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ARE WE RETAINING OUR MAORI TALENT?

REPRESENTATIVE YOUTH NETBALLERS

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

A case study research method was employed to address the question of retention for Māori youth netballers. Despite the fact that young Māori are well populated in the junior age groups of representative netball, a decline at the senior representative levels is apparent. This decline was particularly evident during the period of adolescence contributing to the research focus. Exploring the retention factors relative to this group required consideration of these three interrelated domains: education, gifted and talented education, and sport.

Previous studies related to Māori Education, Māori in Sport, and Gifted Females led to this research. The findings highlighted three key themes: intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural factors. These factors are underpinned by cultural elements which when amalgamated become critical contributors to retention.

As such, this research revealed that there is no single factor that will predictably lead to the fulfillment of retention issues for Māori female youth however several conclusions have been drawn. Firstly that the challenge of balancing multiple, and often, conflicting roles as students, athletes, females and Māori is reflective of racial and gender stereotypes in society. Secondly, that our policies in education and sport need to reflect that 'being Maori' is understood in a broader context encompassing both Māori and non-Māori. In practice, operations which reflect Kaupapa Māori principles will further enhance the participants self efficacy which will lead to improved experiences.

Enhancing participants' quality of experiences in education and sport requires a recognition that access as a predecessor to retention greatly impacts on the institution or organizations ability to maintain Māori youth interest levels.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“If you continuously face challenges, one of two things can happen: you either collapse under the strain, lose confidence in your ability and walk away defeated – perhaps to fight again later or to just drift into a life of non-challenge. Or you win a few impossibles and then are encouraged to have a go at the next impossible. So that before long, you find the impossibles have become possible” – Sara Henderson

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the supervisors of this research for their professionalism, encouragement, and commitment. With the unfailing support and professionalism of Hine Waitere-Ang and Dr Farah Palmer, accepting this challenge of seeming impossibility was made enjoyable. I have appreciated their ability to positively role model for all Māori a belief in self, the challenges of multi tasking, and a commitment to making a difference for others. This quote reflects my impressions of the research process as guided by these women who always believed in the possible which encouraged me to do the same.

To the research participants and the netball organization, thank you for your openness, honesty and ability to share for the betterment of improving our knowledge. Your reflections as participants give us direction and guidance in planning the future. I wish you well in your endeavors as Māori, female athletes and students. Continue to face and relish the challenges!

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GLOSSARY OF MĀORI TERMS

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Aotearoa | the land of the long white cloud (New Zealand) |
| Haka | a traditional Māori dance |
| Hapu | sub tribe |
| Hinengaro | the seat of thoughts and emotions |
| Iwi | tribe |
| Kai | food |
| Kaiako | teacher |
| Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi | face to face, meeting someone in person |
| Kaupapa Māori | Māori purpose or agenda; Māori focused activities |
| Kura | school |
| Kura Kaupapa | schools where Māori language and values are practiced |
| Māori | indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand |
| Mana | influence, power, prestige, status, charisma |
| Pākeha | New Zealander of Caucasian descent/ Anglo-Saxon descent |
| Powhiri | a traditional Māori welcome |
| Rangatiratanga | authority |
| Taha Māori | a Māori component; Māori dimension |
| Taha Wairua | Spiritual dimension |
| Taonga | property, anything highly prized |
| Taonga Tuku Iho | cultural aspirations principle |
| Te Ao Māori | the Māori world |
| Te Ao Pākcha | the Pākeha world |
| Te Ao Hurihuri | a changing world |
| Te Kohanga Reo | Māori medium early childhood centre; Māori language nest |
| Te Reo Māori | the Māori language |
| Tinana | the body |
| Tino Rangatiratanga | the principle of relative authority |
| Whakawhānaungatanga | establishing relationships – kinship and spiritual ties |
| Whānau | family – immediate and/or extended |
| Whānaungatanga | relationships |

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