

Partnership for Change: Promoting Effective Leadership Practices for Indigenous Educational Success in Aotearoa New Zealand

Andrés P. Santamaría
Auckland University of
Technology, New Zealand

Melinda Webber
The University of
Auckland, New Zealand

Lorri J. Santamaría
The University of
Auckland, New Zealand

Lincoln I. Dam
The University of
Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract

In early 2014, a team of researchers was invited into partnership with the Māori Success Initiative (MSI), a national, indigenous led network of Māori and non-Māori principals committed to working collaboratively to raise Māori student achievement. Working with over sixty principals across six regional clusters throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, these researchers utilised critical Kaupapa Māori methodology to observe, engage, and support MSI's vision of A Change in the Hearts and Minds of Principals in mainstream contexts. Qualitative data collected from leadership surveys, hui reflective statements, and other documents were analysed to validate and strengthen MSI's efforts to establish a critical mass of effective school leadership practices that promote and sustain Māori success as Māori. This paper highlights the research and outcomes resulting from evaluating the personal and professional growth of MSI leaders. Finally, implications for effective, culturally responsive leadership for Māori success as Māori are provided.

Keywords: *Kaupapa Māori, critical race theory, culturally responsive leadership, Māori achievement*

Introduction

Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) has been governed since 1840 by a bicultural treaty written in English and *te reo* (Māori language) by representatives of the British Crown and 540 Māori *rangatira* (Māori Chiefs) (Orange, 2011). The Treaty of Waitangi, as it is called, is considered the country's founding document. Although the Treaty provides assurances for a bicultural society, Māori and non-Māori, the non-Māori aspect now reflects European New Zealanders, Asian, Pasifika, those from the Middle East, the Americas, and Africa and as such is multicultural (New Zealand Government, 2013). Because of the bicultural history of the country and persisting monocultural educational system within the current multicultural

landscape, Māori well-being, educational achievement and civic participation have been an ongoing priority for all disciplines. This has implications for Aotearoa NZ's educational leadership, including the need for greater Māori representation in leadership (Durie, 2005) and/or more Treaty responsive leadership from non-Māori school principals. According to recent scholarship undertaken by Santamaría and Hoskins (in press) "Treaty responsiveness in schools and classrooms for educators in Aotearoa NZ manifests as the need to fully engage in Treaty responsive politics and pedagogies" (p. 1). In educational leadership practice, this becomes professional enactment of critical and political responsiveness to Māori, Pākehā (European New Zealanders) and migrant groups in NZ, holding together both cultural and political tensions as well as relationships moving forward in educational contexts. This raises questions about what effective educational leadership for improving Māori achievement needs to look like in order to impact positively on Māori in both English and Māori-medium school contexts.

An understanding and applied practice of Treaty-responsivity, similar to cultural responsiveness, as a means to foster collaboration within an educational leadership context is critical when Māori and non-Māori principals of mainstream schools strive to build *whanaungatanga* (relationship) to achieve one common purpose – "improving Māori success as Māori" (Ministry of Education, 2013). The gap between Māori and non-Māori is a serious issue in New Zealand. In 2013, 78.7 % of Pākehā and 82.0 % of Asian students in Year 11 achieved Level 1 of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA), while only 55.3 % of Māori students gained the qualification (New Zealand Qualification Authority, 2014). Additionally, in 2012 one in 10 Māori left school without any qualifications, three times higher than the rate for Pākehā (Ministry of Education, 2014). The urgency behind the call for improvement in Māori achievement levels is acknowledged widely in New Zealand educational literature (Santamaría, Webber, McKinley & Madjar, 2014; Turner, Rubie-Davies & Webber, 2015).

The New Zealand Ministry of Education (2013) has acknowledged that identity, language, and culture are critical ingredients in the educational success of Māori and have stated that schools and teachers need a greater "understanding [of] the importance of Māori identity, language and culture in effective teaching and learning" (p.34). Through the national strategy, *Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success: The Māori Education Strategy 2008-2012*, the Ministry of Education has recognised the widespread aspirations of Māori to live and succeed as Māori. *Ka Hikitia* – which means to step up, to lengthen one's stride, to lift up – encourages schools and teachers to pay attention to cultural components, personalizing education so that Māori students enjoy educational success in ways that affirm their cultural identity (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 9).

