Multicultural Society

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Navigating Māori, Crown and New Zealand's multicultural relationships

Last year New Zealand celebrated 175 years since the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This provides an opportunity to think about what the future of the relationship between the Crown and Maori will look like. Good progress continues to be made on Treaty settlements; the asset base of the Maori economy is growing, and the Crown and Maori share similar long-term investment objectives to promote the long-term economic and social wellbeing of their people.

Given this:

Where are the opportunities for the Crown and Maori to work together to promote a prosperous, sustainable and inclusive New Zealand and what are the implications for institutions and policy making?

As policy makers, how should we think about this Crown and Maori relationship alongside the trend towards an increasingly multicultural society?

Had Te Tiriti o Waitangi not been signed one hundred and seventy-six years ago, New Zealand's Māori-Crown relations might be different today. Across almost all policy subsystems, there are unlimited opportunities for Māori-Crown partnerships to promote a prosperous, sustainable and inclusive New Zealand. Given the widespread opportunities available, the focus for analysis here will be on education policies, which could have the most profound impact on improving the quality of life for all. However the Treaty of Waitangi also has a role to play for changing ethno-cultural demographics in Aotearoa. This paper proposes three broad recommendations:

1. Innovate the New Zealand Education system for better cultural integration
2. Support Māori in preserving and managing land or other assets including culture
3. Address suitability of New Zealand's formal bicultural policies in future

The aim of this policy paper is to highlight some practical and measureable policy changes, while appreciating any impact these might have on existing institutions and policymaking. Policymakers need to balance respect for indigenous rights with multicultural policies. While Māori-Crown dynamics have in the past changed the focus of institutions and policy-making, in future, it will be beneficial for policymakers to be proactive rather than reactive.

Before considering the tension between biculturalism and New Zealand's increasingly multicultural demographic, there is a need to affirm the opportunities available for Māori and Crown to create a more equitable society with strong economic growth. One key area of policy which goes a long measure to attaining this objective is through our education system. The education system is a critical area to the welfare of citizens and a long-term investment for producing qualified individuals needed in our labour market. It is not difficult then, to understand how effective education policies address all four of the Financial, Social, Natural and Human Capital elements of the Living Standards Framework.[1] A holistic approach to the wellbeing of New Zealanders as evidenced by the Treasury's 'higher living standards for New Zealanders' will help to tackle wicked problems by providing better policy advice. Education policies impact across all aspects of the Treasury's Living Standards Framework, as outlined below:

- Ensuring access to quality education is equitable since it ensures that people are well qualified with skills but also improving on the positive trend for higher educational outcomes among Māori ensures fair representation of views across all sectors of society.
- The increased risk to Māori of social disenfranchisement if educational targets set by the Ministry of Education especially rates among young Māori are consistently not met. This would also fail the Crown's fiduciary duties to ensure Māori are afforded the same equitable access to opportunities in society.
- Higher individual educational qualification achievements help ensure higher personal incomes, but also allow individuals to better engage within their communities.
- Social cohesion would likely be lifted since social connectedness depends on interaction as well as integration. Education is an important tool for social interconnectedness by eliminating ignorance and increasing awareness of New Zealand's history.

For these reasons, education is a highly vital link to achieving the broad long term goals of both Māori and Crown to ensure the wellbeing of Māori people. Ultimately however,

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[1] "An Introduction to Using the Living Standards Framework." *Treasury New Zealand.* July 1, 2015. http://www.treasury.govt.nz/abouttreasury/higherlivingstandards

everyone in New Zealand gains value in an education system that is leading and innovative. This is because a properly functioning education system is so critical to alleviating poverty, increasing political stability, participation and improving the skills of the workforce and New Zealand's economy. Therefore, continual evaluation of the education system should be a top priority for policymakers.

Having established uncontroversial reasons behind the importance of prioritising education, the difficulty lies in developing specific policies within this subsystem that meet these illusive aims.

