Chapter Nine: The Tuara

This chapter examines the strategies that participants utilise to negotiate institutional terrains both as students and as teachers. Their strategies are talked about in terms of the tuara literally translated as backbone or spine. Metaphorically the tuara represents the axis upon which the participants strategically attempt to balance the two repositories, the kete and the briefcase. It is not suggested that any one fixed point of balance exists for these women; rather, their dialogue suggests that drawing on either archive (to achieve educational objectives) is contingent on a number of personal and contextual factors. Typically, participants recognise a need for both repositories as well as indicating grey areas where they intermingle and neither is clearly delineated nor solely distinguishable.

... I’m always questioning myself and at this stage I couldn’t probably say if I used one more than the other and yet sometimes I know I damn well do. I mightn’t agree but I can understand how particular people behave for particular reasons, so I’m more knowing of that, and that in a way influences what you do - you can’t discount it and say well, I’ll chuck away that experience and I’ll go to this sub directory and pluck out another, because somewhere along the line it’s all intermingled and tangled up with everything else but definitely being Maori and a woman and operating both in Maori tikanga and Pakeha has a lot to do with how you operate. It’s very interesting you know, the number of wrong assumptions that people still make, it’s quite incredible really - they’ve got to start meeting you as a whole person - most think because she’s female and because she’s Maori you know, we’ll stick her in the education forum about Maori issues, when really in actual fact, I’m probably better versed and really skilled at talking about property and financial issues (participant paired interview).

To contextualise the discussion, the first section of this chapter overviews the types of educational programmes in which the eight participants have taught. (This helps to explain why participants do not confine their comments to the programme type for which they were selected). The second section builds on the previous chapter, asking the question why participants attained school credentials in a system ambivalent to them and it does so by exploring the most commonly cited institutional influence that motivated them to achieve.

The next section investigates how the women used particular strategies in the course of attaining institutional credentials and juxtaposes these with current strategies used.
The next section investigates how women used particular strategies in the course of attaining institutional credentials and juxtaposes these with current strategies used as teachers. While many strategies emerge from the data, this section primarily focuses on the strategic use of silence, examining how silence is ‘made’ in institutions and how silence is ‘broken’. What motivates the participants to be silent and what motivates them to speak, emerge as central in the dialogue. Questions raised by the strategic use of silence require a separation amid what Boykin (1986) calls four planes of interaction that occur between the child and school. The narratives in this chapter suggest that the four planes of: “what children do or do not do, what they can or can not do, what they will or will not do or, and what they should or should not do” (p 76) need to be equally examined for adults in the workplace.

Although issues of ‘do’, ‘can’, ‘will’ and ‘should’ are indistinguishable in most school based analyses, Boykin (1986) offers an explanation as to why this is so.

In a culturally homogeneous population, what children actually do in an academic setting is based on what they can do and will do, and on what they understand that they should do. Similarly, what they don’t do follows from what they should not, will not, and cannot do. Because White middle-class children participate in a relatively homogeneous cultural experience, they are likely to do what they can, will and should do. Moreover, what the children themselves believe they should do is likely to be consistent with what their teachers believe: there is a congruence of value and belief. (1986, p 76)

Thus, separating questions of: ‘will’, ‘should’, and ‘do’ from ‘can’, seems hardly necessary when considering homogeneous groups. Yet in reality educational institutions are far more complex in that they bring together a number of diverse groups who are compelled to be there. In these contexts distinguishing between do or do not, will or will not, and should or should not become extremely important. This is because these factors do not often represent ‘can’ or ‘can not’ at all. Combining these facets takes for granted that each is congruent as though individual facets present no conflict for any child who wants to do well at school. Many of the participants grappled with these distinct planes of interaction as students. Currently they continue to consider them as they contemplate the scope and limitations of the programmes in which they are presently working.
Teaching Experience Across Programme Types

Table 9.1

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Key: P = participants

As illustrated in tables 8.1, 8.2 (chapter 8) and 9.1, the women in this sample have experienced a variety of educational options both as students and as teachers. As outlined previously, all participants have experienced teaching in general stream. Six have taught in various types of bilingual programmes, four have experience as Resource Teachers of Maori and four have taught in kura kaupapa Maori. One participant has previously taught in a Native School and another has taught in the Catholic system. Participants three and four (although not having taught across the other programme types) have participated in the establishment, development and management of either taha Maori programmes, bilingual and/or immersion units.

All participants are primary trained. One entered pre-service training under the Maori quota scheme operating in the 60's, one trained as part of a bilingual group reflecting a broader range of options at time of entry, while the remaining six participants attended three year, general stream division A courses. At the time of the interviews the women's teaching experience ranged from 5 years (at the end of 1996) to over thirty years - approximately 130 years teaching experience combined.
The group demonstrates both commonality and diversity of experiences. For example, teaching was chosen as a career pathway for a variety of reasons. Some women entered teaching at the direction of whanau, others were channelled into the profession by institutional agents while still others entered of their own accord. Some participants initially held different occupational aspirations but were dissuaded. Still others unsure of their own ability held the view only brainy people were teachers, a characteristic that they did not ascribe to themselves.

As previously cited, as students, one third of the group experienced either suspension (1), or expulsion (2), while one other spoke of corporal punishment and another of being truant, as students. Yet, all these women continued to seek a career in education. It is unlikely, although unknown, that these types of student experiences would be reflected in other cohorts of educational administrators.

What is common to all these women is their identification as Maori and as teachers. Their willingness to hear, and support each other and their commitment to improving educational outcomes for children in general and Maori children in particular was also a prevailing commonality - although such commonalities do not suggest unqualified agreement about the best way to achieve such goals. The ways in which the women conceptualise improved educational outcomes is consistent with their personal career aspirations, which are couched in terms of collective growth and development, discussed in later sections.

Not one participant limited their discussion to the programme type in which they were operating, nor for that matter, the programmes in which they had teaching experience. Participants' experiences reflected their ongoing interest in Maori educational initiatives across a broad range of programme types in primary sector. Experiences included establishment and teaching in rumaki (Maori immersion), units in general stream, bilingual schools opposed to bilingual units, general stream schools changing
their status to kura kaupapa, and kura kaupapa home school initiatives that later attracted state funding. As one participant pointed out, they represented a more diverse group than originally targeted. As a consequence, and previously noted in chapter five, the cited dialogue is not divided according to programme type, nor does the ensuing discussion necessarily reflect the opinion of the participants currently working in the programme type for which they were originally selected.

None of the women believed that they represented the Maori voice on the issues at hand, or that they necessarily held the authoritative position for all Maori women in the programme types in which they operated. They freely acknowledged that within each of the programmes, variances existed based on a number of personal factors (refer to chapter seven) and contextual factors which actively shaped their experience and practice. Contextual factors ranged from the macro level related to globalisation and the potential detrimental effects on indigenous peoples; this stuff about the globally shrinking world is really dangerous, the concept is dangerous because it actually has the potential to break down cultures and languages, to political issues; the word Political is a word that is thrown around a lot in schools, but its actually used oppressively, you know "we're not political'. What they're in fact saying is that's not where I want you to go. At the micro level issues explicitly related to varying management structures, resource accessibility, community and collegial awareness of Maori issues in education and various demographic factors such as ethnic composition of communities in which schools were located. All these issues were part of a smorgasbord of interrelated factors that combined to affect their experiences.

Narrating success - The women's motivation to succeed

Chapter seven indicated the level of whanau support, particularly the critical role played by women, as contributing to the participants' motivation to succeed. Chapter eight indicated a few institutional mentors and advocates who facilitated access to
knowledge codes (Harker 1985, 1991), encouraged their engagement with institutional discourse, and linked participants to informational networks related to careers (Stanton-Salazar 1997). The chapter also outlined those who acted as institutional agents prepared to tolerate, if not act upon or encourage the development of, the participants’ social critique. Sponsorship was not however, solely based on academic aptitude but often qualified by the women’s potential willingness to integrate the hegemonic ‘can’, ‘will’, ‘should’ and ‘do’ characteristics and mannerisms of the institution.

A critical motivational influence, not represented in the literature, emerged from the data regarding how many of these particular women responded to negative experiences as students. For the majority of these participants the most commonly cited motivational influence derived from institutional contexts paradoxically came from experiences that undermined them. The episodes of uncertainty, confusion and distress brought to the fore in chapter eight, typically evoked silent pledges to prove themselves by showing institutional agents that they could be, at the very least, as good as their peers. The dialogue cited here narrates success not as an individual exercise but as a form of resistance. The crucial institutional factor resisted was the pervasive perception of Maori as deviant and intellectually deficient in institutional contexts.

... being made to feel inadequate but I think that’s what provided the drive for me anyway to succeed and be as good, if not better, than my peers. Yeah, it was funny.

