

GROWING THE FLEET; VIEWS OF THE MOANA

A Māori re-search-teina's perspective on Māori and Pasifika re-search relationality

*Ashlea Gillon**

Abstract

He Vaka Moana is a strengths-based project framed by oceanic principles and methodologies that connect us as Māori and Pasifika to the ocean. The underpinning kaupapa and theoretical framework of He Vaka Moana is the Tongan proverb “pikipiki hama kae vaevae manava”, which refers to our individual vaka coming together to support each other as we navigate the moana. He Vaka Moana operates through tuākana-tēina relationships, with Māori, Pasifika and Pākehā re-search fellows across disciplines working with experienced academics, professional staff and new and emerging re-searchers towards Māori and Pasifika student success. The ways in which these tuākana-tēina relationships enhance and support new and emerging Māori and Pasifika re-searchers are important to the success of “growing the fleet” and increasing Māori and Pasifika re-search capacity and capability. Through metaphors of the moana, this article takes a critically self-reflective approach to discuss being a re-search-teina. The experiences and conversations from “floating” through a relational space that can be understood as Moana Nui a Kiwa are explored in this article. Thoughts from the moana are shared as to how re-search tuākana-tēina relationships influence and support the growth of Māori and Pasifika re-searchers. The need for further oceanic projects that support and (re)centre Māori and Pasifika tuākana-tēina relationships and mentorship within westernised academia is also discussed.

Keywords

Māori, Pasifika, new and emerging academic, re-searchers, Indigenous, whanaungatanga

Introduction

Ko wai au? He aha tēnei waka? Who am I?
What is this waka?

Ko Pūtauaki te maunga, ko Rangitaiki te
awa, ko Mataatua te waka, ko Ngā Maihi
te hapū, ko Ngāti Awa te iwi. Tēnā tātou.

I am a Māori woman, a daughter and a sister,
and the first in my family to attend university, to
do postgraduate study, to complete a master's, to
undertake doctoral studies, and to subsequently

become a re-searcher. My experiences are shaped
by those around me and my upbringing, and these
interactions have great influence on who I am and
the ways in which I understand and make sense of
these experiences. As a Kaupapa Māori re-searcher,
the ways in which I seek to re-search, re-tell, re-
write and re-right our stories and our experiences
are purposeful. In this sense, re-searching is a
re-doing and re-acknowledging of the ways that
we as Māori and Pasifika re-searchers can, and
have the right to, re-present ourselves through our

* Ngāti Awa. Research Assistant and Doctoral Candidate, Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education and Te Wānanga o Waipapa, University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand. Email: a.gillon@auckland.ac.nz

narratives, rather than reproducing colonial narratives of researching, redoing and reacknowledging. This means that we, as Indigenous peoples, are re-doing research in ways that re-place previous colonial research and reinterpretations of who we are (L. T. Smith, 2012). These purposeful praxes and language practices are illustrated through the hyphenations, capitalisations and discourse utilised within this article and in the He Vaka Moana project that serves as the context of this paper. He Vaka Moana is a strengths-based project funded by Ako Aotearoa within the University of Auckland that seeks to navigate Māori and Pasifika student success in tertiary education. The project operates through our connections as oceanic people to the moana, to each other and to our goals. The foundation of He Vaka Moana lies within the ocean itself and our ancestors who navigated the vast Pacific Ocean purposefully, using ancestral knowledges, pedagogy, understandings and methods to travel the vastness that is Moana Nui a Kiwa in order to reach their goals. That ancestral knowledge is within us as Māori and Pasifika peoples, and, through the He Vaka Moana project, it has been applied to goals within a tertiary setting. Māori and Pasifika students can conceptualise success in multiple, complex, interconnected ways. Entering higher education with the support and aspirations of their communities is one of these ways (Wolfgramm-Foliaki, 2016). He Vaka Moana seeks to re-define what Māori and Pasifika student success can mean from Māori and Pasifika perspectives.

However, it is important to understand that westernisation and colonial influences on education are not strictly restricted to the “West” or western education. They influence globally. Often westernised educational environments can re-classify Māori and Pasifika students as deficit and at risk, despite the reality that colonisation and westernisation are the problem (McAllister et al., 2019; Pihama et al., 2019; Wolfgramm-Foliaki, 2016). He Vaka Moana centres around the Tongan proverb “pikipiki hama kae vaevae manava”. Pikipiki hama means to bind or lash together to the outrigger of a vaka moana, vaevae means to share, and manava is a complex term and concept that reflects Pasifika expressions for the heart, centre, womb and breath, similar to that of manawa in te reo Māori (Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, 2003). Central to the project is the importance of this relationality between Māori and Pasifika peoples. As kaihana we can share cultural nuances, knowledges and resources in ways that benefit us and our relationships.

