Inclusive workplaces for kaimahi Māori: Te Mahere Whai Mahi Māori

(Māori Employment Action Plan)

Authors
Professor Jarrod Haar (Ngāti Maniapoto & Ngāti Mahuta)
Associate Professor David Brougham
Professor Maree Roche (Raukawa)

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1. Executive Summary

Overview

This research is driven by te Mahere Whai Mahi Māori – the Māori Employment Action Plan.[1]

"The vision for the Action Plan is that Māori exercise rangatiratanga to create intergenerational wellbeing through work" (p. 28), with one of the key immediate actions (1-2 years) of te Mahere Whai Mahi Māori researching "how workplaces can be more inclusive for kaimahi Māori"[2] (p. 3). The aim of this research is to *provide insights on the best ways to help workplaces become more inclusive for kaimahi Māori*. Māori represent a fast-growing proportion of the Aotearoa/New Zealand population and workforce.

One suggested solution is enhanced inclusion from workplaces, defined as "the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness".[3] (p. 1265) Inclusion is regarded as an evolved form of diversity management, enhancing the outcomes for minority employees. The research summarised here focuses on providing insights on the best ways to help workplaces become more inclusive for kaimahi Māori. Specifically, the research focuses on:

1. What does inclusion mean for kaimahi Māori (Māori employees/workers)?
2. How can workplaces be more inclusive for kaimahi Māori?
3. What operational tools or policies may aid this inclusion.

A list of key Māori words and their translations are found in Appendix A.

Summary Methods

The research follows a kaupapa Māori research approach and has two Phases in the field:

1. A focus on kaimahi Māori experiences around inclusion, drawing from in-depth interviews with 32 Māori, and
2. 15 case studies of Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations, with interviews from 47 interviews including business owners, executives, managers, and employees.

MBIE requirements include priority groups of wāhine (female) Māori, rangatahi Māori (Māori youth) and older Māori, tāngata whaikaha (disabled Māori), and takatāpui Māori (Māori who identify with diverse sexes, genders, and sexualities). We also ensure there was a breadth of coverage across industry, occupations, firm size, sector, and location (urban/rural). More detail regarding the research methods can be found in Appendix B.

Aligned with a kaupapa Māori research methodological approach, the interview transcripts (phase 1) were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analytic techniques. For the case studies (phase 2), we use detailed thematic analysis to gain overall meaning and identify the major themes.

Summary Results

Theme 1. Inclusion Benefits

Kaimahi Māori explain what inclusion meant to them, reflecting that inclusion was feeling they belong and being respected for their uniqueness. It represented feeling their organisation was the 'right place to be' and feeling accepted and valued irrespective of their unique characteristics (e.g., gender, sexuality, and disability). Most of the descriptions around inclusion reflect feeling supported and especially supporting others. The theme implications include:

- Inclusion is valuable and should be embraced.
- Inclusion is something Māori workers can notice and describe.
- Businesses need to commit and be authentic in building inclusion in their organisation (more on this below).
- Businesses might start by assessing their workforce's perceptions of inclusion such as whether the workforce feels safe and supported – including priority groups (e.g., disabled, takatāpui Māori).
- Examining the different groups within a business might highlight where 'gaps' exist between certain groups, as well as help identify groups that might need more support.
- Businesses should understand that achieving inclusion might take time.
- Businesses may gain an advantage over their competitors through greater retention of staff and performance of their workforce because of an inclusive workplace.
- It is never too late to start an inclusion journey and it should be a journey of continuous improvement.

Theme 2. Inclusion is for All

Inclusion can occur when there are no Māori within the organisation, or even with just a single Māori employee. It is the organisational culture that helps shape the working environment. Inclusion focuses on belonging and uniqueness and is not restricted to supporting Māori culture or any individual culture. The theme implications include:

- While inclusion is good for business the focus should be broad. Organisations should see inclusion as including strong engagement with stakeholders and connections beyond the business.
- Engaging and supporting the community can lead to reciprocation and benefits for the business.
- Businesses engaging with cultural bodies (e.g., hapu, iwi) can enhance the cultural identity and wellbeing of their kaimahi Māori through this engagement.
- Business engagement with community groups does not have to be expensive, and might simply involve sharing business resources (e.g., tools, products, time, expertise).
- This business outreach shows the workforce that the business cares about the communities' people live and work in. It is another way that businesses show they see themselves as part of a wider eco-system, building inclusion.

Theme 3. Leadership is Key

Many businesses display a strong and positive inclusion climate although most small-sized firms do not have a formal policy. We acknowledge that in large-sized organisations, a formal inclusion policy can be especially beneficial. This is because such policies signal intent and can encourage accountability and so the importance of a formal policy should not be discounted. It is vital to have organisational leaders and managers who are committed to inclusion, as it is the way they role model, support, and apply inclusion that makes it a workplace reality. Businesses can build inclusion through role modelling such as leading with greater cultural competence and awareness. This includes kaimahi Māori being represented in leadership positions. The theme implications include:

- Businesses need to understand that leadership is key for building inclusion within an organisation. Large-sized business might have a formal inclusion policy, but this still requires leader attention and support. Smaller-sized businesses may not need a formal policy, managing instead through good leadership and an informal approach to inclusion.
- Businesses need to understand the importance of representation within leadership roles. Firms of moderate size (50 employees plus) should recognise that any group missing from leadership (e.g., Māori, females) might suggest a lack of inclusion, potentially highlighting a lack of belonging and uniqueness. In the context of kaimahi Māori, this might be the lack of accepting Māori as a cultural factor or value in said leadership roles. This is likely to be less of an issue in small-sized firms.
- Businesses might utilise recruitment and/or training to develop their kaimahi Māori into leadership roles.
- Businesses might look to add inclusion factors to managers' Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to enhance the spread and support of inclusion.

