

Te Korowai Ākonga: A catalyst for change in teacher education at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa

Heeni Grace Jenkins

Abstract: Teaching is the most regulated profession in the world where ongoing tensions remain. Highlighted in the article is the implementation process that was followed by Te Wānanga o Aotearoa in the production of their teacher education degree which is called 'Te Korowai Ākonga.' The Wānanga objective was to prepare Māori teachers for a primary school curriculum that was heavily weighted in traditional Māori knowledge. Such a vision raised the question of capability and sustainability of providing for a programme requiring intensive levels of academic scholarship and resources. Central objectives to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa were building their capability across programmes and thereby maintaining the sustainability of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, unique approach to teacher education.

Keywords: Bachelor of Teaching (Primary); kaupapa Māori; New Zealand Qualifications Board; sustainability; teacher education; Te Korowai Ākonga; Te Wānanga o Aotearoa

Ka horahia te kaupapa: Teacher education.

Te Korowai Ākonga is the degree of Bachelor of Teaching (Primary). It was one of the programmes that began with the establishment of the Waipā Kōkiri Arts Centre in Te Awamutu in 1984. Te Korowai Ākonga initially began at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWOA) campuses in Rotorua, Hamilton and Manukau in early 1997 as a Diploma of Teaching. The initiative began with a collaborative arrangement with Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, who had the accreditation for the Diploma. TWOA sub-contracted that programme. Sub-contracting was later to become a major issue as was the shift in qualifications from Diploma to degree level for New Zealand teachers.

In the process, Awanuiārangi's Diploma became redundant and TWOA had to move swiftly to a degree structure in 1998. They applied to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for approval and accreditation which was finally given in June 2000 under the name Te Korowai Ākonga – Bachelor of Teaching (Primary). The degree was taught in 2001 at the Manukau, Hamilton and Rotorua campuses and implemented at the Gisborne Campus in 2003.

Taku whakapono: Staking a position

At the MAI Conference in October 2008, at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, I spoke of my personal beliefs about directions of Te Korowai Ākonga programme. As indigenous educators and teachers, I thought, that we had become 'change agents' and as such we needed to have a 'radical pedagogy'. One of our executive managers, Shane Edwards, described our teaching pedagogy as "wanagogy", which I thought incorporated a critical observation of the cultural preferences that the Wānanga has adopted to respond to our developmental circumstances. I thought it was critical that we as the Wānanga needed to constantly upgrade the approaches we follow in our teacher education programme. I thought that to ensure the 'buy-in' from our communities, TWOA needed to provide them with the maximum of support that we could manage. We also needed to hold fast to the vision.

Te hikoitanga: Walking the talk

In order to track the development of teacher education at TWOA, the research methodology has been a reflective one. The analytical framework is qualitative and allows the researcher to gather data, discuss the various positions of people and organisations involved, analyse, critique, judge each situation and assess the effects of political interventions by government agencies and community responses to developments that impact on the people who participate and engage in the activities that are produced. Critical theory permeates the analysis of how dominant and subordinate groups worked out their relationships during the development of the teacher education programme (Te Korowai Ākonga). Underpinning our analytical approach is a Kaupapa Māori framework developed by G. Smith (1997, 2003a, 2003b) and interpreted by others (e.g. Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, & Richardson, 2002; Jenkins, 1994; Pihama, 2001; Pohatu, 2004).

Nga mahi o Te Kāwanatanga: State reforms, capacity building

The State reforms of the 1980s which gave rise to *Tomorrow's Schools* were crucial events in the developmental path of Māori teacher education (Ministry of Education, 1989; Wylie, 1990). However, the continuing debate between the Universities and Colleges of Education about whether or not teacher education should be kept within mainstream has dogged the Māori education scene. Prior to 1990, Universities were the only tertiary institutions that could offer degree programmes. After the establishment of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority as the State monitoring and quality control agency for the reforms of *Tomorrow's Schools*, any institution could apply for approval to offer degrees, if they met the criteria. Currently degree programmes are now also available in Polytechnics, Institutes of Technology, Wānanga, Colleges of Education, and some Private Training Establishments (PTEs).