... being marginalised ... And really what we have to recognise is that many of our kids go through that too, so you know, the pressure to conform and the price of not conforming is very high for Maori kids it can be manifested not just one but in many ways. That’s how I feel about it, sheer determination probably did it for me, you know, not necessarily the fact that I wanted to succeed to see what you could do but that I wanted to succeed to show that I could ..

I hated it (secondary school) because I kept doubting my worth as a Maori person and my parents - you know - I had to really work at countering it. I mean prizegiving came around and I got prizes for French and everything else, they didn’t have Maori at the time, but I still hated that period of my life because of the impact it had on me. I’ll never forget the doubting stage of where I came from.
I'd look at the kids and I'd think now you've got a lot over me you're white to begin with, from a wealthy background you have all the social niceties, you know, the clothes and everything else - well - I can beat you academically and I can beat you on the sports field, I think I thought that. I mean, when I look back on it, I knew that's why I was doing it. If I'd have done it for me I think I would have done a lot better but that's what I did to survive really. Racism was rife. In fifth and sixth form I can remember I'd had about six or seven stand up arguments with kids on racism, ... the teachers allowed it to happen I was really surprised actually how lenient they were with me. I think it was one of those things that if they had of come down too hard on me because of the subjects I chose to argue about, they would've been seen to be racists ... so they let it go.

never feeling one hundred percent comfortable ... I know what it did for me and my sisters especially, is that we strove to succeed and we strove to be the best there at school and at the end of the day, we were getting prizes and merit awards ... but we were very competitive in all aspects, sporting, schooling, very competitive... My brother is the oldest but he didn't have the same drive that we did - I don't know if he felt that way, I didn't even bother to ask my sisters if they felt the same way but we definitely all followed the same line (Dialogue drawn from individual interviews).

Underpinning each narrative is an explanation that illustrates their success in terms of the desire to prove their worth by rebelling against the sense of inadequacy and inferiority they experienced. Success is attributed to determination in the face of adversity. Rather than their success providing an endorsement: of meritocratic principles, their grit and determination is played out in silent rebellion against their secondary status, which by default, strengthens their resolve to succeed. The path they travel is complex; fraught at times with contradiction. For example, not only must the group be confronted with institutionally sanctioned cultural slurs that create stress which is related to reduced learning time (Neisser 1986; Fine '91); they must also, at the very least, silently tolerate cultural affronts to attain credentials.

Using, in part, negative influences in order to effect positive outcomes is further evident from the participants’ home experiences. Whanau desire for positive educational outcomes for their children combined with the internalisation of hegemonic view of Maori as somehow deviant, contributes to the convoluted pathways travelled by some.

....that's the trouble with you bloody Maori kids, this is my mum talking as a Maori herself, so you give up. But I know the impetus to succeed from my mum was just as great and I don't think she considered how she was going about it, how she pushed me to succeed in a negative way ... like she could have probably said well,...Oh, you know, you're going to have get in there, it's going to be tough, be determined and that's what's going to get you through but what she chose to do was focus on the negative
and what can I say, it worked... I thought I can bloody do this, you know, I'll show you ... so the grit and the determination sets in (participant individual interview).

Being successful is about much more than what any of these women 'can do', or their academic aptitude. It is more accurately about what they were prepared to do in order to cope with many institutional situations that saw difference and deviance as synonymous.

**Strategies - Negotiating the borders**

Being compelled to cope with school provides a pool of strategies drawn on the work place. While, not all strategies employed by students are seen to be productive in current roles many *coping mechanisms* have their genesis in this period.

I think I learnt a lot about coping at school but I need to learn more the skill of negotiating properly. I mean in primary school my first reaction was to physically attack. That was my first instinct and that's what I did but by form one and two I'd learnt that words can hurt a lot more than anything physical. I had my skirmishes along the way but when I had the disagreement with the teacher in form two it wasn't anything physical, it was verbal. I didn't yell or scream or anything. It was very quiet and calm but it was very cutting. Then I learnt by the time I got to form five and six I'd learnt to debate things and to stand up for principles. I didn't care who it was in front of... and learnt to debate quite vocally about things but then I also learnt that by form six from my encounter with (Jane at the movies - being called a Maori warden) that if they debate with each other and not you, it's more effective. So if you look at the strategies I learnt in effect to refine them as I got older. I mean by that stage when the sister had brought her up to me crying *n* effect it was their hang up about their relationship with me being Maori not mine. The rest of the boarding school had to sort it out and then they came to me and I thought that was a wonderful thing. I mean that wasn't deliberate. It just happened that way, but I learnt that lesson - that if they think that they are in the wrong well it is their wrong, not yours and they need to fix it. Then they do all the yelling and the debating. I s'pose it was just experiences at school that taught me that and home too but, I mean if you look at it, it was a gradual sort of a refinement of coping mechanisms. I mean it wasn’t designed to be like that, it was just the way that it happened - there was no big plan at five to learn these strategies by the end of your seventh form, nothing was a calculated as that but that was what the experiences did - they dealt you things you had to learn to cope with (participant individual interview).

Early strategies cited by participants, typically represent choices made by Maori youth, who, in the main, had little understanding of the complex array of competing and often contradictory ideological positions at work in the places where they were educated. Nevertheless, these women, as children, had to contend with being made aware of their difference as deviance in institutions, where being the same was considered
important. What they did to cope with their institutionally defined differences to achieve educational success is the centre of interest here.

Their coping strategies conform to one of two types; passive and active coping mechanisms. While each type of strategy is treated separately there is enough evidence to suggest that participants often combined or moved between the two categories on different occasions. Equally, the participants’ narratives suggest that within both categories there is considerable scope for diversity of expression. It should also be noted, that not all strategies lead participants down a smooth path toward successful school outcomes. The number of ways institutional forces combine and interlock to potentially exclude the participants, meant that even placing first in seventh form exams (in a large urban co-educational school) did not guarantee access to institutional rewards or retention within the system. The passive and active strategies outlined here pertain specifically to the participants use of silence.

Passive Strategies: Making Silence

The first type of strategy involved accommodating the system, what Boykin (1986) calls passive strategies. As one student perceptively put it; being given a plate and accepting it, with no questions asked. The innocent acceptance of institutional discourse by either choosing to ignore, or "forgo consideration of the inherent oppressiveness of the system" (Boykin 1986, p 73) is often defined by participants in terms of silence. As noted by one participant many of the women were educated at a time when You never talked about that sort of thing, You just got on. You were a very criticised race of people. Boykin suggests for Afro-American children these passive strategies require a subservient (or Uncle Tom) posture. Compliance is thus used not to represent what the participants 'can do' but, reflects an understanding of what they 'will or will not do', and their analysis of what the institution contends they 'should or should not do' in order to withstand at least the harshest manifestations of racial
oppression. Commonly this involved institutions making silence being met with silence.

For the participants, silence was known to be used in a number of ways by themselves and by Maori communities. Little of this dialogue indicated that silence meant agreement. Generally, silence as a coping strategy was spoken about in terms of: shut up; shutting down; hanging down, in order to provide themselves with a psychologically safe place where contrary views of the world and opinions could be held. As students, this involved an understanding that teachers, in general, were uncomfortable with extended wait times.

You just stand there and shut up. What every Maori kid does, you know, you stand there if you don’t want to do or say something - just hang down. You knew back then that if you waited long enough ... they’d choose somebody else quite smartly. And I learnt that ... being thought of as dumb was better than being thought of as lippy (participant individual interview).

Discovering that teachers are not comfortable with silence or gaps in conversations is contrary to institutional agents commonly assuming silence, on the part of Maori children, means either agreement or lack of understanding. Even though the participant believed the teacher decoded silence as sign of being dumb, it was preferable to breaking silence and being considered lippy offering their views in situations where ‘you were (a lone swimmer) swimming against the tide’.

For the majority of participants, silence became the means for deflecting attention, a way of avoiding controversy, a means of holding contrary views safely and as a space in which participants could; sit there and listen and sought of figure out the power plays. One participant cites an incident at primary school involving her sister eliciting the support of silence and her attempts to break it.

(P.) I can remember we had a Christmas show and they wanted a Maori item and so they wanted my sister and I to sing Pokarekareana, now there were other Maori kids there but they chose her and I. Now we weren’t good singers and she refused to so she acted dumb to get out of it and I just said I don’t want to sing it.

(L.) What do you mean by acted dumb, what did she do?
(P.) Well she just withdrew into herself again and she just hung her head and said nothing, it wasn't stubbornness because we knew that's when teachers pick on you when they think that you're being stubborn. It challenges their authority, but she just put her head down and acted really extremely shy. She wasn't shy, she treated people very indifferently ...(participant individual interview).

Though the sisters' educational experiences and educational outcomes were not discussed further, appearing shy and acquiescent provides an image of compliance likely to evoke teacher sympathies. The participant however, unwilling to acquiesce, ultimately in later years would experience expulsion.

Five of the women indicate that by high school silence associated with passive type strategies involved significant changes of character: I retreated, I wouldn't put my hand up, I wouldn't volunteer anything; I went from being gay and extroverted to being quiet introverted really.