This conceptualisation of what He Vaka Moana stands for and seeks to do illustrates the ways in which those working in academia, particularly Māori and Pasifika but also Pākehā and tauīwi, can work together on separate vaka through sharing resources and knowledges before unlash and continuing on our journeys.

Within re-search teams, we are re-negotiating spaces and relationships often. Within this team, as with others, there is a mixture of experienced, early career and new and emerging academics and scholars.

From a Kaupapa Māori understanding, these relationships and mix of experiences can be understood as tuākana-tēina relationships, as opposed to westernised notions of research fellow/principal investigator and research assistant relationships. This article discusses the importance of developing Māori and Pasifika tuākana-tēina relationships throughout re-search and within westernised academia that provide academic support, as well as personal, professional and pedagogical growth through a critically reflective discussion of key learnings.

Tuākana-tēina: He aha ēnei mea?

Part of what we as Māori and Pasifika know to be crucial to our educational success is people, place, practices, pedagogies (Alkema, 2014) and an understanding of spirit, space and stewardship (Matapo, 2018). He Vaka Moana has been able to successfully implement a Māori and Pasifika educational project that creates and maintains a Vā, a relational space (Anae, 2016) between Māori and Pasifika re-searchers and staff within academia. In particular, the ways in which this relational space has been understood illustrate how seeking to foster and re-create knowledge through re-connection and re-navigation of ancestral knowledges and pathways supports Māori and Pasifika students. I argue that these spaces can be realised within tuākana-tēina relationships.

Tuākana-tēina relationships from a Te Ao Māori and Kaupapa Māori understanding encompass notions of kinship and relationality, specifically between older siblings (tuākana) and younger siblings (tēina). The focus of these tuākana-tēina relationships lies with foundational principles of reciprocity, manaakitanga and whanaungatanga (Nepe, 1991). A tuakana is typically understood as an older or more experienced person. The role of a tuakana is usually as an overseer or kaitiaki and as someone who has experience and the ability to make decisions. A teina is often seen as a younger or less experienced “relation” and is often given

different tasks than a tuakana, which arguably may be considered more menial tasks (Hook et al., 2007; Nepe, 1991). However, I would suggest these tasks are complementary to each other, as are the relationships.

Tuākana-tēina relationships carry more than connotations of tutorship or mentorship; these relationships illustrate the responsibilities and rights of tuākana-tēina in order to have thriving, reciprocal, lasting whanaungatanga (Berryman et al., 1995). What is important to understand about these tuākana-tēina roles is that they are not fixed; they are fluid and interchangeable depending on the context. Often tuākana-tēina relationships can be understood as a pedagogy that has foundations within Te Ao Māori (Winitana, 2012). What was traditionally a whānau relationship often based on mana and whakapapa between siblings has become a relationship of social status, structured through both reciprocal and kin relations (Mead, 2003; Winitana, 2012). Māori scholar Mei Winitana (2012) considers tuākana-tēina pedagogy within tertiary education contexts and notes that from a “Māori worldview, the tuakana vocational tutor will always hold the mana of the selected vocational field. . . . Māori pedagogy can be utilised to exemplify the mana of the tuakana (tutor) with the teina (apprentice) in mutually beneficial ways that uplift the mana of both tuakana and teina” (p. 32). Similarly, within He Vaka Moana these reciprocal relationships, and subsequently complementary tasks, have been foundational to the project.