Effective leadership begins with the principal who sets the direction but goes beyond that to recognition that all those in leadership, management and governance have roles to play. These roles are clearly defined and grounded in shared visions, values and expectations. Leaders are supported to develop the skills needed for the tasks they undertake. They set the tone for the school culture and build respectful relationships. Leaders celebrate diversity

and model inclusive, culturally appropriate ways of operating. They work in partnership with and offer leadership opportunities to other staff, students/children, parents, whānau and people in the broader education community (Education Review Office, 2010, p. 3).

In order for this type and level of culturally appropriate education to occur, culturally different ways of approaching and evaluating educational leadership are needed. In early 2014, the authors of this paper, representing what is labelled in this study as the Cross-Cultural Research Collaborative (CCRC), were invited to partner with a national network of approximately sixty principals, known here as the Māori School Initiative (MSI), to engage and evaluate MSI principals' efforts for raising Māori achievement. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate CCRC's evaluative findings of the effective, Treaty responsive leadership outcomes demonstrated by MSI principals in relation to Aotearoa NZ Ministry of Education's *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success* leadership framework (Ministry of Education, 2013).

The Māori Success Initiative

In response to the issues facing Māori within the Aotearoa NZ educational context, a core group of approximately 60 Māori and non-Māori primary and secondary school principals, independent of the NZ Ministry of Education, formed the Māori Success Initiative – a school leadership initiative for school principals committed to the goal of Māori success as Māori. MSI is a grassroots leadership-based collaboration comprised of six regional clusters across Aotearoa NZ that began in November 2013. Each cluster is led by one of the network's core group members who acts as the cluster facilitator. Clusters are made up of 8-12 Māori and non-Māori principals serving in a diverse range of primary, intermediate and/or secondary mainstream schools. MSI's purpose is to foster *whanaungatanga* between principals to positively influence and impact their personal and professional learning in order to identify, develop and implement effective school leadership practices that promote and sustain positive Māori student achievement and success as Māori. The ultimate goal of MSI is to establish a critical mass of effective school leaders and leadership practices which challenge status quo strategies that have resulted in inequitable educational outcomes for Māori. It is a shared understanding among the MSI principals that they are operating according to the bicultural Treaty within monocultural schools for a multiethnic society and that when schools address barriers to student achievement for Māori students, all students – migrant and immigrant alike – benefit.

MSI's vision "*A Change in the Hearts and Minds of Principals*", is reflective of its intent to foster personal and professional growth leading to changes in individual school leadership practices aimed at Māori success.

The MSI cluster facilitators organise meetings once per school quarter and utilise a professional development plan called the Phase 2 *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success* leadership document from the Ministry of Education. This document has identified key school indicators that lead to Māori Success as Māori (Ministry of Education, 2013). During cluster *hui* (meetings) facilitators connect inter-cluster experiences

to identify areas of growth and need. Regional cluster meetings focus on sharing data-driven innovative practices utilising disaggregated achievement data for Māori students (e.g., achievement data organised and reported by student demographic variables) to inform school leadership, pedagogy, and curriculum. By sharing their leadership practices within a collaborative environment, MSI principals participating in this collaborative network are able to problem solve and refine their strategies by accessing the collective knowledge from their regional cluster.

The Cross-Cultural Research Collaborative

In order to support their learning and evaluate outcomes, the founding MSI principals invited a core team of academic scholars, named in this study as the Cross-Cultural Research Collaborative (CCRC), to act as independent researchers to work alongside them in partnership via evaluative Treaty-responsivity to achieve their overarching goal of positively impacting Māori student achievement outcomes. Experiencing similar dynamics resulting from navigating the space between Māori and non-Māori worlds, this cross-cultural, interdisciplinary (e.g., educational leadership, educational psychology, multicultural multilingual education, special education, critical studies, Indigenous education) and international team consists of one Māori (Ngāti Whakāue, Ngāpuhi) researcher and three culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) researchers (Mexican/Irish/Italian-American; African-American/American Indian (Choctaw Nation Oklahoma); and Thai/Cambodian/Chinese/Kiwi) from the U.S. and New Zealand.