Once participants became teachers there were times when passive forms of silence were also evoked to cope with a variety of situations. This was particularly so (though not solely) for the women in early stages of their careers as they did try to fit in the patterns of the ideal teacher according to training college.

I was very confident in terms of how I operated in the classroom and there was nothing, in time allocations, or classroom practice that I was doing different during the time that I was their teacher. However, that was a time where they didn't have to cope with the issues that the reformations brought, they didn't have to deal with the renaissance at its peak, and it may not be at its peak now but, they didn't have to deal with those issues, where we were on the news and it became more apparent that Maori people had concerns and that their silence did not mean agreement, that their silence actually meant disagreement. They didn't have to deal with those issues, so because they didn't have to deal with them, I didn't have to deal with them (participant paired interview).

Attempting to fit the mould, as young teachers, meant having to simultaneously be the same but different where both positions were defined by hegemonic norms. Being the same demanded that they replicate planning, pedagogical and assessment practices of the dominant group. Allowable differences reduced being Maori, in institutional contexts, to endorsing stereotypes where expressions of being Maori, such as the development of cultural groups, posed no threat to the status quo. Institutional
discourse, while providing the linguistic scope to support prevailing norms and theories, concurrently silence through limiting access to theory and language to express counter-hegemonic discourse (Friere 1994). These positions are communicated in the reflections of two women discussing early teaching experiences, during individual interviews.

I taught a year, then I came back and finished my degree. And ... I thought well, what am I going to do? I mean I'd been out teaching for a year and I reflected on my experiences and one thing I learnt was, for a Maori person to walk through a gate of a Kura, they thought written on their forehead was: plays the guitar, sings, does the taha Maori programme and speaks Maori.

True to form, that's what they thought. I thought oh my god, you know, I'm the most musically dormant of Maori people, you know, like, if someone's harmonising by me, I can't hold my part in my head and these people actually think I can sing. When they get me, they think I can sing, they think I can strum the old rakurak and they think I speak Maori.

So I thought after a year of experiencing what Pakeha expect of Maori, that I'd better find out about a bit of Maori language (participant paired interview).

... the racist attitudes as far as knowledge is concerned, what I mean there, is that the teachers I have worked with have always taken lock stock and barrel the theory and the knowledge that they've learnt at training college and in fact at University, most of the teachers I've taught with continue doing papers and they use that as the weapon to almost put you in your place to suggest that our knowledge as a Maori is inferior or is never good enough. Also working with teachers and often being discredited because of the way I work with children when I actually feel I couldn't at that time put a theory to what I could see, how the kids were learning and not being given that credit for the way I planned and the way I evaluated children.

When I was a young teacher it was not good enough because it didn't fit into the boundaries of the theories at that time. But when I look at what people are doing now, they were the same things that I was always arguing about as a young teacher, that our children learn in different ways whether it is because of their race or their socioeconomic class. I always knew ... that there were children who learnt better visually, well that wasn't really emphasised, wasn't even talked about really when we were at training college. That there were children who were more practical. That there were children who ... can move in and out of those particular learning styles. I've always maintained that, but I never had those words I suppose to justify what I was doing to the senior teachers at that stage.

I knew that there were other people who were experiencing those types of things and that Maori children were greatly undervalued by teachers. There was a period when I did try to fit in the patterns of the ideal teacher according to training college but it didn't work for me or the Maori kids I worked with (participant paired interview).

Innovative ways of responding to children were undermined because they did not reflect prevalent theories or institutionalised knowledge codes. Once their own philosophies of education began to crystallise some of the women were surprised that they did not question the extent of their institutionalisation earlier. Frequently, participants saw their own student experiences mirrored by Maori children in schools.
For many of the women, being part of the system and observing the way it operates provided the first opportunity to realise that the marginalising processes that they experienced in silence were not unique to them. *It didn’t work for me or the Maori kids I worked with*.

Much of their critique remained in the space provided by silence not only because they recognised it was counter to ideological assumptions entrenched through hegemonic processes, but also because few discussions actively encouraged their counter-hegemonic views.

Silence came from being in a crowd and not having anyone to talk to. This type of silence was not about their inability to speak, Boykin’s issue of ‘can’, rather it was about their assessment of situations in which they were unlikely to be heard.

... it’s these schools like kura kaupapa that provide the only places where we can get the chance to sit down and talk about issues concerning us. I mean if I have got a problem I have got no hesitations, I will ring (another tumuaki) and bug her until she gives me the answer or tells me how I should address a particular issue that has arisen. But just sitting down and talking issues through that come up for you is what’s important. When we are at Akatia, that’s what we do all the time. It’s that collegiality that we don’t get in other forums. Other than Akatia and say like a Maori group, there is really no other forum, and we know that the Principals in lots of areas, they have meetings - there’s a cluster here and a cluster over there but they don’t address or even want to focus on our concerns (participant paired interview).

The hardest thing for you was you were on your own. You didn’t have anyone else you could talk to. In those types of scenarios especially in bilingual units if your the only class you are on your own. And you really have to think twice about why people stay in the kaupapa ... it’s certainly not the monetary gain (participant paired interview).

An interesting job (as an RTM) but a very lonely one, once again I suppose because you’re out there trying to do trying to do the work by yourself you have your other teachers who you were supposed to support and yet you were on the road four or five times a week by yourself (participant paired interview).

This form of silence was prevalent in general stream and bilingual units attached to general stream schools. Silence was contingent on the women’s assessment of a number of factors; for example: the significance of the issue at hand, *If I didn’t say something those kids were going to be out*; the pervasiveness of issues, *when you realise this isn’t happening just now and then*; the likelihood of contrary views being considered mediated their discisions to be silent or conversely to break silence.
Breaking silence was mediated by knowing that constantly speaking out against inequities attracted resistance and backlash. Silence at these times was not about saving face or *self aggrandisement* but about accessing space for Maori children. The need to balance collegial support from people who would facilitate access to key institutional resources with supporting Maori children currently in the system was contingent to a degree on selective silences and compliance. Speaking up *too loud, or too often* put participants in situations where

... you were just banging your head against a brick wall and you were being labelled all sorts of lovely descriptive words ... (participant individual interview).

It's always the holder of that institution. Like in my case it is very clear other teachers and senior management, staff, the Principal, Board of Trustees, Ministry of Education, ERO, the very people who hold those institutions together so that they will survive they are the challenge (participant paired interview).

Participants while working in mainstream and bilingual units were drawn at times into silence as a response to the pervasive and interchangeable nature of issues that confronted them. In instances where multifaceted and multilevelled barriers were identified, selective silences allowed participants to channel their energies into specific areas where change could be initiated. For example some focused their attention on the attitudes of colleagues as the first point of institutional contact experienced by Maori children. Being aware that

... basically most teachers, are not intentionally rude, not intentionally insensitive, not intentionally ignorant, not intentionally naive, not intentionally racist, and yet in practice all those things (participant paired interview).

... you had to employ different strategies for the different situations you worked in. ... no two schools were the same ... I was moving around a whole lot of schools and I guess ... you'd have about four schools to visit and in this particular school the issue might have been developing the staff to address a bilingual programme. In this school, it might have been the community to come on board, and in this school you have a strong management who believed in the bilingual so you know it was far easier delivering programmes in this school, than that school (participant paired interview).

Silence was also about recognising small incremental steps as progress toward long term goals and being aware that Maori centred objectives could be derailed or sabotaged by a variety of factors. Interestingly, in some respects it is reminiscent of the
half pie was ka pai position (noted in the previous chapter) in reverse; accepting that half an effort was as much as could be expected from colleagues who needed to make major paradigm shifts (indicated by other participants). Conversely it could be read as a display of understanding the difficulties inherent in looking at other ways of knowing - an understanding which had been previously denied these women.

These teachers had a genuine need and a genuine desire to impart, and to acquire some knowledge and pass that on to their students ... they were wonderful learners ... the funny thing was you would try your hardest with Te Reo and teach them the proper pronunciation but you'd come back the next week and it was all screwed up but they tried, you can't ask for more than that and so we'd put it onto a tape and said now really listen to the tape, and you'd come back the next week and the kids would have got it but the teacher hadn't so you'd just have to go with that (participant individual interview).

It is working. People are learning, they are stepping outside their comfort zones just a little bit and at this stage I can't ask for anymore really. I think it's quite a scary thing for some people to actually be seen to understand this Maori way, you know (participant paired interview).

I'm not saying that my Pakeha colleagues don't have that empathy but sometimes there are children who see the white face and see authority and think, I've got to buck it, here's the system I'm not going to do that, they don't automatically react that way to a brown face (participant individual interview).