Through Kaupapa Māori understandings of tuākana-tēina relationships, an emphasis on whanaungatanga occurs. Whanaungatanga centres around relationality and whānau as foundational to these extended familial relationships. Whānau can be understood both literally and metaphorically to represent the complex relationships between individuals that prioritise individual and collective flourishing, rights and responsibilities of the group centred through aroha, āwhina, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Bishop et al., 2014). In educational contexts, whanaungatanga is often privileged within Kaupapa Māori environments. This privileging ensures that relationships and subsequently people are centred, and, thus, mutual flourishing can occur. Bishop (1996) emphasises the importance of collaboration and culturally appropriate actions such as whakawhanaungatanga as a “metaphor for conducting Kaupapa Māori research” (p. 215). The importance of relationality within re-search contexts is paramount among Indigenous peoples,

and involves recognising how our positions as whanaunga can influence not only re-search participants or partners, but also those within our project teams, as we are often seen as “advocates, and sometimes therapists, guidance counsellors, and facilitators of change” (C. Smith, 2013, p. 95; Bishop, 2005; Kensington-Miller & Ratima, 2015; Sunseri, 2007; Webber & O’Connor, 2019). Within the He Vaka Moana project, re-search-tēina were viewed in these ways—as re-researchers and more.

Tuākana-tēina pedagogies have been employed within educational contexts to enhance and shift energies within (westernised) institutions. These ways of teaching and being are often understood to provide culturally relevant, safe and rewarding ways of engaging in education and re-search contexts for both tuākana and tēina (Kensington-Miller & Ratima, 2015; Winitana, 2012). Critical questions are posed around the nature of these relationships. Similarly to Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (2012) development of critical re-search questions, Winitana (2012) also poses questions that explore tuākana-tēina relationships and pedagogies, such as “How it is done? Who does it? Why? At what levels of the training organisation? Who benefits?” (p. 33).

These questions seek to explore, challenge and re-negotiate the underlying values, influences and purposes of these relationships in ways that strengthen, foster and support space for relationships to grow (Winitana, 2012). Tuākana-tēina relationships are a culturally safe way to reinforce the development of spaces that are whānau centred, and that support the reciprocity and enhancement of tuākana and tēina as well as (whaka) whanaungatanga (Bishop, 2005; Kensington-Miller & Ratima, 2015; Webber & Macfarlane, 2019; Winitana, 2012).

With these conceptualisations of tuākana-tēina relationality, differences between a research assistant and a re-search-teina can be identified. The space that is nurtured in order to enable and place emphasis on Indigenous relationality is crucial to having an empowering tuākana-tēina relationship. Such a space encourages, nurtures, and seeks to manaaki, support, grow and nourish these re-search relationships, in particular re-search-tēinatanga. This article focuses on my experiences as a re-search-teina, with an emphasis on Indigenous relationships and capacity building. In contrast to other, often non-Māori and non-Pasifika research project spaces, re-search-tuākana-tēina spaces emphasise relationality and are environments that seek to support, encourage and manaaki each other within the re-search (Kensington-Miller &

Ratima, 2015). This aligns with wider Kaupapa Māori aspirations that seek to “grow the fleet” in terms of Māori and Indigenous flourishing.

Hoea te waka: Positioning and epistemology

As mentioned previously, positionality is essential in understanding how Māori and Pasifika-centred spaces such as He Vaka Moana encourage re-search-tēina to flourish as more than assistants in the re-search process. Within Tāngata o Te Moana are relationalities that shape our interactions and how we make sense of the world through theoretical and methodological paradigms (Bishop, 1996, 2005, 2012). The multiple Māori and Pasifika theoretical and methodological frameworks employed within the He Vaka Moana re-search fellowship are extensive; however, a commonality within these spaces has been the focus on our peoples and providing strengths-based narratives that counter the westernised perceptions of Māori and Pasifika within academia (Pihama et al., 2019; Webber & O’Connor, 2019). As a Kaupapa Māori re-researcher, criticality and relationality are central to my praxis, and within He Vaka Moana these values and worldviews are privileged. I interpret, comprehend and apply the knowledge gained through my experience as a re-search-teina through a Kaupapa Māori lens as a Kaupapa Māori re-researcher.

Kaupapa Māori theorising is not a recent development; nor did it occur as an accident—its foundations are present in historical concepts, and it is a natural process for Māori (Pihama, 2001; Pihama et al., 2004; G. H. Smith, 1997; Taki, 1996). Linda Tuhiwai Smith reinforces Pihama (2005) in saying that Māori have always been theorists and re-researchers and have always done research:

The legacy of our ancestors is actually a legacy of a people who thought, who valued knowledge, and who actually did research. They valued research enough to navigate the greatest waterways in the world, the Pacific Ocean, and they did it purposefully. (Graduate Center, CUNY, 2013, 20.38)

As a re-search methodology, Kaupapa Māori re-search embodies Kaupapa Māori theory and being Māori; it is explicitly transformative, anti-colonial, inclusive, critical and purposeful as Cheryl Smith (2013) elaborates:

Kaupapa Māori research is often more complex than other forms of research because we dare to try

to consider both the structural and cultural issues. We dare to have a preset agenda of attempting to make positive changes within communities because we believe in the wisdom and strengths of our own people. (p. 96)

Consequently, my own Kaupapa Māori theoretical and re-search approach has been, and continues to be, shaped by my own experiences, like those I have had as a re-search-teina, and by numerous Māori theorists and their seminal work (see, e.g., Pihama, 2001, 2005, 2010; C. Smith, 2013; G. H. Smith, 1997, 2012; L. T. Smith, 2005, 2006, 2011, 2012, 2013; Walker, 1996; Webber, 2009).

My perception of how Kaupapa Māori informs my understandings of the world—how I “traverse the moana” and my relationality within Aotearoa with whanaunga of Moana Nui a Kiwa—is encapsulated by Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (2011) simple yet eloquent explanation of Kaupapa Māori:

When I think about Kaupapa Māori research, I see it really simply: it’s a plan; it’s a programme; it’s an approach; it’s a way of being; it’s a way of knowing; it’s a way of seeing; it’s a way of making meaning; it’s a way of being Māori; it’s a way of thinking; it’s a thought process; it’s a practice; it’s a set of things you want to do. It is a kaupapa and that’s why I think it is bigger than a methodology. (p. 10)

Drawing on these epistemological, methodological and theoretical frameworks to make sense of my experiences as a re-search-teina provides a means to articulate the importance of Indigenous-centred re-search, of decolonising re-search and of Indigenous relationality. Through a Mana Wāhine lens—a re-prioritisation of Indigenous women—our knowledges and our ontologies can be understood in our re-search praxis (Pihama, 2001, 2005, 2010; Pihama et al., 2019; Simmonds, 2009, 2011; L. T. Smith, 1992, 2012; Yates-Smith, 1998). This re-prioritisation of Indigenous women as authentic “knowers” and beings actively challenges dominant Eurocentric discourses and ongoing acts of colonisation through the re-search process by utilising and reinforcing notions of kaitiakitanga, rangatiratanga and manaakitanga through decolonising re-search praxes (Pihama, 2001, 2005, 2010; Pihama et al., 2019; Simmonds, 2009, 2011; L. T. Smith, 1992, 2012; Yates-Smith, 1998).

My understanding of working with Indigenous re-researchers of Moana Nui a Kiwa is based on these foundational concepts, epistemologies, ontologies and Kaupapa Māori conceptualisations

of relational space. The space I create quite simply seeks to re-prioritise and re-vitalise all things Māori and Pasifika, particularly success, and to critique colonial power inequities, often through “a calculated and deliberate attempt to position Māori research with an alternative worldview” (Ford, 2013, p. 93). Part of this worldview involves purposeful praxis as a re-researcher, particularly around the language that is used as we re-research, re-write and re-right our narratives (L. T. Smith, 2012). As noted previously, Indigenous peoples have always been re-researchers (L. T. Smith, 2012). These worldviews are alternatives to the “dominant” western epistemologies that re-present Indigenous peoples in ways that fail to acknowledge the value in our “culturally framed resources, programmes and pedagogical approaches” (Pihama et al., 2019; Webber & O’Connor, 2019).

My critical self-reflective approach explores understandings of tuākana-tēina re-research relationships and, in line with these Indigenous knowledges, the ontological and epistemological positionings and purposeful praxis within which re-research-tēina engage with Indigenous re-research(ers). This critical self-reflective examination is utilised to capture embodied experiences of relationality (Matapo, 2018).

Navigating the Vā(-kā): Māori and Pasifika relationality

Our relationships are central to our ways of being as Tāngata o Te Moana, of the Moana Nui a Kiwa which encompasses Māori and Pasifika peoples. Part of this relationality is thinking about how we as Māori re-researchers engage with our Pasifika whanaunga and kaihana.

One of the ways in which this occurs is through navigating and nurturing the Vā. It is important to note that while I am describing this as “the” Vā, my use of Vā is plural. The Vā is similar to Māori conceptualisations of wā(tea), and centres and promotes relationality. As a Māori re-research-teina, my understanding of the Vā as a fluid, spatio-relational space; as a space of betweenness that separates and holds space for each of us; as a space that requires valuing, nurturing and maintaining comes from my experiences of seeing it within Pacific contexts and working with Pasifika re-research-tuākana, as well as from the literature of Pasifika academics (Anae, 2016; Ka’ili, 2005; Māhina, 2010; Wendt, 1996, as cited in Refiti, 2002).