At MSI's request, the research team's role was to observe and participate in MSI *hui* in order to collect, analyse, and interpret data as part of an evaluation process generated by MSI principals in a way that guides their journey towards advancing their own leadership practice through *whakawhanaungatanga* (building kinship/relationships) within, and between, regional clusters. The aims of the CCRC-MSI partnership is to promote the voices and practices of effective Māori and non-Māori school leaders through cross-cultural collaboration and research; and to inform effective, culturally responsive leadership practices across Aotearoa NZ (L. J. Santamaría, in press). In so doing, as illustrated within this paper, the CCRC group of researchers has concentrated on supporting the collaborative learning of MSI principals through the use of critical methodologies (Kaupapa Māori and critical race theory) and by grounding MSI principals' efforts towards improving Māori achievement to a research-based leadership framework (*Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success*; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Ministry of Education, 2013; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). A background of these methodologies and framework underpinning the CCRC team's efforts for supporting, enhancing, and promoting the work of MSI principals follows.

Methodological and Theoretical Frameworks

This study is reflective of a bicultural partnership initiated by Māori principals inviting other Māori and non-Māori principals and scholars to work collaboratively for Māori. In order for the partnership to be effective, non-Māori needed to deliberately engage in Treaty-responsive practices while working towards promoting

positive Māori achievement in mainstream schooling contexts. As such, this study is driven by two underpinning research methodologies: Kaupapa Māori (e.g., Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012) and critical race theory (e.g., Ladson-Billings, 2001); and one leadership framework: *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success* (Ministry of Education, 2013).

Kaupapa Māori

Māori researchers and scholars in Aotearoa NZ have offered their communities of practice, country, and the world significant contributions on what it means to be engaged in Māori research and theory with regard to praxis (Bishop 1996; Moewaka Barnes, 2000; Pihama et al., 2002; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Walker, Eketone & Gibbs, 2006). The most prominent and recognised research strategy that has emerged from this work is known as Kaupapa Māori.

In general terms, Kaupapa Māori represents research that is “by Māori, for Māori and with Māori” (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Walker et al., 2006, p. 333). Kaupapa Māori research emerged when Māori academics and students engaged the process of questioning “Westernized notions of knowledge, culture, and research” (Walker et al., 2006, p. 331). Kaupapa Māori reflects and shares the emancipatory goal of other post-colonial movements, such as those developed by Freire (1985) and Gibson (1986). The research approach challenges the privileged status of Western knowledge systems and research methodologies while contesting the exploitative nature of much research that has been undertaken on Māori as subjects being researched (Teariki & Spoonley, 1992). Kaupapa Māori additionally pushes back and interrupts unfavourable comparisons of Māori with non-Māori, resulting in deficit-based approaches to viewing Māori as a people (Bishop, 1996).

In terms of the ways in which Kaupapa Māori methodology complements the current study, it has shown itself as a radical, emancipatory, empowerment-oriented strategy and collaborative-based process (Pihama et al., 2002). This process, or way of researching alongside and with Māori researchers and participants, when employed deliberately, appropriately, and systematically, can yield excellent research (Tuhiwai Smith, 2006, 2012). Kaupapa Māori research has been documented to contribute to improved policy, practice, and outcomes for Māori people; including academic achievement for Māori learners (Wearmouth, Berryman, Bishop, Peter, & Clapham, 2011) and increased Māori parent participation in educational contexts (Hoskins, 2010).