For one of the participants cited above her support of colleagues' growth and development was at the personal cost of her own Maori sensibilities that required her to repress anger and hurt caused by unintentional culturally insensitive words actions and lack of support returned. The dialogue cited is drawn from a paired interview during a discussion about staff development. The dialogue is picked up after the first participant outlines inequities in professional development provisions through a scenario where a colleague receives paid leave to attend a regional rugby tournament, while she is denied unpaid leave to participate in national kapahaka competitions. She then asks,

(P1.)... If the schools are really there to support this Maori thing, how come rugby is more important? You said your staff is supportive (name) anything like that ever happen to you?

(P2.) No... um ... well ... yeah, sort off, yeah ... ok. We had an incident where a colleague who was brought up by her grandmother, had to go and look after Nanny. So my colleague (after getting the requested Doctors Certificates) goes and looks after her Nanny, who a few days later dies. Myself and another Maori colleague on the staff, are waiting to hear from our friend because we know that the tangi will be soon. We start getting our classes organised so that we can go at a moment's notice. We arrive at school one morning and find that Nanny had died, we had missed the tangi. Our friend came back to school very soon after. We hadn't even gone to the tangi and we felt so bad. What was even worse was that the hierarchy knew. She rang back to say my
mother has passed away. And we couldn’t be there. Not because we had other commitments, nobody told us we just heard in conversation in the staffroom.

"Oh... mum died."

"When?"

"Oh the tangi was Saturday."

This was Monday. We just felt so, so upset. We had a tangi of our own at school, the two of us just cried for our friend because we couldn’t be there.

So just a little bit of intolerance, I think, just, well a lot of intolerance. Total lack of understanding. Totally missed the plot actually.

And I think that’s an important lesson and something that I have seen so many times, that often, the hierarchy who are Pakeha will only see that an incident like that just affects the one person. Whereas, no, there are those of us who give just as much support, she’s our whaea too and we are there to support her as well. We know what she’s going through. This is a hard time. We need to be there. She doesn’t go through it by herself. On a totally different agenda.

(I.) How did you handle the comments in the staffroom?

(P2.) You know the ways that we communicate, we just sat and stared and said nothing. Sat. And stared. And just cried. We didn’t have to say anything. We really didn’t have to say anything. We just cried for our friend. So now, if there is a tangi we cover for each other. We ring each other up (participant paired interview).

The sense of frustration and anger mounted during this discussion as the participant struggled with internal conflict and contradiction. Situated in a position of responsibility where the participant’s sense of leadership and authority required her to support colleagues growth and development also provided another form of silence. Her reluctance to identify the lack of reciprocity from non-Maori colleagues appeared to be derived from institutional discourse where speaking out is considered unethical. Once silence was broken, by the probing questions posed by the other participant, the mounting sense of disquiet appeared in qualifying statements; just a little bit of intolerance, I think, just, well a lot of intolerance. Total lack of understanding. Totally missed the plot actually.

Silence was also about active attempts to be heard. Being selective about when to speak meant they at times they tolerated racist jokes or colleagues who actively character assassinated Maori children in terms of their ethnicity. Colleagues neither politicised nor sensitised to the issues, or the previous experiences of the women, openly displayed their Pakeha-centric views. At times this was tolerated in silence to avoid claims of crying wolf. In other words, some recognised that if they said
something every time they were culturally affronted people would stop listening altogether.

... these kids previously had been little ratbags because nobody else could control them, only because nobody else had actually ever listened to them. They were Maori kids and I mean like you had the typical comments coming through in the staffroom like, "that kid's been to kohanga reo and can't speak English what do they do at that kohanga reo, doesn't know a word of English, can't even read and ... ". Things like that, and I learnt straight away these people looked for weaknesses first with no consideration of these kids strengths (participant paired interview).

It was frustrating in bilingual continually having to defend your position because there were rifts between the staff. They couldn't understand why the bilingual had to have X amount of money over what the other areas got, that was one thing, so money was an issue. And secondly, they couldn't understand why the ratio in the bilingual classes was a bit lower than the mainstream classes. But, one of the things that they could never appreciate was the double workload that we had to carry. They couldn't appreciate or see where we were coming from. Everything was there for them. All they had to do was plan and execute it. But we had to go and find it first, translate it, plan it and execute it but they couldn't appreciate that difference (participant paired interview).

Active Strategies

The second type of strategy is more active in nature. These strategies arise out of resistance to oppression (Boykin, 1986; Fine, 1991), often placing participants at odds (either psychologically, emotionally or physically) with the system. Active strategies for students and teachers included components of silence, where shutting up meant that their critique of the system became an internal conversation with self. Some participants engaged in 'dissembling'(Boykin 1986), whereby they conceal their true feelings (of hurt, frustration or anger) and provide a pretence, or present themselves as a chameleon (Bravette 1994), to the outside world of oppression.

Active silence further allowed some participants to sit there and listen and sort of figure out the power plays. Boykin refers to this as a 'get-over' strategy whereby minority students recognise that success requires playing a kind of game as they strive to 'outfox the power brokers and credentialling agents, typically by using cunning, expediency and trickery' (1986, p. 73) in order to gain the stamps of approval that signify success.
A different strategy from playing the game, was to resist oppression by defying the system. Resistance in this sense was derived from the attitude; if they’re not going to leave me alone, I’ll give them something to pay attention to. Reading silences, tone and body language and the frequent mismatches between each plane of interaction motivates three other participants (as students) to break their silence. Breaking silence to offer alternative views was generally not well received, read by teachers as confrontational, or being subjective. In contrast to making silence, breaking silence distances those who used such strategies from institutional support, and potential institutional advocates. In the following quote a curious mix of emulation and integration of two cultural communication styles is evident. There is a mix of strong body language and forthrightness used by women in the participants whanau, and
tone, particularly sarcasm drawn from institutional experiences.

Oh, I used to always sit at the back of the room and when they asked you questions and you didn’t know or didn’t feel comfortable with what was being suggested - well - it was always my facial expression that would portray how I felt. It was very arrogant and very defiant, that’s one thing they can remember about me was the defiance. Even to this day, if I look at people everything just goes straight into my face. So they would avoid me, they wouldn’t ask me because if that didn’t work, if they kept plugging me for a response I would stand up with my hands on my hips and I would challenge them. I would want them to challenge me and they knew not to come anywhere near me because if they were going to push me I was going to push them back and they knew that. I just wasn’t going to wear being put down or being made to look foolish. So I actually showed defiance and I would use my voice because Pakeha people, I noticed, were very sarcastic and so I would use that, but I would put everything I had into the word that I said to almost make it sound like a slap and I know I learnt that from there. I learnt that Pakehas move away from confrontation, they don’t carry on, whereas when you’re with Maori they just keep coming towards you and that doesn’t work, but nice middle class Pakehas don’t handle confrontation like that well, they don’t know what to do... So body language first and tone second and then I’d move into them I knew Pakehas don’t like us getting close and I knew that just moving into their space would really intimidate them (participant paired interview).

Breaking silence or providing a counter-hegemonic (Freire 1996) discourse emerges when participants are pushed to the outer extremities of their tolerance levels. When this happens it proves to be detrimental to the participants’ length of stay in a system that already considers their presence as ‘temporary and probationary’ (Fine 1991, p. 60).
As students, the participants who held contrary views but remained silent, were able to avoid the harshest forms of institutional punishment. Once qualified as teachers, selective silences decreased the distance between themselves and those in positions of power, particularly where being vocal attracted the label of being radical. The participants as students who held oppositional views but ignored institutional messages about compliance, committed a form of educational and occupational suicide in situations where institutional power was paramount.

Survivalist strategies often manifest in defensive responses which furnish the means to literally cut people off, both teachers and peers. Curt answers, and silence particularly combined with eye contact, were often misread across the cultural boundaries. Silence with eye contact did not mean 'attentive behaviour' when these participants were children, rather, it was encoded in one of two ways. For some, it was a silent plea not to pursue certain types of questions or, conversely for others, it became the forerunner to challenge; push me and I'll push you back; as a way of indicating tolerance levels were being breached.

I knew what was coming obviously because I wasn't the first person asked so in a way while they were going around the classroom and sharing the respective parents occupations, I handled it in a way, where I figured out what I would do is matter of faculty state what they did, but because I was so defensive, I put in that curt remark at the end about - they're the two most intelligent people I've probably met. So, I didn't like attention that came to me but when it did I s'pose I deliberately became defensive and really gave them a message of, this is the situation ... it was really delivered as almost an ultimatum, so don't ask me any more questions, do you know what I mean? (participant individual interview).

I literally cut people off. Now the perception of the rest my Maori peers in relation to me, was really another battle, because they saw that I was in this professional class, they made assumptions about me. Like really that, well I s'pose for want of a better expression, you know, she's a potato, ... Basically what that means is, maybe she's brown on the outside but that's the extent of being Maori and for all good intents and purposes in this educational institution she's white - so you have the kid basically in a situation where on the one hand, in a professional class feeling totally displaced and alienated from her people and the very people that she needs to socialise with are also the people who alienate and displace her in a different way. But effecting the same result in this way, interesting isn't it (participant individual interview).