What is noteworthy about the ways in which a relational space has been nurtured within this context is its connection, and subsequently our

connection as Indigenous peoples to the moana. Under this conceptualisation, what is apparent to me as a re-research-teina are the ways in which the Vā operates as a relational space that can prioritise relational ethics, much like tikanga Māori, which can include the ways in which actions are carried out, and the ways in which the sacredness of this lived space operates (Anae, 2016). In this sense, the Vā allows for space that centres relationships and simultaneously enhances the building, maintaining and growing of those relationships.

Within Māori contexts, the words ka and kā have various meanings. Kā as utilised in this article revolves around notions of being ignited, being lit and allowing to burn. Ka illustrates notions of commencement, particularly of new actions (Smith & Wolfgramm-Foliaki, 2020); in this context the (re)igniting of a relational space and the commencement of He Vaka Moana has been a site for tuākana-tēina (re-research) relationships to spark and ignite, to develop and be nurtured between Indigenous peoples.

Padding and floating between vaka: Waves and praxis

Within He Vaka Moana, and Māori and Pasifika re-research more broadly, there have been many opportunities for re-research-tēina to engage and collaborate with re-research-tuākana. Stories from He Vaka Moana are shared here to elaborate the re-research tuākana-tēina relationships and the importance of these for Māori and Pasifika re-research-tēina like myself, particularly the relationships with Māori and Pasifika women that have sought to “grow the fleet”. As a re-research-teina, I worked with the various fellows of the He Vaka Moana project, “floating” between their own projects.

Talatalanoa

Talatalanoa were a key component of one of the He Vaka Moana fellows’ re-research project. Talatalanoa were events that centred Pacific ways of knowing and relating to discuss Māori and Pasifika student success. They provided a forum for discussion and conversations to be built, as well as relationships (see Fonua, 2019). A “pikipiki hama kae vaevae manava” approach encouraged connection and sharing opportunities. These particular events were run by a Pākehā He Vaka Moana fellow, with the support of the He Vaka Moana re-research project team, for primarily tauwiwi science educators to participate in a reflective process. Ultimately these talatalanoa were about having open discussions and sharing space, and

accumulated interested audiences of 150 academic and professional staff.

Being present at these talatalanoa reinforced my understanding of holding and maintaining relational space (Anae, 2016) in order to enable others to engage in and support Māori and Pasifika student success. Having an open space for tauiwi to openly share their experiences and the gaps in their knowledge around Māori and Pasifika values, culture and knowledge, and to critically reflect on their praxis (Fonua, 2018) can be seen as beneficial to the overall re-Indigenising and decolonising goals of He Vaka Moana. Having this space created by Pākehā for tauiwi to have these discussions can be understood as an effective way to discuss the institutional challenges that affect Māori and Pasifika student success (DiAngelo, 2018; Wikaire, 2015) and the ways in which educators can engage in critical self-reflection.

This experience highlighted the importance of Māori and Pasifika relationality as a means to find good allies in the overall kaupapa of Māori and Pasifika student success, as well as enhancement of Māori and Pasifika re-search-tuākana-tēina relationships. As the “floating” re-search-teina, I was involved in assisting with and supporting several of these events. Paddling between projects meant that as a re-searcher my roles varied, and the methodological practices I was exposed to varied also.

Wayfinding and shell maps

Another event that I supported as a re-search-teina was an exhibition of shell maps as wayfinding tools (see Matapo & Baice, 2019). Shell maps were understood as a tool for guidance and navigation (Spiller et al., 2015), as well as a means for mapping Pasifika student success. This event sought to create dialogue and discussions around what guides Pasifika student success. Through the creation and exhibition of shell maps, a space for dialogue was generated around Pasifika success, specifically from Pasifika student and staff perspectives, for re-claiming ways that our ancestors traversed the moana purposefully, utilising epistemological knowledge and Indigenous ontologies to seek out new futures. Being a re-search-teina meant I had the opportunity to see these shell maps displayed with the images of those who created them in ways that (re)tell Indigenous stories (Bishop, 1996; Sunseri, 2007) of traversing (often westernised) education (Matapo, 2018). Being a part of this project has meant building relationships with academics across departments, faculties and disciplines. Part of this relationship building

is the re-searching and analysing, and another part is being present, being kanohi kitea in the support and whanaungatanga that we show each other within our re-search teams as well as outside of them (G. H. Smith, 1997; L. T. Smith, 2012).