Nga hiahia: Meeting the criteria

There was a presumption that Te Wānanga o Aotearoa would follow a mainstream process in building and developing their teaching education programme. As a new provider, it was thought they would adopt the standard Bachelor of Education degree that exists for all teacher education degrees within the mainstream. Should they wish to follow an alternative programme, for example, a Kaupapa Māori programme, they would then have had to gain an exemption from NZQA and the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) as such a category came under a different scope and level. Such a process would take more time, resources and energy to produce. The guidelines as set by government agents were stringent but TWOA was prepared to adhere and comply with the NZQA and NZTC regulations.

Measuring how the teacher education programme came to fruition is the task of this project. What was the capability of TWOA to provide teacher education and how sustainable would that programme be?

Te whakaritenga o te maara: Building the capacity

Wānanga teacher education was an educational strategy designed to train their own teachers; 'growing their own' was the adage they used. They wanted to produce Māori teachers who were fluent in the reo, and for the wide range of Māori medium schools, including Kura Kaupapa, Reo-rua, Rumaki Reo, and Ngā Kura Āoraki. The political circumstances that helped with the establishment of Wānanga teacher education programmes evolved out of the

Education Act 1989 (Jenkins, 1994, p. 157). This Act can be viewed as the maara (or plantation) for TWOA's educational initiatives because it seemingly offered iwi, hapū and whānau (tribes, sub-tribes and families, respectively) the promise of real control over their own schooling.

The preparation and collection of the resources for Te Korowai Ākonga became a complicated process during 2003-2006. I have used the gardening metaphor of the maara, this Māori metaphorical thinking helps Māori to relate to their own contexts, gardeners of their own destiny, the political work of 'organic intellectuals' their work of nurturing and cultivating the educational acts, government policies that have influenced the development in teacher education in Māori Education.

Through a paper presented at NZARE (Jenkins, Kingi, Maged, Pilkington-McMurchy, Stucki, & Turi, 2006) a description was given about the various phases of preparation needed for the development of the new degree. The paper detailed how the TWOA redevelopment team began preparing their tāpapa (gardening bed) or in development terms as the basis of the degree Te Korowai Ākonga. They list five phases in their development preparations; namely: tinkering, collaboration, disillusionment, crisis and then the empowerment phase.

In the tinkering phase during 2003-2006, the development team stated that they had made various attempts at rewriting the degree. They described the discussions they had about proposed structural and visionary changes and how at a national TWOA level the collegiality for rewriting of the degree between the four campuses (Manukau, Te Awamutu, Rotorua and Gisborne) had been strong. Joint staff meetings had been conducted on developing the graduate profile and other structural modelling. Through the many meetings from which numerous amendments and assessments arose, a plethora of emails were sent out, notifying staff of new developments, but with little or no consultation actually happening. Such happenings were seen as merely 'tinkering' with the degree. By the end of 2004, the situation was untenable as there were four different degrees going on in four different campuses!!

The collaborative phase came about in 2005 when the degree's external monitor identified a number of inconsistencies in the programme delivery between the campuses at Manukau, Te Awamutu, Rotorua and Gisborne. To facilitate the process to co-ordinating for one degree (not four) an outside writer was contracted and the collaboration between the campuses began. The degree's graduate profile and its conceptual framework came together at Rangiaowhia in July 2005. A core development team was formed to co-ordinate the rewriting and the collaborative effort was underway.

By September 2005, the struggle over Western ideology frameworks and the attempt to standardise the structure, created a period of disillusionment. The team described the process metaphorically as lacking the expertise 'to weave the korowai/cloak'. The problems lay within whether the Wānanga degree should be confined to eight papers and uniform credits or whether a new formula could be applied. The end result was to decide on twenty eight papers as compared to the twenty one paper degree structure. Diffusing the tension centred on resolving the prescription of what a Wānanga degree structure should look like and kaupapa Māori principles were called for.