Theme 4. Inclusion Pathways

There are several pathways for businesses to achieve stronger inclusion. Organisations can create genuine inclusion for kaimahi Māori through a dedicated strategy including KPIs or firm commitment around cultural time requirements including tangi and more specifically the double cultural shift. Strong inclusion is achieved through supporting cultural activities in work time. This aligns with growing attention and support for Te Tiriti. Another key to good inclusion is having genuine and authentic engagement with inclusion. This involves meaningful relationships throughout the organisation and creating processes that support significant values. The theme implications include:

- There are many ways for businesses to be more inclusive but being authentic and genuine appear necessary for businesses to create and maintain positive change. Businesses need to be strategic about how they build an inclusive organisation and recognise that one-off actions are likely to be viewed as tokenistic and potentially detrimental to the aim of building an inclusive organisation.
- Businesses need to commit to continual improvement and extended practices to illustrate a genuine commitment to inclusion.
- Businesses should recognise that to achieve a strong inclusion climate and inclusion leadership might be enhanced through providing leaders with training and development. Owners and business leaders can lead by example, but training might aid its genuine spread across a business.
- Some businesses have built inclusion through Māori cultural values. Values like being whānau orientated and building strong relationships (e.g., with community) are ways these values (such as whanaungatanga) can aid a more inclusive climate.

Theme 5. Challenges

A few challenges were raised by kaimahi Māori around their workplace experiences that businesses should be aware of and seek to address. The first issue was high workloads, which might relate more broadly to the cultural double shift (where kaimahi Māori work both their job plus that as a cultural navigator). Other challenges were workplace discrimination, bureaucracy and excessive red tape, and workplace experiences around bullying. A strong inclusive climate does appear to reduce workplace discrimination for kaimahi Māori. Organisations need to be vigilant in supporting staff against customer-based discrimination. The theme implications include:

- Businesses should understand that kaimahi Māori face culturally specific workplace challenges (i.e., cultural double shift) and this may require culturally nuanced leadership to address. Some of these challenges relate to high workloads and might reflect cultural pressures. For example, expecting Māori to organise hui, conduct karakia, and act as an iwi liaison are all activities that need to be factored into workloads.
- Leadership might seek to develop inclusion in the workplace while simultaneously reducing workplace challenges for kaimahi Māori. A useful starting point to developing inclusion is to engage the Māori workforce and seek insight and feedback.
- Businesses and their leaders need to support kaimahi Māori workers who experience discrimination, both inside and outside of organisations. Such actions are likely to illustrate an inclusive organisation and build respect from all members of the workforce.

Summary Conclusion

The present study found kaimahi Māori define inclusion in terms of belonging and uniqueness, and this was broadly similar for priority groups (i.e., age groups, disabled, and gender fluid). Individuals could easily define what inclusion was, and what it meant to them. There are several ways organisations can achieve inclusion with leadership and being authentic especially key. Organisations should understand that te reo Māori and tikanga Māori can play important roles in shaping inclusion, as does promoting suitable Māori into leadership positions. Further, inclusion extends beyond the workplace and is valuable for all workplaces including non-Māori. Pathways for inclusion include organisations showing good leadership and commitment, but also being strategic including how inclusion is developed. While kaimahi Māori do experience workplace challenges, the studies suggest good inclusion does help these challenges. Some priority group experiences were distinct, but for the most part, did not differ largely from other kaimahi Māori. Inclusion is beneficial for all.

2. Introduction

The Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE) sought a supplier experienced in kaupapa Māori research and able to deliver research into how private sector workplaces can be more inclusive for kaimahi Māori.

This research is driven by te Mahere Whai Mahi Māori – the Māori Employment Action Plan[4].

This Action Plan outlined by the Government has an important role in supporting better employment outcomes for kaimahi Māori (Māori employees), which this research focuses on. "The vision for the Action Plan is that Māori exercise rangatiratanga to create intergenerational wellbeing through work" (p. 28). The aim of this research is to *provide insights on the best ways to help workplaces become more inclusive for kaimahi Māori*. Māori represent a fast-growing proportion of the Aotearoa/New Zealand population and workforce. However, Māori face workplace challenges including discrimination in the workplace and can suffer *aronga takirua* (the double cultural shift, where Māori workers operate as cultural navigators for their non-Māori colleagues on top of their normal work roles)[5].

One of the key immediate actions (1-2 years) of te Mahere Whai Mahi Māori is researching "how workplaces can be more inclusive for kaimahi Māori"[6] (p. 3). This aligns with Te Puni Kōkiri's Māori Economic Resilience Strategy, which seeks to build Māori resilience to enable withstanding "future economic shocks, and reshape the status quo to create a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive economy for Māori"[7] (p. 10). From te Mahere Whai Mahi Māori and its guiding kaupapa (philosophy), the following research plan is generated.

Research Plan and Kaupapa

The research aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What does inclusion mean for kaimahi Māori (Māori employees/workers)?
2. How can workplaces be more inclusive for kaimahi Māori?

From responses answering this question, we then seek to answer the third key research question:

3. What operational tools or policies may aid this inclusion?

Phase 1: Interviews with kaimahi Māori about their experiences around inclusion. A total of 32 interviews with Māori are undertaken.

Phase 2: Case studies of 15 Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations with interviews from 47 stakeholders.

The project excludes government agencies and entities due to the funding coming from within the sector. MBIE requirements included priority groups of wāhine Māori, rangatahi Māori (Māori youth) and older Māori, tāngata whaikaha (disabled Māori), and takatāpui Māori (Māori who identify with diverse sexes, genders, and sexualities). We also ensured there was a breadth of coverage across industry, occupations, firm size, sector, and location (urban/rural).

Both phase 1 and phase 2 follow a kaupapa Māori research methodology. Thus, we sought to understand workplace experiences of inclusion for kaimahi Māori in a culturally informed and respectful way. Given the core focus is on inclusion, some discussion of inclusion is included.