While the contradictions offered students were marked and often handled in silence, participants recognised paradox in their own professional experience. In dealing with
Maori issues many found they had to struggle with systems that wanted a Maori presence but failed to recognise or support commitments that were contingent on them sustaining their Maori integrity.

Breaking silence as teachers drew from a different motivational base to the survivalist strategies employed by participants when they were students. Whereas breaking silence both as students and as teachers emerges from resistance to many taken for granted assumptions, the shift in relative power allows teachers a louder voice in institutional settings. In addition, as adults, teachers, mothers and auntsies many of the women drew from cultural notions of reciprocity; giving back to the future in recognition of what one has received in the past. Breaking silence as teachers became an intermediary step to the women positioning themselves, for want of a better word, as change agents (Foster 1986).

Paradigm shifts: Finding Face and Making Space.

The participants are aware that they are successful products of a system that operates in ways contrary to Maori philosophical orientations. Each raised questions about the complex and obscure functions of schooling. Two women talked about education as an explicit political act tightly bound to the politics of difference and silence. My Principal said that to me, 'your job is not a political job, Maori education isn't political.' Then I want to know what the heck is it? I mean if we are not making a statement that challenges the present system in education, we're not making any sort of statement at all. Others confronted personally posed question of themselves; at times I question my own level of institutionalisation. Sometimes I wonder what I'm doing, if I'm really making a difference here, because if you're not ,well, you might as well get out, you should step aside and make room for others to carry on; one of the biggest things for me is to recognise my own used by date .... Still others, frankly recounted experiences where questions had also been directed at themselves by other Maori pointedly
asking, *when will you be captured by the status quo?* At different times each candidly ask hard questions of each other; *do you really think we're making any real difference?* and the system in which they worked; *why does the Ministry continually pit us (the different programme types) against each other - we're not going to get anywhere competing with each other when really we're all meant to be rowing the same waka in the same direction.*

The women recognised that while they saw themselves advocating change, they worked in institutions that are perceived as problematic by many Maori, and trained in pre-service courses that did not adequately prepare them for, nor actively support, their present positioning within it.

Half the group attribute attaining positions of responsibility to sheer determination, confident in the personal support of whanau networks when within the system few institutional mentors or advocates suggested taking on positions of responsibility. In contrast two other women previously held deputy principal positions in the schools in which they won principalships. In addition to whanau support these two women cited the previous principals as actively encouraging them to applying for the positions they were leaving. For another participant attaining a principalship was about being actively recruited, as a year three teacher. For another participant, in her third year teaching gaining a position of responsibility was about being *landed with the responsibility of a senior teacher* after a particular set of circumstances left the syndicate devoid of senior staff.

The following dialogue indicates that winning senior jobs (when they were actively sought) involved the same tenacity used to overcome would be glass ceilings and institutional barriers negotiated by participants as they progressed through the system as students. One participant called it *knowing your stuff and knowing the stuff of those who would interview you.*
... it was time for a change so I started applying for principalships of schools. I sent away for the principals' information packages from prospective schools, and I had to be very selective cos I had two things in my mind. I was an assistant principal. which most people associate with junior school - anything from new entrants to the J3's and I was Maori, and I was a - would be first time principal so I thought to myself when I read these packages, I considered the realities of being an assistant principal, being a Maori, and potentially being a first time principal, and I had to ask myself - what school will take a risk with...the potential to be an excellent principal versus proven ability even if mediocre. Would they take mediocre proven or would they take potential excellence, and that was the gamble. So, I thought to myself, what schools would do that? So as I looked through the Gazette I took particular notice of the area because as soon as I got the right socioeconomic grouping, I decided probably anything between decile 1-3 would take a gamble on me. And those ... lower socioeconomic area schools tend to be most of our people, or mostly Polynesian. It's not because they're Polynesian or Maori that they're there, it's because they're in a lower socioeconomic group - most Non-Maori people tend to confuse the :wo. (participant, individual interview)

... appointments without a doubt are affected by who we are - you know - Maori. I guarantee if any one of us three wanted to apply for the principalship in ( an affluent area) we would probably be lucky to be shortlisted for an interview, and that would be no matter what qualifications or experience we had. (participant, paired interview)

I was determined to be a principal and I prepared myself for it. I made sure I knew what the legal requirements were, personal requirements, curriculum and property and I made sure that I had some understanding of how boards had to operate, and I knew what areas I was weak in, but I felt that I had enough networks and I knew where to go to get the information and support... so it was a bit of homework and I would say that my involvement in the New Zealand Education Institute prepared me in a major way because I got to look at a number of areas and how they impacted on the schools nationally so I didn't just have a narrow view ... I had a view of my school, our school, yeah our school, that's what institutionalisation does to you, you're used to using personal pronouns, but our school in the bigger scheme of life in New Zealand and particularly for Maori kids so working in the institute probably assisted in preparing me as well - definitely in Maori education, and looking at the myriad of issues affecting our people. So I went for this job ... they were taking a big risk with me, I felt like I had a personal stake because these were our kids. I knew what had to happen and I knew for them to succeed and be successful, academically and culturally successful, I had to shift minds and it was the hardest thing. And in the end I didn't shift minds because they shifted. What I had to do as a professional was to make sure that what I did was ethical and that I would provide support for them, and then really they couldn't make the change, I couldn't stop that happening but I knew that the bottom line was, these kids are on the back foot to start with, that is how monocultural systems perceive them and that is how the operating world would perceive them. And, who are the people to make the change, not the kids, it had to be us, professionals first, we're the big people for goodness sake then have another look at the kids. But the situation was compounded by lots of different things ... and the only thing that got me through that really, now that I look back, was rightly or wrongly, what I definitely knew was things had to change for these kids. The kids could wear you down but even at my lowest ebb I realised that was my problem, the kids didn't have any problem with how things were, that was mine, so those were the major changes for me that had major implications ... I had to put up with comments from professionals who were in the ministry and union, saying, "so ... I've noticed that (x number) of the appointed staff have left". I said, "yes they have", and they were offering assistance to me while implying something else. I basically said to the person talking with me, "I will not kiss the ground that any teacher walks on because they've chosen to teach at our Kura ... you give us the teachers that are intelligent and have a particular expertise, to work with these types of children and they'll be fine. These children have a special character" I said, "and it's not religion..." So what I can say to you, is that throughout the whole ordeal or process, I think orceal is a better word, to tell the truth, I've been ethical and professional and provided support but in the end those teachers made the decision to move of their own volition. ... But the bottom line for me is that, if teachers aren't there for kids and in particular our kids, then really there's not much you can do. I mean, you're as ethical and professional as you can be within a framework, always mindful our kids can't afford to wait, they've waited and endured particular types of
education and institutionalisation for their entire school experience. (participant, individual interview)

As personal educational philosophies began to evolve participants began to question the ability of different programmes to effect change. These discussions were less about facilitating their own career paths, having more to do with creating and fostering institutional space for Maori youth. They freely talked of their visions and aspirations. Many of these were not talked about in an individual sense but became tightly bound to their ideas of education's potentialities; what schools could and should provide for Maori. Achieving the 'could' and 'should' was tied to an obligation to give back; I'm not talking about self aggrandisement. Giving back as indicated in the previous section was not lineally defined but couched in future growth and development. The future was represented and physically present in the generation of children with whom they had daily contact.

It's funny, even on a bad day though you notice it's that giving back to children and the parents giving back their heritage that keeps you going. That's why our whakatauki is the way it is kia whakahoki te mana. That's what it's all about just to gather back. (participant, paired interview)

Giving back in a sense was about returning or making reparation for institutional injustices that they wanted no part in replicating. Each participant contemplated systematic change. While the motivation to change drew the group together, the order of priority and emphasis placed on different factors varied.

Views of change

Being cognisant of difference and how difference is perceived in institutional contexts is woven through the two preceding chapters and the earlier sections of this one. While many of the discussions where animated, none more so than when the topic of change arose. Those discussions evoked a range of responses whereby some were optimistic and prepared to effect change and respond to proactive measures irrespective of their source.
I'm confident to debate issues with just about anybody and yet I still keep my mind open. I'm still open to really anything that will bring about positive change for our particular children and the aim would be to capitalise on any window of opportunity, should it become available and to embrace it and to pursue ruthlessly, any strategy or piece of information that's going to achieve the ultimate goal for Maori kids and that is to increase their life chances... the only thing that's constant is changes. (participant, paired interview)

Others however were pensive, sure that change was needed but not yet sure of any one finite structure that would serve the diverse realities of Maori.

