

Principles of Kaupapa Māori

Kaupapa Māori theory is based on a number of key principles. Graham Hingangaroa Smith (1990) initially identified six principles or elements of Kaupapa Māori within the context of educational intervention (Kura Kaupapa Māori) and research [1]. These elements and principles have since been expanded by other Kaupapa Māori theorists such as Linda Smith (1997), Leonie Pihama (2001) and Taina Pohatu (2005). Other theorists who have also contributed to the development and growth of Kaupapa Māori methodology include Russell Bishop (2005), Kuni Jenkins (2001), Cheryl Smith (2003) and others.

The key elements or principals of Kaupapa Māori research are outlined here:

Tino Rangatiratanga – The Principle of Self-determination

Tino Rangatiratanga relates to sovereignty, autonomy, control, self-determination and independence. The notion of Tino Rangatiratanga asserts and reinforces the goal of Kaupapa Māori initiatives: allowing Māori to control their own culture, aspirations and destiny.

Taonga Tuku Iho – The Principle of Cultural Aspiration

This principle asserts the centrality and legitimacy of Te Reo Māori, Tikanga and Mātauranga Māori. Within a Kaupapa Māori paradigm, these Māori ways of knowing, doing and understanding the world are considered valid in their own right. In acknowledging their validity and relevance it also allows spiritual and cultural awareness and other considerations to be taken into account.

Ako Māori – The Principle of Culturally Preferred Pedagogy

This principle acknowledges teaching and learning practices that are inherent and unique to Māori, as well as practices that may not be traditionally derived but are preferred by Māori.

Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga – The Principle of Socio-Economic Mediation

This principle asserts the need to mediate and assist in the alleviation of negative pressures and disadvantages experienced by Māori communities. This principle asserts a need for Kaupapa Māori research to be of positive benefit to Māori communities. It also acknowledges the relevance and success that Māori derived initiatives have as intervention systems for addressing socio-economic issues that currently exist.

Whānau – The Principle of Extended Family Structure

The principle of Whānau sits at the core of Kaupapa Māori. It acknowledges the relationships that Māori have to one another and to the world around them. Whānau, and the process of whakawhanaungatanga are key elements of Māori society and culture. This principle acknowledges the responsibility and obligations of the researcher to nurture and care for these relationships and also the intrinsic connection between the researcher, the researched and the research.

Kaupapa - The Principle of Collective Philosophy

The 'Kaupapa' refers to the collective vision, aspiration and purpose of Māori communities. Larger than the topic of the research alone, the kaupapa refers to the aspirations of the community. The research topic or intervention systems therefore are considered to be an incremental and vital contribution to the overall 'kaupapa'.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi – The Principle of the Treaty of Waitangi

Pihama (2001) identified another principle to be taken into account within Kaupapa Māori theory: Te Tiriti o Waitangi (1840) is a crucial document which defines the relationship between Māori and the Crown in New Zealand. It affirms both the tangata whenua status of whānau, hapū and iwi in New

Zealand, and their rights of citizenship. The Tiriti therefore provides a basis through which Māori may critically analyse relationships, challenge the status-quo, and affirm the Māori rights.

Āta - The Principle of Growing Respectful Relationships

The principle of āta, was developed by Pohatu (2005) primarily as a transformative approach within the area of social services. The principle of āta relates specifically to the building and nurturing of relationships. It acts as a guide to the understanding of relationships and wellbeing when engaging with Māori.

Āta focuses on our relationships, negotiating boundaries, working to create and hold safe space with corresponding behaviours.

Āta gently reminds people of how to behave when engaging in relationships with people, kaupapa and environments.

Āta intensifies peoples' perceptions in the following areas.

- It accords quality space of time (wā) and place (wāhi).
- It demands effort and energy of participants.
- It conveys the notion of respectfulness.
- It conveys the notion of reciprocity.
- It conveys the requirement of reflection, the prerequisite to critical analysis.
- It conveys the requirement of discipline.
- It ensures that the transformation process is an integral part of relationships.

Āta incorporates the notion of planning.

Āta incorporates the notion of strategizing.

For more information about Kaupapa Māori theory see www.kaupapamaori.com

Kaupapa Māori as Research

In addition to the [Kaupapa Māori principles](#), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1997) outlined some working principles specifically for the purposes of research based on the principles identified above.

These principles are:

Whakapapa – The Principle of Whakapapa

Whakapapa which is defined generally as being 'genealogy', also encapsulates the way in which Māori view the world. It is a way of thinking, of learning and storing and debating knowledge. In terms of Kaupapa Māori research whakapapa is integral as it allows for the positioning and contextualising relationships between people, communities, participants, landscape, and the universe as a whole.

Te Reo – The Principle of Te Reo

Te Reo Māori is integral to Kaupapa Māori; the Māori world view is embedded in the language. The way in which we communicate using Te Reo Māori provides an insight into the way we interact with the world and the way in which we build and maintain relationships.

Tikanga Maori – The Principle of Tikanga Maori

Tikanga Māori refers to customary practices, ethics, cultural behaviours, considerations and obligations. Tikanga Māori is important in order to enable us to appropriately navigate and operate within a Māori context, and make judgements and decisions within this space.

Rangatiratanga – The Principle of Rangatiratanga

Rangatiratanga is related to the Principle of Tino Rangatiratanga. The notion of Rangatiratanga, or autonomy, is also relevant in the research process in terms of allowing Māori to shape their own research processes. L Smith (1996, pp. 217-218) has identified some critical questions that need to be posed to Māori communities and researchers that will allow greater control and autonomy over the research process accessible by Māori. These are:

- What research do we want to carry out?
- Who is that research for?
- What difference will it make?
- Who will carry out this research?
- How do we want the research to be done?
- How will we know it is a worthwhile piece of research?
- Who will own the research?
- Who will benefit?

Whānau (II) – The Principle of Whānau II

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