“Floaters” and reminders

Whilst there are re-search-related instances of whanaungatanga, it is also important to note the non-specific interactions that support re-search-tuākana-tēina relationships to flourish and that help guide re-search-tēina through westernised institutions and processes (Kensington-Miller & Ratima, 2015; Pihama et al., 2019). While these cannot be explored in depth in this article, they are mentioned here to highlight the importance of whanaungatanga between Māori and Pasifika re-searchers and the influence this can have. For student re-search-tēina with limited access to funding, simple things such as attending conferences and seeing familiar faces allows us to strengthen and build whanaungatanga within these Indigenous re-search spaces.

Quick, five-minute, bump-into-each-other catch-ups and having relationships across campuses and disciplines are key elements of building Māori and Pasifika re-search-tuākana-tēina relationships. Exposure to multiple and trans-disciplinary re-searchers is not always available to re-search-tēina (Kensington-Miller & Ratima, 2015), and being a re-search-teina in this space has also meant being sought after for other re-search roles through this relationality. Being seen as a valuable and coveted member of projects demonstrates not only the strength of the relationship, but the need for Indigenous re-search capacity building (Kensington-Miller & Ratima, 2015; McAllister et al., 2019; Pihama et al., 2019).

The ways in which re-search-tuākana have been supportive of me as a re-search-teina are numerous and include prioritising time to guide me through new re-search processes; including me in wider project decision making; reinforcing and nurturing a Vā that welcomes me and acknowledges my life circumstances; and asking how work can be structured around my schedule and my studies in ways that prioritise my development as a re-search-tuākana, rather than reinforce power differentials. Whilst these may seem like the norm within Kaupapa Māori and Pasifika re-search spaces, they are not the norm within westernised academia. Being able to work with Māori and Pasifika tuākana within academia may seem like the norm for those of us in those spaces, but unfortunately within westernised educational

contexts access to this can be restricted due to institutional racism and oppression of Indigenous peoples through the normalisation of racist policies that restrict access to academia for Māori and Pasifika (McAllister et al., 2019; Naepi, 2019).

These experiences and spaces have highlighted the differences between working within Indigenous-led and -focused re-search spaces and some westernised research spaces (L. T. Smith, 2012).

Kaiurungi tuākana rānei?

Throughout this project, as with many re-search projects, interactions within the project team took place. As the re-search-teina, I was guided by the two principal investigators of the project. While there have been numerous occasions of support, of learning and of teaching, I wish to highlight some of those instances and conversations, however small they may seem, that have reinforced the importance of whanaungatanga to me and my understanding myself as a re-search-teina.

The value of space is something I have learnt as a re-search-teina (Anae, 2016). The importance of recognising my own autonomy and my own worth within academia has been highlighted to me often within the He Vaka Moana fellowship. The ways in which my re-search-tuākana have valued not only my input as a re-searcher but also my value as a whole person are numerous. However, this has not been the case in every academic or research setting that I have experienced, and it can be difficult to gain access to working with Māori and Pasifika within westernised academia because of the ways in which racist policy restricts our access to formal positions (McAllister et al., 2019; Naepi, 2019). The focus on relationships and reinforcement of my holistic value as a person as well as a Kaupapa Māori re-searcher emphasised the types of spaces I could choose to be a part of as a teina that are not readily available to all re-search-tēina in academia. The emphasis placed on my overall abilities and hauora during this project, rather than pure productivity, has reinforced my understanding of the type of re-search environments I want to be in, the relationships I want to be a part of, and the value I bring with my Kaupapa Māori lens.