Inclusion

He aha te mea nui o te Ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata
(What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.)

This whakataukī (proverb) highlights the important, critical, and central role of people to te ao Māori (the Māori worldview)[8]. This whakataukī is important because while Māori make up 17.4 percent of the Aotearoa/New Zealand population[9], even accounting for a larger proportion of youth (non-workers), Māori account for a lower proportion of the Aotearoa/New Zealandworkforce[10]. The unemployment rate is 265 percent higher for Māori than for Pākehā, and the underutilisation rate (those unemployed, underemployed and in the potential labour force, as a proportion of those in the extended labour force) is 177 percent higher for Māori than for Pākehā[11]. In addition, Māori are disadvantaged in the workplace, with 10 percent lower income compared to Pākehā[12] and being over-represented in all low-income groups[13]. Finally, very recent research shows Māori face strong racism and discrimination in the Aotearoa/New Zealand workplace, with only 6.4 percent of Māori reporting no discrimination in the workplace[14]. This research noted "more frequent usage of an indigenous language (e.g., te reo Māori) appears to bring undue attention to the minority ethnicity and perhaps the discrimination is acutely tied to language use"[15] (p. 14). Thus, te reo Māori usage by Māori employees in the workplace is directly linked to higher levels of discrimination. Overall, Māori face systemic challenges in the Aotearoa/New Zealand workplace, and it may be that inclusion can play a key role in enhancing participation and enjoyable work experiences for Māori.

Providing support for employees is important, but this is especially so given the high level of cultural diversity within workplaces in many countries[16]. This certainly applies to Aotearoa/New Zealand, because there is a large proportion (14.2 percent) of Māori in the Aotearoa/New Zealand workforce. Inclusion is regarded as an evolved form of diversity management, except while diversity management has provided some benefits[17], inclusion is argued as being a superior way of supporting minority employees[18,19]. The topic of inclusion has enjoyed growing theoretical attention[20], although critics argue it lacks empirical research and support[21,22]. Notably, diversity management strategies have tended to focus on different demographic compositions, whereas inclusion focuses on leveraging diversity through the promotion of all employees participating equally within an organisation[23]. It has been suggested that diversity management aims to give an individual a sense of belonging, whereas inclusion goes a step further by acknowledging the individual's uniqueness[24]. Thus, inclusion is defined as "the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness"[25] (p. 1265).

The present study examines how kaimahi Māori view and experience inclusion in their workplaces. Early inclusion research showed benefits[26], and now strong empirical research on Shore's inclusion approach (at the group level) suggests inclusion has dimensions of belonging and uniqueness, with workers reporting higher helping behaviours, creativity, and job performance[27]. In the Aotearoa/New Zealand context, research has found an organisation's climate based on cultural inclusion (capturing the way an organisation acknowledges employees' cultural backgrounds, values, and beliefs) is positively related to job performance for kaimahi Māori [28].

Theoretically, researchers[29] typically use social exchange theory[30] and the norm of reciprocity to understand why inclusion is beneficial. In essence, this theory recognises that employees become psychologically motivated to recompensate their organisation when they are treated in a supportive and positive manner. Social exchange theory also aligns with the Māori concept of utu, which is about social relationships and reciprocation[31]. Thus, reciprocation is returning the positive actions of one party to another, with the receiver giving back to the initial giver. The Māori term utu might be typically viewed as representing revenge or 'getting even' but King stated that utu meant "'reciprocity' or 'balance exchange'… an obligation to respond in kind"[32] (pp. 81-82). According to social exchange theory, in a supportive organisation that provides care and respect for things employees value, employees reciprocate with stronger attitudes and behaviours[33], such as enhanced helping behaviours towards co-workers and managers. Fundamentally, this theory focuses on the quality of relationships[34], and this aligns with inclusion as a way of understanding how employers shape their organisations to provide support (or otherwise) to kaimahi Māori. Indeed, while evidence supports the beneficial nature of inclusion, there is a lack of evidence from Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Method Summary

The present study follows the approach almost universally used by inclusion researchers, who explore inclusion using qualitative methods[35]. The advantage of qualitative methods is the ability to gain depth and insight into a phenomenon[36]. This aligns with our research questions regarding understanding inclusion experiences of kaimahi Māori and determining operational tools and/or policies to aid in building inclusion.

Applying our whakataukī to an inclusion workplace experience, this research seeks to understand the way Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations nurture, protect, and cultivate the inclusion experience of kaimahi Māori. The whakataukī's focus on employees is more complex than simply referring to workers as being important and valued. It reflects the importance of organisations and leaders in their role \ of supporting Māori workers so they can thrive to reach their full potential in the workplace, something that an inclusion climate can achieve.

3. Research Findings

Summary Findings

We highlight and detail five major themes identified across the two research phases undertaken (interviews and case studies). We then provide detailed analysis of themes for both phases individually.

#1. Inclusion Benefits

We began by having kaimahi Māori explain what inclusion meant to them. They said inclusion was feeling they belong and being respected for their uniqueness. Inclusion reflects feeling their organisation is the 'right place to be' and feeling accepted and valued irrespective of their unique characteristics (e.g., gender, sexuality, and disability). Most of the descriptions around inclusion reflected feeling supported but also this support extending to others (e.g., non-Māori, communities). For some kaimahi Māori, this specifically aligned with tikanga Māori values in the workplace, but often there was an acceptance that inclusion was by its very nature broad and all encompassing. Kaimahi Māori made common reference to the use of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in the workplace and this was positive to their inclusion perceptions.

Both employees and business owners note that strong inclusion was beneficial. This was especially in relation to retention. Many kaimahi Māori contrasted their current work experiences with historical experiences and recognised that while they are currently enjoying an inclusive workplace, and this was a valuable and desirable change from past workplace experiences. Many suggest they have been on a journey to find an inclusive workplace and thus are more inclined to stay when they found it. Hence inclusion creates greater commitment to their organisation and a greater willingness from kaimahi Māori to extend themselves at work. Kaimahi Māori also note that inclusion enhances their work behaviours and led to greater perceived productivity. Hence, inclusion created a positive joy for working for such supportive organisations and is a win-win for employer and employee.