I'm still mulling all that over what the structure should look like. Even after 20 years out teaching, since I was born really, I'm still trying to figure out what's there and why. I've had ideas but I don't even know what the structure to help us is going to look like, I'm still looking and trying to weigh it up in my own mind, trying to fathom it because as a people, as an indigenous peoples, we are changing so fast as we have always done but I see different things happening and for me it's always a dilemma to try and balance my views with what I can see and try and make some sense of it. How do we move on, how do we get there, what do we put in place to get there. How are we suppose to achieve that dream where our kids have real chances and real opportunities that don't require them to become brown Pakehas... It's important to look and see what's happening and listen to lots of people and try and work out in your mind what's happening because it's not worth trying to guide people in a direction if they can't see what's there. I mean we have a vision that is enshrined in seeing us as whanau, hapu and iwi members, how do we make the vision a reality is the challenge. (participant, paired interview)

Some expressed weariness and ongoing scepticism, particularly when change involved tikanga in institutional contexts and where the locus of control resided outside Maori control.

Today's society where some of our tikanga get overlapped and we tend to forget what it really means. And that's why I have, difficulty at times with rangatahi trying to operate in a Maori kaupapa. I'm trying to operate a Maori kaupapa in a Pakeha system. (participant, paired interview)

In contrast others saw tikanga as fluid while the philosophical core provided the constant.

... as far as Maori management I believe we do have styles that are more friendly to us but I mean it's like everything else like our people's tikanga it was the rules that we lived by our lore l. o. r. e. at the time that's what our tikanga is and it changed, it had to change, your environment changed you had to change the tikanga. I'm not saying that your beliefs or your philosophy changed. The philosophy that was behind lore would have been the same, that was the constant. But all this thing about tikanga, you shouldn't change it is rubbish. How else did you get from a race of people coming over to things like going onto a marae with paake or tu atu, tu mai, how else would you have got two different ways of doing (except for whanau or hapu making choices) that was the changing of tikanga. So as far as I'm concerned some Maori management systems should be changing with the time to suit us it's rubbish about us going back into those little mud huts and grass skirts, we would have changed. A lot of people said that the Pakeha brought technology and all the changes well trading did and we were trading and that's how you improve on anything through trade and meeting new people. I really do think if we hadn't been colonised I think we would treat a lot of things differently and the other thing which is saddening I think we would not have lost as much as we did. I think we would have developed in a far superior way than we have at the moment because we're still in that servant sort of a stage as we are and that's the biggest thing about colonisation that I have problems with is the fact that they robbed us of so much
of our heritage that we'll never ever get back again and it's that knowledge and that understanding of who we are and who we come from that's so important. (participant, paired interview)

Attempting to effect change also required knowing the rules of the game.

I know for me going in there I was very clear about my identity and my role but it puts me at loggerheads with the framework, not only within my school but within the whole area of education and you are constantly battling, you are constantly having to revise, you are constantly having to restrategise, your long term goals always remain, but every day, every hour is constantly adjusting. (participant, paired interview)

The group were unanimous agreeing that systematic change was needed. Discussion focused on knowing what to change, identifying goals that would effect desired outcomes, the need to monitor change and the potential hindrances that made effecting change problematic.

Knowing what to change

The primary theme underpinning the discussions about change focused on changing mindsets; prevailing discourse that persistently situated Maori in institutional contexts as being somehow inferior. Where facets of Maori culture were seen to be in addition to structures and processes (rather than fundamental to the core business of schools), participants remained sceptical of colleagues’ commitment to change, aware that for the majority of their colleagues commitment towards a Maori contribution was contingent on initiatives that did not encroach on school structure or processes. More extensive initiatives were met with resistance by many who did not believe more substantial change would positively contribute to the educative process.

Changing mindsets, particularly of non-Maori colleagues was about moving beyond deficit modes of thought and the development of stereotypical strengths.

... what these people couldn’t see was that you couldn’t crack the cycle with these kids with a particular uniqueness, the same way you could crack the cycle with other children. So basically it requires a paradigm shift, a whole new way of looking at these kids and say, well okay that’s where they are in this particular area can we deliver in their strength? (participant, individual interview)
... most teachers can't deliver to our kids strengths. They can not deliver and take them beyond singing at primary school, when they get to high school it's too late, unless they have the personal commitment and burning desire to be a musician. I mean this is definitive stuff but in general the majority of teachers can not deliver or extend their cultural and their aesthetic innate talents. The major barrier, as far as I was concerned, to the kids, in effecting positive outcomes in education is really a lot of teachers, by saying that I recognise I have to put in the work too. You have to find people that are willing to work with teachers in order to enskill them. The urgency of everything is accentuated because you think of our kids being pushed to fail everyday - this school has given me experience in ethical dilemmas that I just don't want to know about anymore.

However, we work through the issues and really if you want to succeed with our kids, what I tell our teachers now is, the probability is when you back our kids into a corner they're going to do one of two things - they're going to submit or they're going to come out fighting. My experience in the short time that I have observed these students at (this kura) is that they will not submit, you back them into a corner and you publicly humiliate them, you takahi their Mana and their Mauri you're going to pay the price and you might say that's unfair but the point is you're the big person, the expectations are upon you to change, you don't like the behaviour - change the programme and sure there are exceptions to that rule, but the point of fact is if you can't do anything for the ones that you can't handle, the majority are still there waiting to be taught, so start doing something for them. But the bottom line is we have to get teachers in front of our kids.

We find that we have to bite the bullet in some instances because there is no doubt a school employs the best person available, but of course everything's relative, it's the best person Available within a shrinking pool and questionable quality. (participant, individual interview)

... my niche is in Maori education and it is to address those inequities and to build within Maori children particularly, a pride of who they are and what they are and to build within them that determination to achieve ... I've always had this philosophy with Non-Maori, I'm as good as you, you're no better than me, we both have faults and we need to recognise each other, our strengths and our weaknesses. And that's what I've tried to build within children, is the respect for each other no matter what race they are. I think that's another important value that children need to develop ... (participant, individual interview)

We're still outspoken but we've found another way to address the issues and you've got another lot coming through that were like us ... a cycle coming full circle, I think it might be fair to say that those ones that are coming through now, we probably in some small way had a part to play in that because we've tried to make spaces in the system where they could believe in themselves, to be proud of who they are fight for their rights and you see that's what's coming but they're addressing it in their way, we addressed it in our way. I guess it's a stage of development in terms of addressing self determination and we've come through that developmental period and now we're at another stage of development and we're saying, here is another way that we can address it. In order to create changes, you have to be part of the system, so you have to get within to make changes. You have to be in there to create the changes you can't create them from the outside. (participant, individual interview)

Change was focused on excellence and getting the best for children in order to get the best from them. Ideological change was the primary issue, change the way people think about these kids and they'll start to identify for themselves some of the other things that need to change too.

Identifying goals
Effecting change was contingent on being able to identify goals that would achieve the desired outcomes. The participants commonly talked about changing resource allocations, specific timetabling structures, curricula content, pedagogical practices and assessment methods. Identified changes also varied according to contextual factors, that included for example, people, places, incidents and the institutional cultures in which they worked. Knowing your focus was an important factor. The dialogue suggested change needed to occur simultaneously at a variety of levels in ways that included all with a vested interest in education.

Some of the women focused particularly on staff issues.

If you want to work in this Kura you have to have intelligence and you have to have grit. How you interact and how you behave with these children and how you treat them is really important and that's not to say we don't feel like giving them a size twelve up the demiere at times, hell you do! But when that becomes the norm as a thought process, or when you're constantly publicly humiliating kids and when I say constantly, if you do it three times a day that's three times too many, then we need to do something to affect positive change and I have to realise that sometimes people can not make the paradigm shift required.

Setting goals were also discussed in terms of short term goals that would instrumentally lead to the achievement of long term objectives.

The school I have here was a predominantly Non-Maori school it also served a purpose for me as a Maori to achieve a key decision making position in a predominantly Non-Maori community, and you see you could sew some seeds there in that particular school but the strong desire was always for me to come back into a Maori community, just to put that in its right context, over the thirty years plus in education, since graduating most of it has been in Maori communities and Maori schools but I have also had the experience of the other side of the fence, so coming here, mainstream the Principal and I decided on a ten year plan and that was to develop the bilingual cos they already had a bilingual Whānau, so the both of us developed it into immersion, to completely immerse the school. Those were the goals for this particular school. We have a vision and I feel we're achieving it, ... it's a struggle but you see I go back to my upbringing and draw on that determination to achieve.

Participants talked about the complexity of issues, realising that there were no easy or quick solutions. Previous approaches were seen to treat serious issues as though they were passing hiccups in a system that required little in the way of fundamental change. The group had a sense of optimism that this view was changing and that positive incremental steps were being put in place. This was seen to be primarily initiated by community effort which later attracted state support.
... what the government said would be just an overnight affair developed into an everlasting affair. The thing that's given this momentous growth in Maori education, is the Kohanga. It was the beginning that developed that growth that's happening in primary. So bilingual schools began to grow and have increased to meet the need and then immersion came in and then the transition into Kura, it's growing so much that it is a concern. As an educationalist the concern I have in the growth is that the government is not meeting the needs, they're developing reactive policies. The biggest concern I have for Maori, is the quality of delivery because for me personally, it has to be the best for Maori education. It cannot be second best, the resources, the personnel ...