Walker et al. (2006) assert the core underpinning principles of Kaupapa Māori research are: *tinu rangatiratanga* (self-determination, autonomy), social justice, Māori worldview or Aotearoa NZ Indigenous ideology, *te reo* (Māori language), and *whakawhanaungatanga*. These features speak to Māori aspirations, philosophies, processes (e.g., *tikanga* or customs) and pedagogies (e.g., *wānanga* or extended, sometimes overnight, educational seminars or gatherings), which are consistently found within successful Māori interventions (e.g., academic achievement, increased parent participation). They are also at the heart of the researchers’ collaborative work with the MSI principals featured in this study. In addition, the principle of *āta*,

developed by Pohatu (2004), also informs CCRC's research work because the term relates specifically to the building and nurturing of relationships. *Āta* acts as a guide to the understanding of relationships and well-being when engaging with Māori. Moreover, *āta* focuses on relationships, negotiating boundaries, working to create and hold safe space with corresponding behaviours that encourage reciprocity and parity when working with others (Pohatu, 2004).

Kaupapa Māori provided an example of empirical, relevant, culturally- embedded, grounded and responsive research guidelines that the current researchers were able to draw from when engaging in this collaborative research endeavour. The researchers committed to a kaupapa Maori approach in three key ways: 1) by integrating MSI principals' feedback and research questions into the design of the research instruments to ensure the research was beneficial for all involved; 2) by engaging in powhiri, karakia, mihi and waiata associated with hui to uphold Maori tikanga; and 3) by working in ways that upheld the Maori values of *whānaungatanga* (relationships), *manaakitanga* (hospitality), *kotahitanga* (common vision) and *rangatiratanga* (independence). Tuhiwai Smith (2012), an eminent NZ Māori scholar, maintains that due to the focus on empowerment and emancipation of Māori as oppressed and colonised peoples not unlike Paulo Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Kaupapa Māori research manifests itself as localised critical theory. Building on this premise, critical race paradigms are considered to further frame this study.

Critical Race Theory

A critical race theory (CRT) perspective clearly complements the Kaupapa Māori approach in that progressive educational leadership scholars in NZ (Bishop, 2003; Pihama, 1993; Smith, 1997) and the U.S. (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Jean-Marie & Normore, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 1999) employ these frameworks in their investigations. This theoretical perspective is also centred on notions of critique and change (e.g., socio-political improvement) as opposed to understanding or explaining social phenomena (Horkheimer, 1972). Finally, a CRT perspective functions optimally when it is explanatory, practical, and applicable to everyday routines (Calhoun, 1995).

Critical race methodology is incorporated into this study as a way to address oppression resulting from systemic and institutionalised colonisation in Aotearoa NZ (Ladson-Billings, 1999). In Aotearoa NZ, systems of ignorance, exploitation, and power are often carried out to oppress Māori, Pasifika, and other marginalised groups on the basis of ethnicity, culture, mannerisms, and colour (Marable, 1992). In this study, the authors aim to interrupt traditional ways of thinking about educational leadership by utilising critical race theory and social justice inquiry to address the ongoing Māori struggle for decolonisation that Tuhiwai Smith (2006) exemplified in her research.

In this instance, building on previous research on comparative Indigenous leadership (Santamaría, Santamaría, Webber, & Pearson, in press), the authors consider Kaupapa Māori and CRT perspectives. In this example, the Māori Success

Initiative (MSI) principals' counter-stories are collected, developed, and shared in order to add new and positive stories about leadership for Māori success, disrupting racism and negative educational leadership and education race relations in Aotearoa NZ (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Practicing Kaupapa Māori and CRT research methodologies, interrogating traditionally accepted and practiced paradigms, and seeking practical culturally responsive solutions are not without their challenges.

