

The Wisdom of Māori Women Educators' Pedagogy

Abstract

For a number of years, Indigenous peoples have examined, explored and researched their pedagogies to reclaim their ways of being, knowing and doing. This presentation shares the wisdom of three Māori women educators on pedagogy, gathered over a year of one to one and group conversations in Aotearoa New Zealand. The conversations formed the basis of research being undertaken for a doctorate with Deakin University in Australia. The women's first language was te reo Māori and they were all influenced in their early years by their kuia, koroua and other relations of that generation. A Māori child was an integral part of the community and were included in whānau activities, and given their whakapapa and the related stories throughout gestation into childhood. They were taken to hui and when their parents were at work they stayed with their kuia and koroua to share in their daily lives. Within the various contexts of everyday Māori life and with the guidance of those older than them, children learnt to be fully rounded contributing members of their community.

This presentation explores three overarching components of Māori women educators' pedagogy drawn from this research: continuance and sustenance, every place a learning place and knowing each other. Continuance and sustenance expands on the understanding that, what the participants learnt in childhood was visible throughout their lives. Every place a learning place elucidates the idea that whether in the home, by the sea, in the forest, on the marae or in the classroom, learning in Māori whānau and hapū occurred in a deliberate and focused way. Knowing each other explores the relationships developed between learners and teachers that was reciprocal and deep. These Māori women educators embody their pedagogical practice and these three pedagogical components are at all times interwoven and interrelated. Their wisdom is inestimable and their stories have major implications for a broader, deeper and clear Māori pedagogy in ways that will be discussed in this presentation.

Keywords: Māori pedagogy, Māori education, Māori women's pedagogy