One area to start with improvements is on the delivery of the school curriculum around understanding our bicultural history. Understanding the history and the treatment of Māori through different governmental policies is important for policymakers and New Zealanders alike who need to acknowledge how colonisation has affected and still affects Maori people today. For instance, early loss of indigenous culture through assimilationist policies could be addressed by changes to the educational institutions will mean more collaboration between Māori and the Crown. These assimilationist policies of their era resulted in massive loss of native speakers of Te Reo.[2] By contrast, in 1987, the Maori Language Commission was founded to promote and protect the Maori language and only then was Te Reo Maori afforded the position it should have had since the signing of Te Tiriti as one of New Zealand's official languages.[3]

Language is one aspect at the core of Māori identity. It is important to recognise that iwi or Māori institutions may adapt to changing Māori needs while mainstream institutions should also adapt to Māori. Hence, the potential benefits of a compulsory Māori language component in the national school curriculum in primary schools when children are most easily able to learn different languages, result from the need for institutional design and policymakers to respect the urgent need to preserve a Māori taonga through collective national effort. If Te Reo Māori was and better delivered and consolidated through the curriculum, especially given high numbers of urbanised Māori youth, this will give effect to Crown commitments under article two of protecting Māori taonga. There is evidence that stronger support, perhaps also from non-indigenous speakers, to help retain a language's survival which depends on oral speakers is necessary. An example is given from the sample of schools which returned Ngā Whanaketanga Rumaki Māori results that achievement rates were well below the target of 85%.[4] Fortunately enrolments and completions in tertiary Te Reo Māori have increased in recent years alongside the number of teachers completing their initial teacher training in the Māori language over the previous five years.[5]

While this policy is a merely one of many different possible options to be further researched, it is not inconsistent with Governmental strategies. Since the early 2000s, the New Zealand government has prioritised the Māori language through a revised Māori Language Strategy. The purpose of this policy action was "to consolidate and coordinate its Māori language programmes and policies, to revitalise Te Reo and increase the

[2] Roger Maaka and Augie Fleras "Engaging with Indigenity: Tino Rangatiratanga in Aotearoa." In Political Theory and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, edited by Duncan Ivison, Paul Patton and Will Sanders. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

[3] Maori Language Commission. http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/ Accessed July 12, 2016.

[4] Ngā Haeata Mātauranga: Assessing Māori Education. Education Counts. https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/31351/nga-haeata-matauranga-annual-report-on-maori-education Accessed July 23, 2016.

[5] Ibid.

number of people who use it and the situations in which it is used."[6] Moreover, such institutional design changes can increase levels of "Māori trust, access to, and participation in key institutions, impacting on the inclusiveness and effectiveness of those institutions".[7] A Māori-Crown partnership which can drive retention in Māori language speakers is thus an opportunity that should be further developed.

Although the case can be made from many angles, not least one of which is to give effect to the promises of the Treaty, arguments for an all-inclusive policy implementation around Te Reo can also be made from the point of view of the wider societal benefits. Given the consolidating Māori asset base, an important investment for New Zealand's economy needs Māori across the board to be highly educated since Māori Trusts or Boards administer this area. Furthermore, educated individuals hold a higher stake in society and can help realise any internal policy changes to objectively ensure that partnerships between Māori and Crown need to be transparent, and accountable to all including Māori members, the Crown and public.

An education system that effectively supports cross-cultural relations will also build greater understanding between different cultures as well as providing students the foundational skills for learning. Importantly, given increasing numbers of immigrants and refugees in New Zealand, learning about our bicultural history will help encourage better integration into New Zealand. Ideally, there also needs to be greater understanding or awareness of different cultures or religions currently in New Zealand as the demographics change. At the same time, acknowledging the special position Māori are in will help to establish a unifying national identity regardless of ethno-cultural background.[8] Moving beyond a tolerant society to a respectful one where many can participate in, and are accepting of different heritages is the ultimate goal.

This policy suggestion however is not without its challenges, including pressure on schools, or auditing for consistency of quality teaching across schools. Policymakers may need to provide resources to transition education providers so they can properly respect diversity. New Zealand is one of the most diverse nations in the OECD that embraces diversity as a strength.[9] Diversity is important and schools across New Zealand recognise this. But there are challenges on many levels, including an impact on how established educational institutions currently approach the curriculum and creating positive relationships between diverse communities and schools.