Business Implications:

- Inclusion is valuable and should be embraced.
- Inclusion is something Māori workers can perceive and verbalise.
- Businesses need to commit and be authentic towards building inclusion in their organisation (more on this below).
- Businesses might start by assessing their workforces' perceptions of inclusion such as whether the workforce feel safe and supported – including priority groups (e.g., disabled, takatāpui Māori).
- Benchmarking the different groups within a business might highlight where 'gaps' exist amongst certain groups, as well as help identify groups that might need more support.
- Businesses should understand that achieving inclusion might take time, and other businesses might overtake competitors via inclusion through greater retention and performance of their workforce.
- It is never too late to start an inclusion journey and it should be a journey of continuous improvement.

#2. Inclusion is for All

Inclusion can occur when there are no Māori within the organisation, or even with just a single Māori employee. It is the organisational culture that helps shape the working environment. Inclusion focuses on belonging and uniqueness and is not restricted to supporting Māori culture or any individual culture. It is about supporting all cultures and peoples. A workplace with 100% Pākehā might fully support all differences across sexualities, disabilities, mental health challenges etc. Providing broad support for everyone highlights the benefit of having a strong inclusion culture because it creates a climate that attracts a diversity of people. Examples of successful inclusion include focusing beyond the workplace. So, not only on employees, but their whānau and other parties, including business contacts, and community groups. This aligns with Māori cultural values around whānau and building strong relationships (whanaungatanga). Many successful firms with high levels of inclusion had a strong interest and engagement with community, including marae, iwi, and business networks. Hence, businesses that engage in strong outreach and engagement activities beyond their business are likely to create a better and stronger inclusion climate. They are also likely to gain more support from the community creating a mutually beneficial relationship. Fundamentally, good inclusion behaviours appear to be wide ranging and extend beyond the business.

Business Implications:

- While inclusion is good for business the focus should be broad. Organisations should see inclusion as strong engagement with stakeholders and connections beyond the business.
- Engaging and supporting the community can lead to reciprocation and benefits for the business.
- Businesses engaging with cultural bodies (e.g., hapu, iwi) can enhance the cultural identity and wellbeing of their kaimahi Māori through this engagement.
- Business engagement with community groups does not have to be expensive, and might simply involve sharing business resources (e.g., tools, products, time, expertise).
- This business outreach shows the workforce that the business cares about the communities' people live and work in. It is another way that businesses show they see themselves as part of a wider eco-system, building inclusion.

#3. Leadership is Key

We acknowledge that in large-sized organisations, a formal inclusion policy can be especially beneficial. This is because such policies signal intent and can encourage accountability and thus the importance of a formal policy should not be discounted. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, around 97 percent of businesses have 20 employees or less and thus inclusion is likely to be driven from leaders rather than policy. While larger firms might have a policy, smaller firms often lack the resources (time, money) or inclination to write down a policy. They simply enact what they believe suits their business best. Indeed, many businesses included in this research who displayed a strong and positive inclusion climate did not have a formal policy. It is vital to have organisational leaders and managers who are committed to inclusion, as it is the way they role model, support, and apply inclusion that makes it a workplace reality. Businesses can build inclusion through role modelling inclusion in leadership roles. For example, having leaders that represent uniqueness (ethnicity, disability, sexuality) because this shows that unique employees are represented in leadership roles. This includes kaimahi Māori being represented in leadership positions.

Regarding leadership and firm size, some differences were identified. These largely relate to the resources that leaders can access to create an inclusive climate. Large-sized firms do have greater

resources including personnel, but small-sized business owners can encourage inclusion by living the values of belonging and accepting uniqueness. This can be achieved by creating a climate where everyone feels they belong and are part of the team or organisation, while also having their unique characteristics (e.g., cultural, disability, sexual orientation) accepted and valued. Finally, leadership does not have to be a linear process. It might often be like a journey, with leaders adjusting and learning to be better at creating and supporting inclusion. It might take time, but that needs to be embraced rather than being seen as a source of frustration. Hence, inclusion is a destination to progress towards, and can be continuously improved. Overall, this theme provides a useful reminder that without leaders who are Māori, kaimahi Māori – even in organisations that feel initially very inclusive – will begin to doubt there is a genuine commitment to Māori and Māori culture. Without seeing a Māori leader, kaimahi Māori (both wāhine and tāne) are unable to see how they can fit into the organisation fully.

Business Implications:

- Businesses need to understand that leadership is key for building inclusion within an organisation. Large-sized business might have a formal inclusion policy, but this still requires leader attention and support. Smaller-sized businesses may not need a formal policy, managing instead through good leadership and an informal approach to inclusion.

- Businesses need to understand the importance of representation within leadership roles. Firms of moderate size (50 employees plus) should recognise that any group missing from leadership (e.g., Māori, females) might suggest a lack of belonging and a failure of uniqueness. This is likely to be less of an issue in small-sized firms.

- Businesses might utilise recruitment and/or training to develop their kaimahi Māori into leadership roles.

- Businesses might look to add inclusion factors to managers' KPIs – this can enhance the spread and support of inclusion.

#4. Inclusion Pathways

There are several pathways for businesses to achieve stronger inclusion. Organisations can create genuine inclusion for kaimahi Māori through a dedicated strategy including KPIs or firm commitment around cultural time requirements including tangi and more specifically the double cultural shift. Strong inclusion is achieved through supporting cultural activities in work time. This aligns with growing attention to and support for Te Tiriti. Thus, cultural support encourages organisations to understand that inclusion needs to be a genuine focus in the organisation, and strong commitment is required especially from leaders.