To this end, the authors acknowledge Western and mainstream modes of empirical research (e.g., methods, findings, discussion, etc.) employed in the present study. These ways of engaging research are in conflict to the arguments for rejecting Westernised research paradigms noted by Walker et al. (2006). In other words, the researchers involved in this study are actively demonstrating what it means to combine traditional Western understandings of scholarly and empirical research while privileging Indigenous ways of thinking, being, teaching, and learning. In this way, this chapter demonstrates ways in which Indigenous 'knowing' can be adapted (vs. adopted) by researchers from systemically and/or historically 'marginalised' and excluded groups to disrupt dominant paradigms (e.g., scholarly discourse, empirical knowledge, common narratives), adding authentic alternative voices to re-story educational leadership from multiple perspectives. Moreover, MSI principals' counter-stories, as related to effective school leadership for Māori achievement, are being collected through observation, interviews, surveys and document analysis as these leaders engage in their practice to foster Māori success as Māori (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). These counter-narratives serve to create a record that challenges and interrupts deficit-oriented tales about Māori learners and leadership for Māori (e.g., Māori parents do not care about education, Māori students are incapable of learning as compared to their non-Māori peers), similar to that of other Indigenous populations in the world, for the purpose of adding a new perspective and promoting improved leadership practices for Indigenous learners in mainstream settings.

Effective School Practices for Māori Achievement

Within the context of improving school leadership practices for Māori learners, the Māori Success Initiative (MSI) has identified *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success* to frame the leadership practices of MSI principals (Ministry of Education, 2013). Developed by the Ministry of Education for the purpose of promoting Māori success as Māori, a phrase used to differentiate from Māori achieving educational success according to *Pākehā* (New Zealanders of European descent) standards and expectations, *Ka Hikitia* identified five key areas for primary and secondary education focused on the importance of: (1) integrating elements of students' identities, language and culture into school curriculum, teaching, and learning; (2) utilising disaggregated student achievement data to align school resources to target areas of identified need; (3) developing strategic intervention programmes for priority learners; (4) creating effective community-based partnerships; and (5) fostering high expectations for Māori to succeed as Māori. The aims of *Ka Hikitia* are that schools make improvements in two critical areas: (1) quality provision, leadership, teaching and learning, supported by effective governance; and (2)

strong engagement and contribution from parents, families and *whānau* (family), *iwi*, *hapū*, Māori organisations, communities and businesses (Ministry of Education, 2013). This public document formed the basis for linking MSI's efforts for promoting change to a Ministry-led initiative and for framing MSI principal collaboration and discussion to identify effective, shared leadership practices. In summary, grounded in Kaupapa Māori and critical race theory, the CCRC team engaged in partnership with MSI to assess principals' leadership practices in relation to the core elements for Māori achievement described within *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success*.

Data Collection

Over the course of the past nine months, the CCRC team has collected data by attending, observing and participating in MSI *hui* and *wānanga*, conducting focus group interviews, analysing MSI documents, and by inviting MSI principals to complete two open-ended surveys. One survey centred on principals' leadership practices for improving Māori achievement, while the second focused on the outcomes of their collaborative work within regional cluster *hui*. In total, CCRC received back 44 completed leadership surveys and 46 *hui* reflective statements, which reflects approximately a 75% response rate. Utilising NVivo qualitative analysis software, the CCRC team then coded all data from observations, interviews and surveys to group principal responses into themes, keeping in mind the core elements from *Ka Hikitia*.

MSI Leadership Practices for Promoting Māori Success

Data analysis revealed a total of six key indicators directly linked to *Ka Hikitia's* core elements for Māori achievement in primary and secondary education (See Table 1). Many principals noted that in order to prioritise student identity, language and culture within their schools required, first, a shift in the overall school culture. Establishing clear strategic goals and providing meaningful professional development were necessary to improve teachers' awareness of Māori *tikanga* (beliefs, customs and traditions). Transferring MSI principals' intentions to raise Māori success as Māori and promote Treaty responsiveness throughout the culture of their schools and communities was critical for ensuring entrenched sustainability and buy-in to avoid appearance of just another one-off initiative.

Whakawhanaungatanga was the first step often demonstrated by MSI principals to foster shared-decision making and elicit valuable input from staff, families, and the local community. Understanding what works best for Maori learners meant understanding what works best for their *whānau* and *iwi*. Ensuring that *kaumātua* (elderly Māori with status) and *whānau* not only felt welcome within the school, but were invited to join key representative groups to inform school practices or even provide professional development to improve teachers' *reo* and *tikanga* was one common strategy employed by MSI principals.