The focus on developing my capacity as more than a research assistant has been, and continues to be, more than apparent:

We've been really fortunate to get you, we've been really lucky. It's not easy, the system makes it very difficult. . . . Some people think if you're an RA [research assistant], you're forever gonna be an RA,

but I think in our space there is that desire to see people develop and build capacity so that you get to be self-determining and we're drawing on our own knowledge to help us navigate this western space in ways that can benefit us. ('E. Wolfgramm-Foliaki, personal communication, June 12, 2019)

The re-thinking of re-search relationships also reinforced the importance of focusing on “growing the fleet” and the ways in which relationality can support wider Indigenous goals through both re-Indigenising and decolonising (McAllister, et al., 2019; Pihama et al., 2019; Smith & Webber, 2019; Webber & O'Connor, 2019). The focus on development and enhancement and re-thinking what success looks like has been crucial not only to He Vaka Moana, but to our tuākana-tēina relationships:

Developing emerging researchers, research-teina, however it is, I've never really thought of you as a research assistant, you're part of the research team, the project team. . . . It's about that support and developing and nurturing of the next set of vaka to come alongside, because we are working into a much bigger agenda. It's not just a project, it's not just the university, it's developing Indigenous research. Developing Indigenous research capacity, Māori and Pasifika research capacity, Indigenous women's research capacity. (H. Smith, personal communication, June 12, 2019)

It's a decolonising way of working. ('E. Wolfgramm-Foliaki, personal communication, June 12, 2019)

Being a re-search-teina is a privilege that has re-shaped the way I understand Indigenous relationality within westernised academic settings. Through the supportive relationships of tuākana-tēinatanga within re-search, moments of discomfort have allowed for growth and resolution. As a re-search-teina it can be difficult at times to voice concern or suggestions in westernised academia, but centring relationships has made that process easier and allowed for confidence building as well. While there is still discomfort, it is re-defined as a way to grow and develop further, rather than seen as a negative. Re-search-tuākana-tēinatanga has enabled me to identify what is able to enhance my skills as a re-search-teina and to align with my positionality as a Kaupapa Māori re-searcher in ways that reinforce my tino rangatiratanga and desire to decolonise research and academia (McAllister et al., 2019; Pihama et al., 2019; Smith, 2012). The ways in which

relationality centres a continuation of Māori and Indigenous re-search excellence reiterate that individual projects, frameworks or initiatives should not be siloed (G. H. Smith & Webber, 2019)

Wayfinding, finding the ways: Concluding comments

Tuākana-tēina relationships are paramount within Te Ao Māori (Hook et al., 2007; Mead, 2003; Nepe, 1991; Winitana, 2012). They provide a foundation for developing and enhancing skills, whanaungatanga and overall wellness. Within westernised institutions, prioritising Indigenous relationality is crucial to the continuation of Indigenous re-search(ers). This, however, is an area in which westernised institutions have been failing (Amundsen, 2019; Hall et al., 2013; McAllister et al., 2019; Nikora et al., 2002; Pihama et al., 2019). In order to grow the fleet, tertiary institutions must prioritise access to Indigenous re-search-tuākana-tēina opportunities for Māori and Pasifika re-searchers to be mentored and nurtured by Māori and Pasifika. Tuākana-tēina (re-search and academic) relationships with Māori and Pasifika are enabling and reinforce autonomy, as well as support teaching and learning in Indigenous-centric ways through Kaupapa Māori and Indigenous methodologies (Amundsen, 2019; Hohapata, 2011; Mete, 2013; Pihama, 2001, 2005, 2010; Simmonds, 2009, 2011; L. T. Smith, 1992, 2012; Tomoana, 2012; Yates-Smith, 1998).

Through prioritisation of Indigenous relationality and Indigenous values, re-search-tuākana-tēina relationships can be built and enabled to flourish. (Re-)centring relationships and acknowledging the value that re-search-tēina bring to re-search spaces can further enable tuākana-tēinatanga to become effective praxis within westernised institutions and (Indigenous) re-search spaces. Being a re-search-teina within Indigenous re-search projects is a position of privilege. Having access to our ontologies and our epistemologies through relationships with Indigenous academics, even within westernised institutions, is a privilege not all have access to. Being a re-search-teina means being in spaces that re-prioritise whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, kaupapa and kaitiakitanga. As Indigenous peoples, our goal is to pikipiki hama kae vaevae manava; however, within westernised tertiary institutions accessing our ways of being and reclaiming re-search can be challenging (Pihama et al., 2019; L. T. Smith, 2012). McAllister et al. (2019) suggest the need for a shift from the colonial, singular, neoliberal focus of tertiary education to one of plurality, (re-)Indigenising

and decolonising. Projects like He Vaka Moana are an opportunity to acknowledge and support Indigenous re-search. This re-prioritisation of Indigenous re-searching opportunities seeks to transform re-search relationality and the ways in which re-search-tuākana-tēinatanga can be emphasised and supported. Being a re-search-teina put me in a position to pose these critical, purposeful questions (L. T. Smith, 2012; Winitana, 2012) in order to be a good (re-search-)tuakana for those tēina and relationships to come. Ultimately, being a re-search-teina is simultaneously being a re-search-tuakana and working towards creating and nurturing space in order to grow the fleet.