Another key to good inclusion is having genuine and authentic engagement with staff. This involves meaningful relationships throughout the organisation and creating processes that support significant values. An authentic inclusion approach means organisational leaders from supervisors to owners recognise their roles in creating the 'glue', by which employees feel they belong, and their uniqueness is embraced. Authentic inclusion is expressed beyond the workforce too, to include workers' whanau, their homes, and towards the broader community. Our research shows that kaimahi Māori often assessed their workplace commitment towards inclusion and were especially critical of tokenistic approaches. Thus, kaimahi Māori can assess when their

employer engages in inclusion in a tokenistic and piecemeal fashion and the very people workplaces are trying to retain and attract are instead likely to exit the business. Inclusion needs to be genuine and non-tokenistic - this requires a transformational effort that genuinely works to remove barriers that drive inequity. For employees to feel greater inclusion means they need to feel like genuine partners in the business. Another avenue for organisations is to encourage open dialogue between management and employees, allowing them to have input on inclusion activities. Giving the workforce the ability to voice their opinions and concerns is invaluable. Businesses state that when employees have the confidence to voice issues of inclusion, both positive suggestions and challenges, this provides a way to constructively build and enhance inclusion.

Also, several businesses use Māori cultural values to build or illustrate a strong inclusion climate. This includes having a strong whānau focus but also using tikanga Māori to cement the goals, strategy, and vision of the organisation (e.g., being guided by the principles of Te Tiriti). Māori cultural values were not seen as being exclusively for Māori businesses. Many use a focus on te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, to show kaimahi Māori and all employees that they are supported, cared for, and belong. For example, a business owner might embrace the value of kaitiakitanga, viewing themselves as the 'guardian' of their employees, and seeing an inclusion climate as a way of protecting and enhancing work for employees. Finally, cultural values including whanaungatanga and manāki represent the importance of networking and building relationships. Similarly, non-Māori businesses embrace these values because they can represent supporting, nurturing, and family values, which are universally beneficial.

Business Implications:

- There are many ways for businesses to be more inclusive, but being authentic and genuine are useful ways for businesses to create and maintain positive change. Businesses need to be strategic about how they build an inclusive organisation and recognise that one-off actions are likely to be viewed as tokenistic and potentially detrimental.

- Businesses need to commit to continual improvement and extended practices to illustrate a genuine commitment to inclusion.

- Businesses might recognise that good inclusion leadership requires training and development. Owners and business leaders can lead by example, but training might aid its genuine spread across a business.

- Some businesses have built inclusion through Māori cultural values. Values like being whānau orientated and building strong relationships (e.g., with community) are ways these values (e.g., whanaungatanga) can be actualised.

#5. Challenges

A few challenges were raised by kaimahi Māori around their workplace experiences that provide additional issues for businesses to be aware of and seek to address. The first issue were high workloads, which might relate more broadly to the cultural double shift. This reflects the additional work roles that kaimahi Māori typically undertake in the workplace, acting as cultural guides and navigators – sometimes at the expense of their own workloads and wellbeing.

Another challenge was workplace discrimination. While this research found discrimination was not widely experienced in their current job, many had experienced it in their past workplaces which is why they left. Discrimination was strongly detrimental when it was experienced - it came from many sources including co-workers and customers.

Another challenge is around bureaucracy and excessive red tape, where workplace support appears to require endless paperwork to access.

Finally, workplace experiences around bullying were also identified and strongly detrimental to kaimahi wellbeing and job attitudes including retention. Some of these challenges likely affect all workers (e.g., bullying and bureaucracy), although cultural experiences around workload (i.e., aronga takirua) are more likely to impact kaimahi Māori more.

A strong inclusive climate does appear to reduce workplace discrimination for kaimahi Māori; however, organisations need also to be vigilant in supporting staff against customer-based discrimination.

Business Implications:

- Businesses need to understand that kaimahi Māori face culturally specific workplace challenges (i.e., cultural double shift) and this may require culturally nuanced leadership to address. Some of these challenges relate to high workloads and might reflect cultural pressures. For example, expecting Māori to organise hui, conduct karakia, and act as an iwi liaison are all activities that need to be factored into workloads.
- Leadership might seek to develop inclusion while simultaneously reducing workplace challenges for kaimahi Māori. A useful starting point is to engage the Māori workforce and seek insight and feedback.
- Businesses and their leaders need to support kaimahi Māori workers from discrimination, including within and outside the organisation. Such actions are likely to illustrate an inclusive organisation and build respect from all members of the workforce.

Testing for Differences

While this study reports on workplace inclusion for kaimahi Māori generally, we were also looking for broad representation to understand whether the experiences are different across wāhine/tāne, rangatahi Māori, tāngata whaikaha and takatāpui Māori. While some factors do not enable comparisons because of limited respondents across industries and occupations, we do explore findings by firm size and location (urban/

rural). Overall, there were few noticeable differences across the main workforce characteristics of gender, age, disability, sexual orientation etc. Hence, the findings around inclusion appear to hold strongly for all respondents. Some findings did differ by firm size, but this was largely around inclusion policies (formal versus informal) and how much of resources could be spent on inclusion.

We broadly found no difference between these, although, we do acknowledge that large firms did have a greater array of inclusion offerings in their policy, which many small-sized businesses could not compete with. That said, employees in small-sized firms were largely positive of inclusion, but this is likely because small-sized firms are able to offer boutique options that might be harder for large-sized firms to uniformly offer. We suggest that inclusion needs neither formal policy nor large financial commitment. Instead, it requires good support from leaders to create a workplace where everyone belongs, and everyone's uniqueness is embraced. Future survey research might test kaimahi Māori experiences of inclusion climates and these differences could then be quantitatively tested (e.g., age, gender, industries) to gain greater confidence in similarities and differences.