The data that MSI principals accessed to inform their practice were, for the most part, not generated by a school computer, but rather through the face-to-face interactions with people themselves. Principals' purposeful active presence at

special gatherings and events at their schools, their families' homes or at the local *marae* (meeting place) was instrumental in fostering more personal relationships with their students. By doing so, principals began to reshape their schools creating a more bicultural atmosphere wherein Maori students could more fully realise their potential. As MSI principals began strengthening relationships within the school and community and improving teachers' culturally responsive professional practice, many found the New Zealand curriculum an impediment to realising Maori potential. Given the mainstream schooling context, some MSI principals expressed a sense of dual obligation between meeting the Ministry of Education's expectations for student achievement in literacy and maths and creating opportunities for Maori learners to learn and develop *te reo* and *tikanga*. Integrating *kapa haka* (traditional Māori performance), *waiata* (song) and *karakia* (prayer) into daily classroom routines and school assemblies was one way MSI principals worked towards normalising a Māori way of being for Māori, while instilling bicultural, treaty-responsive awareness for non-Māori students. Finally, MSI principals expressed the need to lead by example in order to set and maintain high expectations for staff and students, while, at the same time, interrupting deficit-based thinking and other barriers preventing Māori success in both Māori and Pākehā worlds. For MSI principals, providing opportunities for Māori students to learn *te reo*, perform in *kapa haka*, or participate in the arts was equal to ensuring Māori students achieved in literacy and maths at levels commensurate to their Pākehā peers in order to provide them equal access to opportunities in mainstream societal contexts. A selection of qualitative principal comments are presented in relation to Ka Hikitia's core elements in Table 1 below.

Table 1: *MSI principal sample data related to Ka Hikitia's core elements for Māori Success as Māori.*

Ka Hikitia's Core Elements for Māori Success as Māori	Māori Success Initiative (MSI) Indicators	MSI Principal Representative Sample Data
Integrating elements of students' identity, language and culture into school curriculum, teaching, and learning.	Empowering students' culture and identity	<p><i>Helping students to understand and value their Māoriness – identity, culture and allowing them to connect with our core values and living these values as Māori.</i></p> <p><i>A determination to be culturally sensitive and aware. I want to share my culture with the tamariki [children] and want to deepen my understanding of Māori culture and identity, and how to continue to support, acknowledge and enhance this within our environment (school and wider community). I recognise how important my culture and identity is to me and to my wider whānau, and recognise the need to support and foster the same for our school whānau.</i></p>

	Prioritising <i>te reo</i> and <i>tikanga</i>	<p><i>Use of personal Māori greetings. Use of Māori language at school assemblies and at school events. Whakataukī [proverbs] included in weekly newsletters.</i></p> <p><i>Staff are expected to continually improve in their knowledge of and ability in te reo and understanding and reflective use of tikanga in the classroom.</i></p>
Utilising disaggregated student achievement data to align school resources to target areas of identified need.	Actively seeking input from <i>whānau</i> (families)	<p><i>Our school has a strong partnership with our hapū [subtribe]. They assisted us in developing ways of improving how school delivers/provides education for our tamariki. Mana whenua [Māori people with authority over the land] sit on the board. Tumuaki [Principal] consistently consults hapu to see if actions he takes are okay and vice versa. Hapū have an office at kura [school]. Hapū education representative/kaumātua provides teachers with lessons and PD to implement tamaohotanga (Ngāti Tamaoho tribally specific knowledge, history and traditions) into kura.</i></p> <p><i>We actively gain whānau perspective and voice through korero [talking], surveys, hui, informal gatherings, building links and relationships with our local marae [meeting place].</i></p>
Developing strategic intervention programmes for priority learners.	Improving in <i>Mātauranga</i> (Māori knowledge, wisdom, or understanding)	<p><i>Changes in the curriculum to best reflect the needs of our community and how this is developed through growing responsibility and ownership by the students and all stakeholders. Recognition that Māori students need a whānau atmosphere to learn and providing that in the school.</i></p> <p><i>Demanding staff to continually upskill in aspects of te ao Māori. Diversifying the curriculum to include woodwork, carving, and bone carving. Employing tutors with skills to develop children's potential in arts/technology areas.</i></p>
Creating	Establishing	<i>Having a true openness in welcoming Māori</i>