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Glossary

Māori

aroha	love, compassion, affection
Atua	ancestors, gods, supernatural beings
āwhina	help, support, assistance
hauora	wellness, wellbeing
He aha ēnei mea?	What are these things?
hoea te waka	paddle the waka
ka	particle used before verbs to indicate the start of a new action
kā	to burn, glow; be alight, burning, ablaze
kaihana	cousin
kaitiaki	guardian, minder, custodian
kaitiakitanga	guardianship, looking after, stewardship
Kaiurungi tuākana rānei?	Navigators or tuākana?

kanohi kitea	seen face, being present (physically)	wāhine	women
kaupapa	agenda, an ideology, theory, methodology, epistemology	waka	seafaring vessel
Kaupapa Māori	Māori approach, Māori principles, Māori agenda, an ideology, theory, methodology and epistemology	wātea	to be free, unrestricted open space
kōrero	speak, talk, discuss; discussion	whakapapa	genealogy, ancestry, familial relationships
mana	power, spiritual power, authority, control, enduring indestructible power in all things from Atua	whakawhanaungatanga	building relationships, relating well with others
manaaki	to support, take care of, protect, show generosity, respect and care	whānau	familial group, family, extended family
manaakitanga	hospitality, kindness, generosity, support	whanaunga	relation, relative, kin
manawa	heart (of a person)	whanaungatanga	relationships, kinships, familial connections, friendships, reciprocal connections
Māori	Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand	<i>Tongan</i>	
moana	ocean, sea	pikipiki hama kae vaevae manava	to bind or lash together the outriggers of vaka moana; share resources
Moana Nui a Kiwa	Pacific Ocean	talatalanoa	sharing stories, creating dialogue within an inclusive, receptive space; specific project-related examples
Pākehā	New Zealand European	<i>Pan-Pacific</i>	
Pasifika	peoples of the Pacific Ocean located in Aotearoa New Zealand	Vā	space between, relational space
rānei	or	vaka moana	ocean-going canoe
tāngata	peoples	References	
Tāngata o Te Moana	peoples of the ocean	Alkema, A. (2014). <i>Success for Pasifika in tertiary education: Highlights from Ako Aotearoa-supported research</i> . Ako Aotearoa. https://ako.ac.nz/assets/reports/Synthesis-reports/f836897c7e/SYNTHESIS-REPORT-Success-for-Pasifika-in-tertiary-education-Highlights-from-Ako-Aotearoa-supported-research.pdf	
tauīwi	foreigners, non-Māori, Pākehā	Amundsen, D. (2019). <i>Māori transitions into tertiary education</i> [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. University of Waikato.	
tautoko	support, advocate for	Anae, M. (2016). Teu la va: Samoan relational ethics. <i>Knowledge Cultures</i> , 4(3), 117–130.	
Te Ao Māori	Māori worldview	Berryman, M., Bidois, P., Furlong, M., Atvars, K., & Glynn, T. (1995). Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi: A Māori language reading tutoring programme. <i>SET: Research Information for Teachers</i> , (1), 5–15.	
teina/tēina	younger sibling/s, less experienced relation/s	Bishop, R. (1996). <i>Collaborative research stories: Whakawhanaungatanga</i> . Dunmore Press.	
te reo Māori	the Māori language	Bishop, R. (2005). Changing power relations in education: Kaupapa Maori messages for mainstream education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In F. Bodone (Ed.), <i>What difference does research make and for whom?</i> (pp. 255–269). Peter Lang.	
tikanga	practice, plan, protocol, systems of values, customs and practices	Bishop, R. (2012). Pretty difficult: Implementing Kaupapa Māori theory in English-medium secondary schools. <i>New Zealand Journal of Education Studies</i> , 47(2), 38–50.	
tino rangatiratanga	sovereignty, self-determination, autonomy	Bishop, R., & Glynn, T. (1999). <i>Culture counts:</i>	
tuakana/tuākana	older sibling/s, more experienced relation/s		
tuākana-tēinatanga	relationships between experienced and new and emerging peoples; the conceptualisation of the tuākana-tēina relationship		

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