Significant change was based upon people working together toward a common goal rather than being imposed by a system of which many whanau members were sceptical.

... we had to do our homework because it was in the days when you had to register yourself and do all that sort of thing. I called all the huis, wrote to the experts on bilingual education because you had to go through that whole process. You couldn't just start it up so then together we moved towards reorganising the whole school to work as one and we started really small and progressed along each year. ... There were just no resources then, nothing at all, there were no Training Colleges putting out any teachers to deliver the curriculum in Maori none of that happened.

**Monitoring change**

In monitoring change many participants were caught in the dilemma of wanting to effect change quickly for the sake of those currently in the system but also recognised that in order for change to be accepted and collaboratively owned, this further created contexts where change appeared frustratingly slow.

It's difficult for us to work with the different groups because even though you may have a plan of action, the main thing is to gain the confidence of those people that where you are, who you are, and where you are going is a place worth getting to. And what it means is that it has taken this long for just a couple of fractions to become confident that I am not going to sell them out.

..I would say that ...in the context that I'm looking at now and in those beliefs that have been driven I would probably use, draw on a lot on my own unvalidated experiences however, at particular moments I would use the validated experiences to further progress what I saw as important, and indeed if I was at Saint Cuthberts, I would use the validated one to the nth degree but I need both of them ...

Change required commitment and long hours necessitated by the need to simultaneously be curricula expert in all areas (finding, developing, writing, implementing and assessing curricula and children across multilevels), and being the developer and publisher of resources.
I was teaching the children and getting the resources, translating all the books - there was only me and I had parent help you know and some of the parents were tremendous. I could call on them to help me. I was teaching, seven different levels and it was very difficult. Nobody else in that Whānau bar one other person could Korero so I really did everything on my own I mean I didn’t have lunch hours cos there was no one around so I’d eat with the kids but there was never a break for me away from the kids and it was very tough. Even now I can get upset when I talk about this phase of my teaching experience. I was so disappointed that I didn’t see the twelve months out, disappointed in myself because I didn’t stick to it

One particular benefit arising out of RTM positions was having the space to step back and reflect on school structures and programmatic issues. Other dialogue taken from the same paired interview also recognised many draw backs based on positions being reduced to superficial assessment criteria that saw them as resource makers, hindered by current climate of delivering tangible outcomes.

One of the things that I find that being in this position which is different and more positive than being in the classroom and being in charge of say five teachers, is that you have that ability to stand back and reflect. You haven’t got all those flooding restraints on you like looking after your own class, ensuring that your staff are all on task or whānau issues. You are quite isolated from all that, you can actually stand back and have a look at what the situation is like because it was your reality, but now you are actually able to look at all the other issues, the long-term outcomes of immersion education, because of the day to day realities of the classroom aren’t yours. But you can identify not only the short, middle and long-term goals you also have got a better view of what the other issues are impacting on classrooms.

But when I came into the job I saw it as a resource person encouraging and promoting the growth of Maori medium education. The focus that I have taken was that the resource is me - how resourceful could I be in encouraging others to opt into Maori medium and be informed and have choices.

I mean I have seen people in this position who have taken my job title literally. Because we are Resource Teachers of Maori, that’s what they have done, they have made resources in Maori. And we all know that, all that does is empower the person that makes the resources and doesn’t empower the people who use the resources and I’m not into that. I would rather teach the person how to make the resource themselves, they do it themselves and then they have got that power, I don’t have it.

The making of resources is a tangible output which you can actually measure in terms of people and output, whatever you want to call it, you can measure that output, now, en-skilling a person is really difficult to measure as an output but when you make a resource you can say look I have done this and this and the school have these resources in their store room and they can say "WOW". You can measure it, but all your doing is justifying this salary as a glorified teacher aid really. (participant paired interview)

Monitoring change was about being effective individually, as a profession at large, and as a systematic institutional structure aimed to meet the educative needs of all.

I mean, if we were effective, we should basically be out of a job. Do you understand what I mean? We should be doing ourself out of a job. Instead we are securing ourselves for many years. Instead our services is becoming more demanding, there is more demand for our jobs now - why? I think it’s because we are not being effective. I don’t think we can under the conditions and terms in which we are working.
Aware of the hindrances

Participants spoke of a number of hindrances and resistance to change. Many have been previously discussed in terms of ideological resistance by colleagues and communities, underpinned by perceptions that Maori thought processes, values and beliefs would not enhance the educative process. Vocalised resistance however was often expressed in terms of pragmatic issues. The issues cited ranged from timetabling, horizontal class groupings and even included architectural design.

One benefit expressed by some of the participants to overcome resistance was the long route they had taken to immersion. Having worked across a number of sites participants were clear about their personal philosophies and able to articulate with clarity the short comings of current general stream options for Maori.

Then I went from there (an integrated school to a bilingual) to an immersion unit. By that stage the immersion unit was totally autonomous from the rest of the school and I was developing my own theories on immersion education and what that means for me, what that means for my kids, what it means for the other kids and we were putting it into practice, it was great. It was a gradual development but one thing that I could see was we were moving forward. I couldn't have planned it better the way that I did it really. I mean going through the Catholic system and then going into a mainstream bilingual and then immersion. I know it was a longer but I actually think my grounding is wider and when I argue things on immersion education I argue from experience as well as from theory plus I grew up a lot, it's just that I can say I've tried that, I've been there, I've seen how that works, I've seen how other people teach and it doesn't work and I know this is the reason why. Many can't differentiate between the two because they don't know the two they don't know how the mainstream school system works and they don't know actually how an immersion school system works, they can't differentiate so they don't know which is it. Maori think as a whole, we think about the total being before we go down to the individual skills of the total being.

But dividing makes it easier to manage. It provides a safety net and don't forget outputs - you can physically see the outputs of a spelling lesson, a writing lesson things like that, you can't often see the outputs of a whole language session in the same way.

The most common dilemma faced by the group was, the whole issue is with inadequate resource base full stop.

Dealing with the frustration’s of gained and lost ground also became a common challenge to be coped with.

... I tend to go out into other schools and I get frustrated as hell because you work with a group of teachers or you work with a teacher usually for a year and a) either the teacher
leaves, b) the situation changes, or c) or the teacher has lost something or they go away for the holidays and you have got to start again. And to me it is maintaining sanity. You have got to start all over again and you think to yourself, what I have done the last year. You have got situations nine times out of ten that are changing and you have got to start all over again.

We both have that conflict all the time and what I find is that it’s an outcome of having to working alone.

Change was also about common understanding of issues between those they worked with, communities and themselves. For example the following quote about equity states that

The idea, the word equity is very problematic. Principals dive on the equity issue as meaning the disabled, Maori, and gender issues, whereas when you have worked within Maori education with students who are Maori, equity means something quite different. It’s talking about their resources so that we will have equal outcomes and to try and get Principals to sort of see that your whanau is actually saying we should be working towards equal outcomes has been very difficult. I have been very disappointed because I thought that these people would have a fair idea of what the issues are.

This practitioner was clearly demonstrating that common understandings are at best illusive, but more often, non-existent.

**Future aspirations - drawing back to the centre**

The main thrust that contributed to their aspirations regarding educational change was excellence. Notions of excellence encompassed ideological shifts, teacher perceptions, and structural change.

... we have to open up another world for our Maori children. There is another world out there that they have to survive in and the environment is becoming very difficult for them to survive in.

... I think Maori education is well and it's alive but we need to nurture it and we need to develop it and we can only do that if we have the resources to do that and if everyone is in agreement. ...

... Well, you have to look, your actually bringing them out of the mire. Your getting them to rise above it. What’s the future for Maori children now? Now what I’m saying is it doesn’t matter where you come from, first and foremost you are Maori, be proud of who you are and you can achieve. When I considered career options, the only option that was really considered for us was teaching. Now we’re struggling to get good Maori students applying for training college. What have we got now? We’ve got them going into law, accountancy, medicine. In my day no one considered law or being doctors, dentists - no one. Nursing or teaching were the career options for Maori.
Participants also talked of the future. Future aspirations not only involved where the participants saw themselves but more importantly where they saw themselves in relation to supporting children currently in the educational system.

...what I hope to see for me in the future is going a little way to cracking that cycle and to have people look at our kids with new eyes and new ears, it mightn't be as a principal of a Kura it could possibly be as a political lobbyist. I do have a concern for Maori students that are in general education, at present they do not have the same political clout as Maori children who are not. What I mean is we need to go further to actively lobby so that, whoever is in front of them actually recognises that they have to use a different vehicle to achieve the same sort of thing and they have to know that their language and their culture has to be part of the vehicle - unless, they produce something like me and then you wait till they're adults and think oh my god, I've got to go back to the Marae, I better do something about being so white for so long.