Detailed Interviews (Phase 1) Findings

Overall, our analysis of interviews led to the identification of 10 themes, which we have grouped into three overarching topics. These were:

Topic 1: Inclusion Benefits

Theme 1. Defining Inclusion

Theme 2. Positive Experiences

Theme 3. Benefits for All

Theme 4. Historical Referencing

Theme 5. Inclusion is Beyond the Workplace

Topic 2: Achieving Inclusion

Theme 6. Avoiding Tokenism

Theme 7. Leadership

Theme 8. Strategy and Commitment

Topic 3: Inclusion Challenges

Theme 9. Racism

Theme 10. Other Workplace Challenges

We use quotations from the participants to illustrate the meaning behind the themes and we use italics to show these are direct quotes. We have slightly modified some quotations to make them easier to read and to remove comments that might potentially identify persons or organisations.

We use the term 'inclusion climate' to reflect employee perceptions of inclusion within their organisation. This is similar to an organisational culture, but the term climate acknowledges many different aspects make up a culture[37], and thus what reflects inclusion is better described as an inclusion climate. Each direct quote is shown in italics, with the hashtag used to show the respondent number, for example, #9 means respondent #9 (see Appendix D for full list).

Inclusion Theme 1. Defining Inclusion

Our first major theme was what kaimahi Māori participants thought of inclusion and how they defined it. While several interpretations of inclusion were offered, many did align with the academic inclusion themes of belonging and uniqueness[38]. The following quotes provide examples of definitions of inclusion:

Just being willing to accept anyone from any background (#9).

An inclusive workplace, I would define as a workplace environment where all employees feel valued, respected, and supported (#23).

I think for me, personally, is kind of roots level. I think it sums up from how I think you treat people at a basic level, and then their cultural needs and then it moves into actions, and then it goes higher into HR and stuff (#18).

A common theme amongst definitions from respondents related to inclusion of a broad range of people. Thus, no one talked about just themselves being included, but a good inclusion climate reflected acknowledging and supporting all employees. This is typified by the following quotes:

> *Nice place where people feel welcome. A place where people feel that they can be safe, and they're not feeling bullied or challenged with regards to their identity…[a] place that reflects a variety of different communities (#19).*

> *So, inclusion they define as more like the LGBTQI community, but also female, also Māori and Pacific Islander, you know, how many represented? Yep. And my thing is also around, which they don't really look at, but as around people with disabilities. And it's like neuro diverse, but also people disabilities working (#7).*

> *I would define an inclusive workplace as people who respect you, not just your boss, but also your teammates…not necessarily referring to culture, but any of your like personal needs, or spiritual needs, that people can respect that. And allow you to express yourself in a way that matters to you. That's important for you so that you feel valued as a person (#5).*

> *[Inclusion] gives everyone the happy vibes…so, trying to keep that nice happy culture with your brand. And you see heaps and heaps of different people. And they feel welcome, especially us employees (#12).*

> *[Inclusion is about] creating the space and opportunity to sort of bring your full self to work. And it's like intentionally doing it. Doing it for the right reasons versus your corporate and we're checking the box (#24).*

A few kaimahi Māori also related definitions of inclusion specifically towards Māori cultural values, as shown by these examples:

> *Respects other people's beliefs and customs. Current workplace they're actually quite good. They are actually running te reo [Māori] courses through the work and work time (#27).*

> *I have very strong Māori cultural values. So, for me, inclusion is very much Te Tiriti based. Very much about enhancing and supporting Māori cultural values, tikanga, and the way that they are connected in the workplace (#28).*

> *These elements – like speaking the language [te reo Māori], understanding your values and ensuring certain practices and customs…this has become what inclusion looks like (#21).*

> *Inclusive and a workplace says it's about respecting your cultural values and where you come from and making the time and creating the space for them to be able to like, share that and connect and practice there. And I thought that like that is to me tikanga as Māori and it's creating an inclusive workplace, allowing people from different cultures to be themselves in a workplace really themselves (#22).*

Theme 1 Summary

From the interviews, kaimahi Māori see inclusion as very much aligned with the academic approach that emphasises belonging and feeling their uniqueness[39] is accepted and valued. Most of the descriptions and definitions around inclusion reflected feeling supported – and beyond the self, to include others. For some, this specifically aligned with tikanga Māori values, but often there was an acceptance that inclusion was by its very nature broad and all encompassing. This theme can be best summed up by the following quote:

> *Just being willing to accept anyone from any background (#9).*

Inclusion Theme 2. Positive Experiences

Many of the participants reported that their sense of inclusion in their current job was largely positive. For context, this has not been the case for many kaimahi Māori previously and reflects a useful comparison which is explored further in theme 4. Most Māori participants thought they were supported – either somewhat or a lot – and only a few (see theme 4 below) felt they had limited inclusion or cultural support from their workplace. The following quote typifies this:

> *I think a lot of workers here feel that they do get a lot of cultural support (#28).*

> *It is a sense of responsibility that comes from everyone…bridging that gap, so we can all learn together (#26).*

Many participants commented on how their current workplace was inclusive, and how this increased their satisfaction with their job, the sense of meaning they found in what they did, and how it enhanced their sense of belonging at work. When talking about how supportive their management was, two participants said:

> *I've done so many jobs. Yeah. This will be the one [job] that I stay at. I probably won't move on from this one (#11).*

> *An environment where employees feel valued, respected, and supported…and allows all the openness to be shared (#23).*

Other noted positive elements such as *I feel safe* (#19) and *I feel culturally safe here* (#20).