Bicultural policies accept the indigenous rights of Māori and provide much-needed redress, rather than just reparation, for past grievances. On the other hand, we need to appreciate and respect other cultures. Another contention therefore lies also in a, at least theoretically, incompatible bi- and multicultural views. Unlike quantitative policy analysis, predominantly qualitative research around the issue whether to adopt a formal bicultural or multicultural approach means significant shifts in the perspective that institutions and policymakers will need to take. A country adopts either bi-, multi- or monocultural

[6] Maori Language Strategy. http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/the-state-of-te-reo-maori/maori-language-strategy/maori-language-strategy-en-nz/ Accessed July 12, 2016.
[7] New Zealand Treasury Paper. Whitehead, John and Barbara Annesley. The Context for Māori Economic Development: A Background Paper for the 2005 Hui Taumata. http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/research-policy/tp/huitaumata Accessed July 12, 2016.
[8] Augie Fleras, The Politics of Multiculturalism: Multicultural Governance in Comparative Perspective. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
[9] OECD. CERI - Teacher Education for Diversity. https://www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/ceri-teachereducationfordiversity.htm Accessed July 12, 2016.

policies. Nevertheless, our demographic dynamics make monoculturalism in Aotearoa impossible, biculturalism in some form essential (to give effect to the Treaty), but multiculturalism increasingly most representative. Currently, New Zealand has adopted an official bicultural policy which has been recognized internationally. However our multicultural policies have not been formalised, although subjective multiculturalism in society already exists in more diverse cities such as Wellington and Auckland. How, then, should policymakers think about Māori-Crown relations given other residing groups?

Policymakers could understand that a commitment to Te Tiriti and New Zealand's founding bicultural history is not incompatible with multiculturalism. There is a danger that policy debates often side-line immigrant ethno-cultural so policymakers must ensure that biculturalism doesn't come at the expense of other cultures.[10] Biculturalism stipulates, at least in theory, equal partnership between the two peoples, 'with the values and traditions of both cultures reflected in society's customs, laws, practice, and institutional arrangements, and with both sharing control over resources and decision making'[11]. A nuanced view that even biculturalism has been criticised for its limited focus on Maori development which keeps Maori in a position of minority rather than partner, might call for development into whether the relationship needs reassessment in a future of multiculturalism.[12]

Equally, Ward and Liu identify the blending of biculturalism and multiculturalism as necessary given the special circumstances in New Zealand.[13] More importantly, although much more effort is needed to continue addressing formal representation of Māori views, institutions have come a long way from being "institutionally monocultural".[14] A democratic dialogue around the changing expectations of a multicultural group of citizens in New Zealand could inform policymakers on the changes necessary in policymaking and institutions that would appropriately address a multitude of cultural perspectives. For instance, in order for multiculturalism to thrive in New Zealand, migrants need to be allowed to maintain their culture, native language and customs as well as have the opportunity to participate equally and freely in the wider society despite cultural barriers.[15] Recent government initiatives are noted to have provided services to help equalize immigrants, particularly the recently proposed Multi-cultural cultural Act which provides recognition of Maori status, cultural maintenance, and participation for all groups. Institutional tools such as the Office of Ethnic Affairs actively promotes a "strength in diversity paradigm".[16] Policymakers should carefully monitor biculturalism, which has been regarded as an impediment, whereas multiculturalism is seen as a platform for peace and harmony.[17]

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10 Augie Fleras 'From Social Control towards Political Self-Determination? Māori Seats and the Politics of Separate Māori Representation in New Zealand.' Canadian Journal of Political Science, 18, no. 3 (1985): 551-576.

11 O'Reilly and Wood 1991: Biculturalism and the Public Sector. In Reshaping the State: New Zealand's Bureaucratic Revolution, edited by J. Boston, J. Martin, J. Pallot and P. Walsh. Auckland: Oxford University Press page 321.

12 Dominic O'Sullivan, "Beyond Biculturalism: The Politics of an Indigenous Minority." Wellington: Huia Press, 2007.

13 Ward, Colleen and James Liu. 'Ethno-Cultural Conflict in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Balancing Indigenous Rights and Multicultural Responsibilities' In Handbook of Ethnic Conflict, 2011.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Mervin Singham. "Multiculturalism in New Zealand – the need for a new paradigm." Aotearoa Ethnic Network Journal 1, no. 1. (2006): 33 - 37.

17 James Liu. "Multiculturalism and Biculturalism in New Zealand: Promises and Regrets" In Bananas New Zealand Going Global Conference. Auckland, 2007.

Distinguishing us from other postcolonial states, Te Tiriti has formalised the future relationship between Māori, and the Crown. Now it is up to policymakers to chart the formal relationship, if any, with a changing demographic. Policymakers should be prepared in future to address whether New Zealand will replace bicultural policies with both a written constitution incorporating the Treaty of Waitangi and multicultural policies in turn.

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