The crisis phase that was described by the development came in November 2005 but was soon resolved after the issues of ensuring staff input to the degree was assured and that a Māori worldview or an indigenous framework was to underpin the degree. A key question arose and that was, 'what was the point of difference from other pre-service education providers?' in the degree. The core development team was able to proceed after the crisis point was resolved. The crisis phase was a constructive process and made the guidelines very clear about what would constitute a Wānanga teacher education programme.

All of the preceding phases contributed to the 'empowerment phase' that the core development team described as their process. Their writing of the degree structure became a collective process. They described their process as 'a bottom-up approach', which was anchored in the basic principles and demands made in the preceding phases. The major areas to consider further included, what the degree structure should look like, how many papers there were to be, what the credit value for each paper should be, identifying the paper content, the learning outcomes and the performance criteria. Their guiding principles were:

Each one of us really started from within ourselves, using our own knowledge and our own expertise at that stage ... the expert was just scaffolding us ... constructing and reconstructing ... we had found someone who could understand our needs as novices in this process (Jenkins et al., 2006).

Te take o nga Wānanga: The rationale for Wānanga

Wānanga were established to promote teaching and learning in mātauranga Māori, including te reo, tikanga, hapū and iwi development, hapū and iwi resource management to disseminate such knowledge for the social, cultural, and political development of hapū and iwi. A natural progression was to start up teacher education programmes. In 1993 the three Wānanga established Te Tauihu o nga Wānanga o Aotearoa, (the National Association of Wānanga) to address issues of concern from all the wānanga which have been defined as:

A Wānanga is characterised by teaching and research that maintains, advances and disseminates knowledge and develops intellectual independence and assists the application of knowledge regarding ahuatanga Māori (Māori tradition) according to tikanga Māori (Māori custom). (Winiata, 1994, pp.137-159)

The name Wānanga is given to a higher educational institution that focuses on indigenous education for iwi Māori, the native race of New Zealand. The main focus of Wānanga has been to address Māori educational needs, and to have an open door policy for all students. The characteristics of Wānanga teacher education programmes are that these are located within both Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā contexts and which encourages both Māori and Pākehā pedagogies.

Profiles of the three Wānanga

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa is a multi-sited learning institution established in 1984. The founder and first leader was Rongo Wetere. The headquarters are in Te Awamutu. The geographical distribution of the organisation stretches from the Te Tai Tokerau in the far north through to Otautahi in the South Island. There are over 43 satellite sites serving an EFTS (effective full-time student) base of around 19,000 enrolled students in 2008.

The biggest programmes that run at TWOA are Te Ara Reo, the Diploma of Te Tohu Mātauranga and Te Arataki Manu Korero. The Mauri Ora programmes that deal with literacy include: Mahi Ora, Mauri Ora, and Kiwi Ora. Computers and Business programmes are very popular. Also of popular interest are Māori performing arts programmes.

Te Korowai Ākongā: Bachelor of Teaching (Primary) is one of four degree programmes. The other degrees are Bachelor of Social Service, Bachelor of Iwi Environment and Bachelor of Visual Arts. TWOA predominantly offers certificate and diploma programmes. Most programmes are delivered as mixed mode, distance and face to face delivery. There is an open entry policy for student attendance which helps in the cultural inclusiveness. Offered also are

industrial-based programmes and social service programmes. Māori content permeates throughout all programmes.

Te Wānanga o Raukawa

Te Wānanga O Raukawa is a tribal wānanga that services the Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa and Te Atiawa tribes from Taranaki through to Wellington. All its programmes are Māori Language based. They offer full academic programmes in certificates, diplomas, and degrees at undergraduate and graduate levels. Their teacher education programme (Rangakura) was previously based at Wanganui Polytechnic but is now on-site in Otaki. The Rangakura outreach has become national to include Te Taitokerau, Manukau, Waikato, Porirua, Taranaki, and Wellington. Their graduates in teaching are found in Kura Kaupapa, Reo Rua classes.

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi's headquarters are in Whakatane. Two satellite campuses are established in Auckland (Tamaki) and Wellington (Poneke). There are negotiations to establish a Tauranga site. Te Wānanga o Awanuiārangi was established in 1991 under the Wānanga Act. Its motto is "Rukuhia te hōhonutanga o mātauranga ki tōna whānuitanga. The current EFTS count is around 2,500.