In terms of belonging at work, the following quote demonstrates how one wāhine (Māori woman) thought inclusion came from and aligned with a sense of the collective or group[40]:

> *I would identify inclusion as a place who practices full tikanga Māori of being inclusive – you can walk in there like this as your whare. You feel like you are welcome here – [participant gestured] "please be comfortable". You feel as a collective, you know you are what I think being Māori is, it's like, you are not an individual anymore, you are part of something, you are part of this team, even if I'm only there for a meeting for a couple of hours (#26).*

Other participants felt inclusion aligned with te ao Māori. One kaimahi Māori described inclusion as:

> *Being freely able to share the Māori worldview – not only staff, but clients as well. We use a lot of tikanga at work, we use a lot of te reo [Māori], and we are very supportive of Māori (#28).*

Some participants reflected on how they explicitly appreciated inclusion, as illustrated in the following comment from a café worker:

> *Like my managers, they always greet me in Māori, we do specials at work (in te reo Māori) for customers as well. We encourage customers to order coffees in te reo Māori and then we give them a special or percentage off or whatever. And it also encourages the workers to embrace the Māori language and culture too (#8).*

An interesting finding was the way kaimahi Māori articulate inclusion. Specifically, while they clearly value inclusion and were having positive experiences at their current workplace, they often comment on how important inclusion was by using an 'in contrast to' statement. That is, positive inclusion is most fully understood and valued 'in contrast to' past negative experiences in previous workplaces. Indeed, many kaimahi Māori report that they had left, or had become disengaged in, their last organisation because of the lack of inclusion.

> *My current workplace is a great place to work – very culturally supportive. I came from another company, yeah, terrible place to work for management, like absolutely terrible. Like they make their staff cry. They were just like cutthroat at us and it's all about the money (#11).*

Theme 2 Summary

From the 32 interviews, kaimahi Māori report their workplaces as providing a useful inclusion focus, and this is being perceived favourably and positively by Māori. These kaimahi Māori experience a lot of support for inclusion and the comments focus predominantly on a sense of belonging, being culturally supported, and feeling culturally safe. There were common references to the use of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in the workplace, which would normalise the uniqueness of Māori in the workplace setting.

This theme also identifies that many kaimahi Māori, who were currently experiencing positive inclusion, had past experiences of employers who were non-inclusive. This suggests that non-inclusive experiences help shape understanding and appreciation of inclusion in the present, which is like the idea of resilience aiding and shaping experiences[41]. This section can be best summed up by the following quote:

> *I think, you know, there's not a better time to be Māori then 2023, you know, like, it's never been better than being a Māori at the moment (#23).*

Inclusion Theme 3. Benefits for All

Not surprisingly, the strong positive inclusion perceptions (theme 2) were reflected in positive links towards work outcomes, which is theoretically implied[42] and has some empirical support[43], including in Aotearoa/New Zealand[44]. Theoretically, according to social exchange theory, we would expect kaimahi Māori (Māori workers) who are in an inclusive climate to report superior work attitudes and behaviours (e.g., higher job satisfaction, lower turnover intentions).

The results of this research support this aspect of social exchange theory. An inclusive climate resulted in employees' positive sense of job satisfaction, increased engagement, and overall commitment to their organisation. An earlier quote highlights this:

> *This will be the one [job] that I stay at. I probably won't move on from this one (#11).*

Employee retention is a key factor in Aotearoa/New Zealand firms[45] and thus kaimahi Māori can recognise the special nature of a strong inclusion climate and reciprocate with wanting to stay in that workplace.

The following quote highlights the danger of workplaces being highly inclusive and then 'pulling back' on their inclusion commitment:

> *But more recently, in the last six months, the company has become more and more critical of my work. Specifically, becoming highly negative about my time spent in the Māori community. My role includes time with community groups, but due to my expertise in te reo [Māori], they want me specifically. And more often! This can become extensive and removes me from my direct 'work' related stuff – even though my role includes community engagement! It has now got to the point where I'm now actually considering quitting, because they have kind of gone backwards on the commitment (#28).*

The following comment is from a participant who left their job due to the lack of inclusion at their old workplace:

> *I ticked the diversity box for them. They were looking for the young female Māori, and that they had that in, you know, great, because I could lead karakia. But really weren't looking for too much else from me in that regard. So, I think it might have been about six, six months. And I suggested to them that they, if they wanted to take the serious, you know, if they wanted to actually have an inclusive role like that, then they should go to manawhenua and actually talk to them about who could be that representative for them, because that's not me. And that's not what I want to do anymore. So, I don't know whether it's discrimination directly, but perhaps just some unconscious bias that I would tick the box and we don't really need anything else… And that's not what I want to do anymore. In the end, I quit that job (#26).*

The following participant reflects on the extra effort he put in at his current job because he was able to attend community meetings and cultural events:

> *Yeah. So, it's kind of like reciprocation, you give them something, then you know that you both help each other. I pay it forward as well. I don't know when something like a tangi is going to start, so I'll put on a couple extra hours in*

when I can, and my managers are quite aware of it. But at my old workplace, they got sick of me going away, and they're always promising you that the five people are going to be hired at some point [referencing they were short staffed]. Because we're the skeleton crew, the owner was making millions – making money hand over fist – because we were at the coalface just going hard for each other (our work crew). I'm all about helping out but you're not reaping the benefit from it. And it's just burning you out, while they had a record year [for profit]. (#14).

The participant notes he left that role soon after to work in his current role, and states *he couldn't be happier* with his new job.

Theme 3 Summary

The inclusion literature suggests that employees with a strong sense of belonging and having their uniqueness as Māori supported would lead to benefits for their employers[46]. This finding was supported in this research study. Specifically, participants talk a lot about quitting jobs that were less inclusive and how they are sticking with their new employer or current organisation because they are supportive of Māori culture. This aligns with the uniqueness aspect of inclusion[47] and shows that kaimahi Māori work behaviours – retention and extra role behaviours – are positively influenced by inclusion. Further, this reciprocation reflects a positive joy of working for a supportive organisation, making inclusion a win-win for employer and employee.