<p>effective community-based partnerships.</p>	<p><i>Whakawhanaunga tanga</i> (relationship building) with whānau</p>	<p><i>families. Ensuring every avenue is taken to work with our "whole families" to meet all needs, spiritual, social, physical and educational.</i></p> <p><i>It is the formation of better relationships with our akonga [students], whānau, and community. Teachers are becoming more reflective about who they are, their practice and relationships and how this impacts on our Māori akonga and whānau.</i></p>
<p>Fostering high expectations for Māori to succeed as Māori.</p>	<p>Promoting a culture of <i>Rangatiratanga</i> (leadership)</p>	<p><i>We are embarking on new Māori initiatives this year - improving teachers' te reo, tikanga and developing a leadership programme that recognises Māori giftedness.</i></p> <p><i>Showing you really care, you are interested in their achievements and you have very high expectations of all of them and their whānau. I make a point of attending wider whānau functions and homes when appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>I do my best to lead by example. I work very closely with my leadership team - we talk about student achievement and what is best for our students - collectively we need to be on the same page about our students. If we don't get it right at the leadership level then we can't make an impact across our school.</i></p> <p><i>Ensuring teachers are of high quality and are not monocultural in outlook and expertise. Valuing Maori as being of huge value to the school and to society as a whole. Identifying barriers that exist and breaking them down.</i></p>

Working Towards Changing the Status Quo

The intent of this paper was to highlight and promote the effective, culturally responsive leadership practices of a group of Māori and non-Māori school principals working collaboratively towards improving Māori success as Māori in Aotearoa NZ. For the Cross-Cultural Research Collaborative, linking Māori Success Initiative

principals' leadership practices to the core elements of Māori achievement identified within the Ministry of Education's *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success* leadership framework was just the first step towards confirming and strengthening their efforts. This study's findings also revealed additional elements of MSI principals' leadership practice, including ways in which their identities informed their leadership, challenges principals faced when attempting to shift school culture, needs to ensure sustainability, and the impact of MSI collaboration on principals' learning and practice (Table 2).

Table 2: *Additional indicators informing school leadership for Māori Success as Māori.*

Additional MSI Indicators	MSI Principal Representative Sample Data
Identity-based leadership	<p><i>I know exactly what it is like to be a minority and I never want any of the students or whānau in my school to feel like a minority but make certain that we embrace and make their culture be a part of every day life within our school. I have huge aspirations for my own whānau and this filters through in all what I do for my school. I am definitely still learning how to better engage whānau and Māori students but I am determined to make a difference.</i></p> <p><i>I cannot be rid myself of my 'Māori self'. Wherever I go I take my whānau, hapū, iwi with me. The tamariki I teach are whānau. It is my role to grow the passion of Māori students to be Māori.</i></p> <p><i>A determination to be culturally sensitive and aware. I want to share my culture with the tamariki and want to deepen my understanding of Māori culture and identity, and how to continue to support, acknowledge and enhance this within our environment (school and wider community). I recognise how important my culture and identity is to me and to my wider whānau, and to recognise the need to support and foster the same for our school whānau.</i></p>
Challenges to shifting school culture	<p><i>The fixation with national standards, numeracy and literacy. Te ao Māori, tikanga, te reo are still add-ons for us rather than a lens through which to view learning.</i></p> <p><i>Finding quality, reliable role models for te reo, kapahaka, etc. to help lead us all. Developing pride and identity as a group within our school.</i></p> <p><i>Sense of origin. Knowledge of themselves. A vision for the future. Acceptance and understanding. Finding their place and purpose in the world.</i></p>