Professor Hirini Moko Mead has led the Wānanga's Council for many years along with Mr Wira Gardiner, Mr Joe Mason and Mr Peter McLay. Currently the CEO is Distinguished Professor Graham Smith. The Wānanga is structured in three schools as follows:

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------------------------|
| Levels 1-4, | 1) Marae-based programmes |
| Levels 5-7 | 2) Undergraduate School with 7 degrees |
| | Four in Education |
| | One in Science |
| | One in Nursing |
| | One Mātauranga Māori |
| Levels 8-10 | 3) Graduate |
| | Two Masters |
| | One Ph D |

Non-Wānanga Māori initiatives

During the 1990s other Māori initiatives were set up outside of existing state facilities which included: Tu Tangata organisations, Waipareira Trust, Manukau Urban Māori Authority, Waipa Kōkiri Centre (forerunner to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa) and Hui Taumata (Māori Business Association).

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa is an indigenous environment, where a Māori world is considered the 'norm'. Their journey towards a degree course was progressive through a teacher aide course, a Diploma of Teaching course and finally Te Korowai Akonga - Bachelor of Teaching (Primary) in 2001. With the growth in their school of education a number of branches have occurred where TWOA had an early childhood division, a teacher's aide division, a tertiary teacher division.

In the *Ka Awatea* publication, (Lattimore, Duncan, Ikin, Davies, Ballingall, & Yearbsley, 2003) the story about how TWOA evolved as a story of connecting and engaging with people who were out on a limb in society and who were now returning to the job market. These authors discuss how one and a half to two generations of people who are on low-income work; seek education through wānanga in order to develop their own knowledge and skills about the world in which they live.

Courses such as: whakairo (carving), waka-building (canoe building) modules, are not necessarily geared towards employment but people come in large numbers to enrol. Why do they do that? The answer is that these courses are relevant to Māori identity and the Māori 'lads' value them for value's sake. They also enjoy the physical and intellectual challenge of creating artistic work, of crafting something that is theirs. The growth in the Trades courses has seen a phenomenal influx of Māori people. These courses have provided Māori opportunities to learn new skills that have led to better and more secure employment.

Whakawhanaungatanga: Working with others

Viewed from a Kaupapa Māori framework working with others is often described in terms of tuakana/teina or a Maori pedagogical idea of reciprocal teaching approaches because the relationships contribute to the wider aspects of whakawhanaungatanga and manaakitanga. Salmond (1997) refers to the concept as 'reciprocity' with respect to these terms. From an educational-psychological perspective, Royal-Tangaere (1996) discusses developments in education through deconstructing Vygotsky's scaffolding model and relating the concept to a Māori image of the poutama. In doing so, Royal-Tangaere assists us in re-thinking a way forward in the contemporary context while we are still able to interpret our actions through Māori traditional frameworks.

The graduate profile of Te Korowai Ākongā

For the degree, TWOA's graduate profile exists in three dimensions which are metaphorically described as links to the making of a korowai as: "Hāro ka tika, ka muka" (Professional Knowledge); "Whatu aho pātahi ki runga" (Professional practice); and "Whatu ahorua ki raro" (Professional values and relationships) (Te Korowai Ākongā re-approval document programme, 2006)

The criteria for "Hāro ka tika, ka muka" includes performance indicators of demonstrating professional knowledge which focuses on a teacher's capacity to extend knowledge of content and theory through effective programme planning and preparation as in the metaphor of preparing both the muka strands of a korowai and the transmission of good planning habits to taurā.

In the profile of "Whatu aho pātahi ki runga" the graduate is expected to demonstrate the establishment and maintenance of every day teaching processes to the kaupapa of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Their practice also must be seen to make contributions of consequence that supports the professional teacher, the kaiako (teachers) conduct and positive role modelling and motivation. Such a process is considered to apply to good professional practice, as in the process of weaving a korowai, which becomes evident in the durability and quality of the final design of their practice.

