



## Understanding the pedagogy of school-based marae: A culturally responsive learning context in secondary schools.

**TLRI grant holders:** Dr Jenny Bol Jun Lee, Ms Lisa Smith, Dr Leonie Pihama

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### Introduction

This research project will investigate the role of school-based marae as a culturally responsive pedagogy in mainstream secondary schools. It will involve the participation of students, teachers, whānau and community representatives of three urban school marae with the Auckland region. This study will examine the pedagogy of school marae and the way it impacts on the educational achievement of Māori learners and their whānau.

### Aims

The aim of this project is to examine the culturally responsive pedagogy of school marae in secondary schools. The overarching research question of this project is:

*How does the culturally responsive pedagogy of school marae operate, and what impact does this pedagogy make on the educational achievement of Māori learners and their whānau?*

The key objectives of this project are threefold:

1. To provide pūrākau (similar to a case-study approach) of each of the participating school marae about the establishment, operation and impact of school marae on Māori students, other students, teachers, whānau and community.
2. To identify key success elements (institutional, personal and instructional) that contribute to the maintenance and practice of a culturally responsive pedagogical approach for Māori learners and their whānau.
3. To investigate ways marae in schools contribute to the enhancement of educational achievement and cultural well-being of Māori learners and their whānau.

### Why is this research important?

The establishment of school marae in mainstream secondary schools was part of the kaupapa Māori educational initiatives begun in the early 1980s such as Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori. Today there are approximately 99 marae in state secondary schools in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2008).<sup>1</sup> Marae in schools are officially endorsed by the Ministry of Education (2000) as a way to better engage with Māori parents, whānau and communities.<sup>2</sup> However, there is a dearth of literature about the setting up of a school marae, and the ways which school marae impacts on the teaching and learning of Maori students and their whānau.

### What we plan to do

#### Data

We will be interviewing key people about the establishment of each of the school marae. We will also conduct focus group interviews with students, teachers, whānau and the Principal about the role the marae in teaching and learning for Maori students and their whānau. Maori students, staff and whānau at each school will also complete a questionnaire to provide further information about the importance of marae.

#### Analysis

- 1 The MoE is cautious in providing this statistic as the codes that Property use to distinguish types of buildings does not necessarily mean that a whare or marae is not in operation in another building in the school. Furthermore MoE are not able to provide this information for state integrated schools, private schools and schools on marae eg. TKKM o Hoani Waititi Marae. Personal communication with Research Analyst, Demographic and Statistical Analysis Unit, MoE (26 May, 2008).
- 2 Ministry of Education. (2000). *Better relationships for better learning: Guidelines for boards of trustees and schools on engaging with Māori parents, whānau, and communities*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Kaupapa Māori will provide the methodological approach in this study. Pūrākau methodology (Lee, 2008) is a Kaupapa Māori research approach to narrative inquiry that will be employed in this study. As well as the creation of pūrākau of individual school marae, a thematic analysis will also be undertaken. Data collected from interviews, observations and questionnaires of schools will be manually indexed into themes. The iterative and progressive process of analysis will seek to provide the 'big picture' or cultural portrait via pūrākau as well as identify and synthesise themes within and across the pūrākau.

### Our partners:

The three secondary school marae involved in this research project are: Nga Oho Marae, Western Springs College; Te Pou Herenga Waka Marae, James Cook High School, and; Te Mahanahana Marae, Massey High School.

### Contact details



Dr Jenny Bol Jun Lee  
Director, Rautaki Ltd  
PO Box 14779, Point Chevalier.  
1/338 Point Chevalier Rd,  
Point Chevalier, Auckland 2011.  
Phone: +64 9 846 7636  
Email: jenny@rautaki.co.nz