	<i>Low expectations. Lack of culturally responsive practice. Lack of awareness with te ao Māori.</i>
Building sustainability	<p><i>Community consultation, what's important to them and including this in the school's curriculum. Sharing learning with whānau. Opening doors to welcome whānau into school. Providing learning workshops for whānau.</i></p> <p><i>Staff need to have a sense of self determination and understand the community. Staff development is essential. Being led by the community.</i></p> <p><i>Success in a bicultural NZ is a two-way responsibility.</i></p>
The impact of MSI's collaborative practice on leadership	<p><i>It is sharing the aspirations and the actions. It is building the knowledge and the capability; it is sharing ideas and realities. It is building a network for action and support. The regular meetings provide reflective space and encouragement. Readings help to build an evidence base of understanding.</i></p> <p><i>The 'group' helps change the 'group'. Together we can make a difference, on our own we battle alone. Provides me with models of good practice to think about so that I can then adapt/adopt/modify for my own school setting. Provides us with the resource/people to voice our ideas.</i></p> <p><i>It equips me with a sense of support and collegiality to bravely push forward for whānau that I serve.</i></p>

On the whole, MSI principals expressed a strong sense of identity and ways in which their identity impacted their leadership practice (Santamaría, 2014; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012; Santamaría, et al., 2014). Māori principals, especially, indicated personal urgency for sharing their values of beliefs as Māori to their school's ākonga and whānau. Pākehā principals also shared similar values and intentions as their Māori peers, but, at times, were not perceived by their school's whānau as authentic. MSI, however, enabled both Māori and Pākehā principals to share stories and understanding benefitting both cultures and the schools in which they served. To some degree, MSI provided both with the other lens through which to see their school so that they may begin to identify ways in which to change their own approach and/or practice to foster an improved bicultural climate in which both Māori and Pākehā students and families could experience success.

There were challenges, though, for MSI principals putting vision into practice (as was also found in the 2010 ERO Report). Many principals reported difficulties in shifting the values, beliefs, and knowledge of their staff to reflect the identified needs for Māori success in mainstream contexts, while, at the same time, having to engage whānau within a developing bicultural climate. As much as teachers

needed support and professional development for adapting mainstream curriculum and pedagogy in order to integrate te reo and tikanga, Māori parents were unaccustomed to filling significant roles for participating and engaging as key personnel within the school to support and, in some cases, lead staff on a regular basis. As MSI principals changed in their own hearts and minds through their collaborative work within their MSI cluster and the larger MSI network, they realised that, in order to do the same for their own school and community, they needed to build capacity and capability within their students, staff and whānau to see and experience a collective vision for Māori success as Māori.

This project provides a national case study for and underscores the importance of evaluation of educational leadership in mainstream contexts (vs. Māori medium kura) that has Māori learners at the front and centre. According to the New Zealand Educational Administration and Leadership (NZEALS) 2010 Educational Review Office Report, when evaluating educational leadership in any Aotearoa NZ context it is important to use the Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) standards (e.g., establishing goals and expectations; resourcing strategically; planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum; promoting and participating in teacher learning and development; and ensuring an orderly and supportive environment) as a primary measure (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). However, as Santamaría et al. (2014) and the ERO (2010), have established it is equally as important or arguably more important to recognise, particularly when evaluating in Māori or Indigenous contexts, the roles played by identity, socio-cultural context, navigating complex, diverse communities and educational/ economic factors. In other words, identity and tikanga Māori in this case, impacts the leadership expression or style enacted which further impacts the quality of the resulting educational leadership practice (Santamaría, 2014; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2012).

As the CCRC-MSI partnership continues, and as MSI principals have a more significant impact on shifting the culture in their schools, further data collection and analysis will be utilised to expand on these initial findings to continue to assist MSI in changing the hearts and minds of principals and schools serving indigenous learners not only in Aotearoa NZ, but at a global scale if possible.

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