For the third performance indicator of the profile "Whatu ahorua ki raro" (Professional values and relationships), the graduate must demonstrate the principle and practice of whanaungatanga (reciprocal relationships) in order to prove that their korowai has indeed been woven with good design. Out of the professional relationships dimension the graduate profile 'hinges on the nature of student perception, communication and consultation amongst key stakeholders'. The philosophy of Te Korowai Ākongā focuses on 'valuing and striving for reciprocal transmission' to be realised. It goes to link 'the interdependent nature of sound professional practice' to the 'sturdy twining techniques of whenu (strands) within a korowai (cloak) to ensure strength and sturdiness'.

Taukumekume: Sustainability

At the tinkering stage, the core development team, the management team, advisors and government agencies were all concerned with the sustainability not only of Te Korowai Ākonga degree, but also of the entire academic curriculum of TWOA. My emphasis, because I am a team leader and lecturer of the degree, has been on Te Korowai in which I played a major role in the development and nurture of it. Sustainability is a key motivation for my interest. As the degree was constructed in crisis mode and the review highlighted that the degree did not resonate a Māori worldview, or indigenous framework, I am constantly anxious about its operation and continuance. Such concern is based not just on the quality assurance issues that have been raised, but also on the way students, schools, community and stakeholders of the degree view its future place in their lives.

Whakamana te kaupapa: Maintaining the vision

Developing a new degree was helped along by the conceptual framework, graduate profile and the collaborative vision. The 'bottoms-up approach' allowed us to sustain an approach that would gain traction because stakeholder interest was high and the developers learned to be transparent in their practices and processes. In Maori terms this whakawhanaungatanga (reciprocal approach) kept the balance of power at an even level so people all felt they had a part to play.

Penetito (2005) suggests that when an alternative system based on Kaupapa Māori is created, and where accountability to Māori is assured with major decision-making being mandated by Māori (and is required to be put into practice), then the formula of sustainability is well guaranteed. By following Penetito's simple solution that focuses on:

- 1) Finances: always taking responsibility for receipt, planning of funding to iwi education authorities,
- 2) Policy research, design and dissemination of educational policies related to kaupapa Māori education,
- 3) Accountability: the monitoring of the above activities.

Sustainability ought then to be a foregone conclusion, or as Penetito (2005) calls it: a 'win-win' solution. True partnership between the State and TWOA would then be an ideal worth struggling for. To date, the State has been both the supporter and the destroyer of Wānanga hopes and aspirations as the Wānanga either complied or did not comply with State policies.

Conclusion

Whaia te pae tawhiti, Whaia te pae tata,
Whakamaia kia tina,
Hui e, Taiki e.

*Search the distant horizons
to bring resources closer
to hold them within your grasp
we have the necessity of life*

Tama tu, Tama ora,
Tama noho, Tama mate.

*The boy who stands (alert) is the boy who survives.
While he who sits (lounging about) will perish.*

In connecting these two proverbs they offer the platform for reflecting on the achievements of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Together the proverbs help express the teacher education programme struggle that did take the Wānanga to distant horizons; to Māori communities throughout the country in order to establish campuses. The campuses have developed independent profiles yet they are united in the output of teachers to serve their local communities through a Māori pedagogy developed at the Wānanga.

Shane Edwards (2006) may have used the concept 'wanagogy' as a throw-away line, but when one reflects on the journey of the Wānanga's teacher education programme at Aotearoa and of their determination to 'grow-their own', the styles of teaching that have emerged can only have happened through the distinctive programming features developed in the Wānanga. Their styles of teaching and learning, the labelling of practices, the search for understanding and improving the context and content of their delivery, all relied on a kaupapa Māori pedagogy that was woven together in a korowai for teaching and learning. Such pedagogy are not easily found or produced within mainstream teacher education courses.

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Author Notes

Heeni Jenkins is of Ngati Porou, Te Atiawa descent. She trained as a primary school teacher and is currently a lecturer in teacher education at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. She is also a PhD candidate at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī.

E-mail: Heeni.Jenkins@twoa.ac.nz