We're going to come to a day of reckoning with this and it'll assist in programmes if people are able to see the language and culture of these kids as a strength, as a step to see it as we all do. More people are starting to see but the actions don't necessarily come with it. So I'll be somewhere, definitely in education ... we've lived with the ten point plan for a while - The ten point Maori education plan - it's beautiful rhetoric and it's just: lovely to trot out when you're at a strategic planning meeting but we have to realise people make it happen and you've gotta realise that you can't divorce policy making from the people that are s'posed to be implementing it. So definitely I'll be battling for Maori education and thinking of Polynesian and Maori kids that are in general education. General education's changed a hell of a lot now, and I guess I should pay tribute to the changes that have been made in favour of kids, I just get a sense of urgency that we have to bloody hurry up and do a lot more because kids are too often being consigned to rubbish heaps that aren't of their own making. I mean this crap about the globally shrinking world is really dangerous, the concept is dangerous because it actually has the potential to break down cultures and languages ... in Aotearoa New Zealand Maori culture is the only thing that makes us unique but we're beginning to see global policies which have the potential to actually break down cultures like we've never seen before. ... when Aotearoa New Zealand was first colonised by Pakeha and continued right up till 1960, the biggest weapon used to actually destabilise and ensure that the culture - in as far as they could make it - became sterile was by legislative violation - really it was violations of the law that were the biggest weapon used to break us down in terms of our beliefs and values.

The participants' aspirations extended beyond their own physical placement in education. It was difficult to get participants to talk about themselves as separate entities from the children with whom they had daily contact, from whanau who these children were an extension of, or from Maori educational issues in general.

What I hope to see for me in the future is just going a little way to cracking the cycle ... to have people look at our kids with new eyes and new ears. It mightn't be as a principle of a Kura, it could be as a political lobbyist ... Knowingly, I'll be in there somewhere fighting for these kids. I just want to be sure I know when I've stopped fighting cause that's the time to get out and move over for someone else to step in.

I'll have to think about that, before the reforms I would have said the inspectorate, I don't know that ERO has the same appeal. ... there's still a lot of work to do, just ask whanau and they'll tell you we've still got a long way to go, I'd like to think I've still got things to contribute and a few more years to do it in ...
Summary

An initial aim of the research was to identify student strategies used by the participants to negotiate institutional terrains that facilitated the attainment of school credentials. The data provided a diverse and complex range of responses. The necessity to develop coping mechanisms emerged from contending with hegemonic norms that drew attention to the mismatch between the liberal educational principles of egalitarianism and meritocracy and the ways these principles’ discursive formations silenced the social critique of this group of students.

Applying the principle of meritocracy - where the idea of educational outcomes in a ‘neutral system’ is based on the assumption that school success is derived from ability plus effort - provides a weak explanation for the women attaining school based credentials. This is primarily because such principles fail to recognise the differentiated costs delineated by ethnicity, complicated by gender and often exacerbated by class for some within the group. What the group must cope with has less to do with what Boykin (1986) defines as the 'can or can rots'; their ability to display the technical or academic competencies associated with curricula (many attained awards for subjects as diverse as French, English, Maths and Science), rather their experiences brought to the fore issues of 'will' or 'will not' and 'should' and 'should not' as they contended with competing norms, values, beliefs and behaviour patterns. What is often taken as Maori children's failure to learn, can just as easily be seen as the school's failure to teach (Neisser 1986). It would appear that many of these women succeeded not because of neutral systems but because of inordinate amounts of determination in the face of adversity; overcoming the multifarious contradictions of negotiating cultural terrains that threaten to ideologically and structurally lock them out. Boykin (1986) maintains that 'schools can and do function as agents of hegemony' (p79).
Their struggle reflected a mismatch between self ascribed identity and the identity markers ascribed by others. The often subliminal messages that challenged their perceptions of self caused a range of responses from doubt, vague discomfort and confusion to confrontation as they struggled with the pressure to acquiesce to totalising institutional norms.

The issues raised are multifaceted in that power is not a simple, technocratic, lineal phenomena that flows from the top down. Within each site (noted above), contestation, resistance and/or accommodation occurs. For students, power is about the struggle to attain credentials and the development of coping mechanisms in order to negate the 'glass ceilings' that first appear for this group at the school site. They must cope with hegemonic precepts of their difference as deviance in terms of teacher expectations, institutional discourse, knowledge codes, informational networks, pedagogical practices, peer interaction and the application of cultural stereotypes.

Strategies used to progress through school ranged from being a 'private affair' where little in the behaviour, public responses or attitudes to school could be interpreted as different from their non-Maori peers. Passive silence used by all the participants at various stages (as students and as teachers), provided a smoother path through school and employment contexts; however, it was not without a sense of possessing ill fitting institutional keys that did not quite fit institutional locks that represented the cultural logic of the briefcase. The participants at the other end of the continuum, as indigenous women, who through public display of breaking silence and talking back, in situations where the power differentials were and continue to be distinct, learnt the fate of unwelcome guests in the learning house of the immigrant coloniser.

The injustice of oppression for this group can not be defined outside or divorced from a historical, socio-political context. The institutional forces that each participant struggled
with were situated in the disjunctive process of colonisation and its attendant notions of power and racial hierarchies.

Equally as staff they must contend with high visibility and cope with performance expectations based on stereotypical precepts about being Maori. In contrast to their student experiences the women define their teaching roles in terms of creating institutional space, not so much for themselves, but more significantly, about enabling Maori students currently in the system to maintain a positive Maori identity while striving to succeed. The facilitative roles they see as critical are drawn in part from a body of knowledge from which notions, roles and functions of leadership are derived from a cultural source. It is one of the foundational cornerstones from which they operate that is ignored within Western conceptualisation's of leadership. None of the women see themselves as individuals working toward aspirations based on solely self fulfilment; rather it is based on where Maori, as a group, might advance to and what would facilitate such growth and development.

Often the cultural logic embedded in institutional norms implicitly requires those outside its norms to see themselves as deviant. In stark contrast, for this group, it became the motivation to succeed. At least six of the eight participants at some stage in their student experience consciously and quietly made a pledge to show 'them' - that they 'could', 'would' and 'should' succeed. At times this meant accommodating the system not because they accepted the 'rightness' or the 'justness' of the system but because it engagement with it for instrumental purposes was unavoidable. Silence provided the safe haven in which the engagement occurred.

Their current convictions are predicated on their own school based experiences as students and the often unchanged recurring scenarios with which they are confronted as teaching professionals.
Student experiences provided the genesis for strategies used in teaching related contexts. The frankness with which the issues are discussed highlight the alignment of many of their experiences with those of the Maori children presently in their charge, rather than drawing them closer to other professionals with whom they trained. Their narratives are situated within a multitude of dualisms emanating from the multifaceted nature of self perception juxtaposed by identity markers ascribed by others. Ironically though self ascription and ascription by others may both result in the same designation - Maori - the meaning and value attached to such ascription is often polarised. As emphasised in the kete, there are variances across the group attributable to a variety of factors. Nevertheless, colonisation has collapsed together such differences providing commonalities of experience in institutional contexts that are either unable or unprepared to move beyond diametrically opposed dualities of them and us.

Often, as young teachers, silence was also used as a significant strategy. As their own educational visions emerged, the fundamental strategy employed to stay in the system was derived from their personal convictions. Being convinced that things have to change and in believing that, knowing that there have to be people prepared to effect change motivates them to stay. They are further motivated by a sense of reciprocity - giving back, by giving forward; about creating the space for future generations. The biggest strategy of all that sustains their commitment to education is their clear articulation of the need for change encased in their visions, hopes and aspirations for a better, fairer future. Their visions both help them to tolerate and be frustrated by the inconsistencies, contradictions and paradox, as they remind themselves that they are not there solely for themselves (recognising better money, prestige and reduced stress to be found elsewhere), but for children in the system and those yet to come through. On this basis they chose at times to allow some things to go unchallenged (such as racist jokes) as a means to conserve energy and reduce the risk of being marginalised knowing full well that the required resources to effect change do not reside on the margins.
Success seen as another form of resistance is derived from the ways in which their success has been utilised. Not one of the women sit within the comfort zone that denying a Maori identity would provide. To the contrary, they actively use their positions to struggle, often against the tide to effect change. Placing themselves in opposition to supporting the status quo by actively seeking change continues to provide a curious mix of holding silence and breaking silence.

The third and final aim initially identified at the beginning of the research was to investigate the correlation between student strategies used to attain school based credentials and those employed by teachers in the primary sector. This aim was explored as previously discussed specifically in relation to silence.

The clamour of silence and its subtleties reverberate through the hallways of institutions, echoing messages of exclusion (Awatere 1984; Fine 1991) for those outside the hegemonic norm. The presence of particular discourse, and the absence of others proclaims who may creditably speak, the topics able to be spoken about, and the ways in which discourse is heard and validated. Silence is derived from the paradox of elicited dialogic engagement while concurrently making it clear that only particular responses will be heard (Jones 1998).