua and tīpuna. (p. 31)

Te Whāriki acknowledges that, for Māori, the child is a link to the world of the ancestors and to the new world, connected to people, places, things and the spiritual realm; they belong to whānau, hapū and iwi and they are a kaitiaki of te Tiriti o Waitangi. (p. 52) The implications for kaiako relate to the need to “know the mokopuna” and know how to support mokopuna to engage with and connect with their worlds. *Te Whatu Pōkeka*, a Kaupapa Māori assessment of learning framework, asks three questions related to Māori perspectives of knowing the mokopuna that are useful in terms of knowing worlds: “Ko wai koe? Nā wai koe? I ahu mai koe i hea? Who are you? From whom are you? Where have you come from?” (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 50). Kaiako therefore need to know not only the temperaments, personality traits, likes and dislikes, interests and talents of their mokopuna, but also their whakapapa, their whānau, hapū, iwi and their tūrangawaewae.

Te rongo ā wairua / Experiencing and connecting spiritually

The fourth key theoretical premise is the need for mokopuna to contribute to their worlds in meaningful ways. Associated with the development of mokopuna understandings and affinity to their worlds is the development of knowledge about how to care for their worlds, and what is required for their worlds and those that inhabit them to flourish. Contributing to their worlds requires the enactment of learnings, action, commitment and responsibility. Kaumātua and educational leaders highlighted in their pūrākau the point that their learning was not specifically about mana and kaitiakitanga; rather it was about aroha and manaakitanga. The enactment of one’s knowledge and understandings of mana and kaitiakitanga involved caring for people, the community, the environment, te reo and te ao Māori. In this way, these taonga could be sustained and preserved. A further point associated with enacting mana and kaitiakitanga was that it needed to be expressed with humility and respect. Kaitiakitanga was expressed in a respectful manner, ensuring the maintenance and enhancement of mana for all concerned. *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017) makes a number of statements that support these points: Kaiako recognise the relationship mokopuna have with the environment. They support them to fulfil their responsibilities as kaitiaki/ carers of the environment. For example, kaiako encourage mokopuna to observe nature without harming it. (p. 48)

Kaiako support mokopuna to engage respectfully with and to have aroha for Papatūānuku. They encourage an understanding of kaitiakitanga and the responsibilities of being a kaitiaki by, for example, caring for rivers, native forest and birds. (p. 33)

In order for mokopuna to contribute to and develop a sense of responsibility for their worlds, they must have authentic opportunities to give, be generous, demonstrate caring and compassion, and through these opportunities show their understandings of aroha, manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga and mana. Kaiako contribute to mokopuna learning of kaitiakitanga through providing opportunities to give and be responsible; reminding mokopuna of the need for aroha manaaki and respect in interactions with people, places and things; and recognising, valuing and further encouraging these caring, empathetic behaviours in mokopuna.

Conclusion

From a Māori perspective, wellbeing is strongly linked to mana. Mana is key to one’s perceptions of the world and of oneself within it. Understandings of mana are therefore fundamental to an understanding of the Māori world. The overall aim of *Te Whakapūmautia te Mana: Enhancing Mana through Kaitiakitanga* project is to explore ways that mokopuna can enact mana and kaitiakitanga, develop understanding of what the enactment of mana and kaitiakitanga looks like for mokopuna and kaiako, and investigate what people, tools, artefacts, processes and practices can contribute to enhancing mana and kaitiakitanga for mokopuna. Pūrākau gathered in the first phase of the project highlight a number of theoretical understandings central to learning to be a kaitiaki and the accruing of mana, including the need for mokopuna to have opportunities to experience and engage in their worlds, develop knowledge and understandings of their worlds, develop connectedness to and affinity with their worlds, and contribute to their worlds in meaningful ways.

The pūrākau of kaumātua and educational leaders collected in Phase 1 of the project were shared with kaiako and whānau in the second and third phases of the research as a basis for discussions and possible future planning. These phases focused on understandings and implications for pedagogies and practices that emerge from kaiako, whānau and mokopuna contributions, and the findings will be published in the final project report.

Glossary

aroaha	love, compassion, empathy, affection	moana	sea
atua	god(s)	mōhiotanga	knowing, understanding(s)
awa	river	mokopuna	child/ren, grandchild/ren
hapū	subtribe; pregnant	ngā atua	spiritual world
harakeke	native flax, <i>Phormium tenax</i>	ngāhere	forest(s), bush
hinengaro	intellectual; mind	noa	normal, unrestricted
iwi	extended kinship group, tribe, people	Papatūānuku	earth; Earth Mother
kai	food	pēpi	baby
kaiako	teacher	pīngao	native plant that inhabits coastal sand dunes, <i>Desmoschoenus spiralis</i>
kaihautū	leaders	pūrākau	narrative(s), stories
kaikōrero	speakers	rākau	tree(s)
kairangahau	researcher(s)	rangatahi	young person/people, youth
kaitiaki	trustee, custodian, guardian, protector	taiao	environment, nature
kaitiakitanga	guardianship	tamariki	children
karakia	prayer, ritual chant, incantation	tangata/tāngata	person, individual/people, human beings
karanga	call of welcome	tangi	funeral; cry
kaumātua	elder(s)	taonga	treasure, precious gifts
kaupapa	purpose	tapu	sacred, restricted
Kaupapa Māori	research methodology grounded in Māori worldviews	Taunaki Auraki	English-medium Contributions
kawa	rituals	Taunaki Puna Reo	Māori-medium Contributions
kiekie	thick native vine, <i>Freycinetia banksii</i>	Tāwhirimatea	god of the elements
Kīngitanga	Māori King movement	te ao Māori	the Māori world
Kohikohinga Pūrākau	Collecting Narratives	te reo Māori	Māori language
kōrero	conversation, chat, story, discussion	tiaki	care for, protect
kotahitanga	unity, collective action	tikanga	culture, customs
kuia	female elder	tinana	physical body
kupu	word	tūpuna	ancestor
mahitahi	working together	tūrangawaewae	place to stand
mana	power, authority	waiata	songs
manaaki	generosity, hospitality, care for others	wānanga	educational seminars, meetings
manaakitanga	process of showing respect, generosity, hospitality and care	whakapapa	genealogy
mana whenua	people with authority over the land	whakataukī	proverb, saying
māra	garden	Whanaketanga Ariā	Theory Development
marae	buildings and land associated with whānau, hapū, iwi	whānau	family
maunga	mountain	whatumanawa	heart; emotions
		whenua	land
		wairua	spirit, soul
		wairuatanga	spirituality

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