Inclusion Theme 4. Historical Referencing

Along with the notion of positive inclusion amongst kaimahi Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand workplaces, we also found that many participants have seen, or experience, non-inclusive behaviours. Positively, many participants felt the landscape in Aotearoa was changing for the better. One participant noted their work experiences had improved markedly in the last 20 years, stating:

Yes, it was hard, because I joined in 2005 it was still oh, I suppose, you could call it you know, non-PC then. So, it was pretty much to shut up, do what you're told. And then obviously, as the organisation modernised, you know, got progressively better. So, at the start was pretty ruthless, to be honest, like, racism, sexism, every ism, you could think of and now it was like, completely different, like, it turned into a school, like a college (#13).

That participant also notes a change in the use of Māori culture in the workplace, stating the support they have now is amazing and culture is celebrated, but problems are still lurking:

Racism is a bit more back door now. But it was pretty open back then. But now, like that's pretty much what you see on TV. In regard to Māori culture being more accepted and mainstream, like a lot of workers now speak te reo Māori. They know their pepeha, they introduced themselves in Māori (#13).

This was echoed by participant #7, a private sector consultant, who stated:

I think it's pretty good at the company I am in. To be honest, if you talked to me even five years ago, or ten years ago, I could tell you horrendous stories about my time in government. But things have changed, especially in the last five or so years. I'm sure there's some organizations that are still behind the eight ball or even in terms of the pay and equity (#7).

Another older Māori participant notes the historical inclusion focus (or lack thereof) towards Māori and how that has changed. They state:

I think some of the experiences that I've seen of were not inclusion…just the status quo, or the business as usual, is maintained year after year after year, with potentially society or the world outside of that organization has moved forward. And so, we, you know, we've seen young [Māori] people, graduates, interns come through the door, who aren't seen for who they are. I think the same criteria, or the same layer of expectations is put on them that was used 30 years ago. But these individuals are not the same as those who came through the door 30 years ago (#26).

Theme 4 Summary

The findings in theme 4 show a level of sophisticated analysis, in which kaimahi Māori are able to assess their current workplace commitment towards inclusion and contrast it with past workplace experiences and employers. While theme 2 shows a strong and positive perception of inclusion, theme 4 highlights the role that historical experiences play in shaping perceptions. Overall, there is strong evidence that kaimahi Māori often used their past workplace experiences to assess the current workplace, including those who had been in the same organisation or field for a long time. This historical perspective did not seem to distort their perceptions, but rather clarify their assessments and enable them to see their positive experiences more clearly.

Inclusion Theme 5. Inclusion is Beyond the Workplace

The focus of this theme is that organisations need to be inclusive even when no one is looking, and even if there might not be any apparent reason to do so (i.e., no minority or Māori employees). Logically, inclusion is about making everyone feel they belong, and some differences might be hard for managers to perceive, such as some disabilities, mental health issues, and sexual orientation. Amongst the individual kaimahi Māori interviewed in this research, their inclusion experiences were not found to relate to any specific tikanga Māori or highlight any Māori approach to inclusion. Aligning with their definitions in theme 1, they simply found that a good inclusion climate benefited everyone.

Importantly, the ethnic majority of Aotearoa/New Zealand (i.e., Pākehā) can benefit from inclusion because every employee wants to belong and have their unique characteristics accepted and supported, but it can be hard for co-workers and managers to perceive and understand these differences. Finally, other minority groups will respond positively when there is inclusion towards Māori because it shows a genuine commitment and support for a key ethnic group in the Aotearoa/New Zealand workplace. This is supported by several participants, with the following kaimahi Māori reporting on a work experience reflecting inclusion:

My friend works for a very corporate Wellington workplace, like, full-of-European workplaces. They are fully committed to being culturally inclusive. And there's not, I don't think, there's any Māori that work there. But they like took time off. They went to the East Coast and stayed on a marae and learnt what it means to be Māori – the challenges Māori face in the workplace. And how they [as an employer] can become better, like taking that actual time out and going to a place that is very foreign to them. And I just thought that was

really cool. I hadn't really heard of that before. I thought that was like such an awesome way to do it. Like, just taking those steps like being meaningful in what you're doing. Real intention behind it, I think is very important (#21).

While another participant was the only Māori in their workplace, they still note that they felt very much included, stating:

Especially in this job, it's been the best job I've had for support! We have, like a few different layers of management, that you can go through and like people that you can talk to, and the whole place is really supportive. And if you or someone else can identify [Māori, gender diverse, etc.] and suddenly there is a need, whether that's for you personally, or another staff member, they are usually really forthcoming in making that happen. Because everyone wants staff to be happy (#3).

That participant notes that even though they are the only Māori in the organisation, they perceive strong inclusion across the entire workforce. They state:

I'm literally the only person that is of a different culture and that's not just because I'm Māori but everyone that we work with in our staff is about the same age (around 45 years old). It was just white – but there is an ethos of the management to be inclusive – and that a has lots to do with it [happiness of staff]. And my Māori friends in similar organisations [in that industry] don't feel as supported or they don't feel as included or like they feel like a bit like a number and like a cog to the machine. Whereas in our place, everyone does feel quite included in the makeup of the actual organization. And I think everyone saw that everyone does feel quite important. And I think that's important to the staff as well. And, and that's what management kind of pushes us to make everyone feel included and important, so that they get the best out of them. So, I think that's the key [to inclusion] – more of a management directive and focus (#3).

One participant, who was also the only Māori in their office, states why they were so engaged at work:

I think it would be the calibre of people, everyone's got all different backgrounds. They share the experiences; they share to support and collaborate. They understand the significance of the networks and the relationships and also the role of the job. They've also been very accommodating, being helpful, they don't have that attitude of 'they're an organization, what's that [cultural event] got to do with this job? You've got to do it like that'. No, here they give you the autonomy, the responsibility, they understand how important it was to have culture, but also at each role of the firm strategy, leads to a Māori component, when it comes to outcomes, so they know how important that is [supporting Māori culture]. And here I feel I am safe when I exercise my own [Māori] culture, but we also have a lot of Māori relationships within the organisation. I've learned more about this town about my [Māori] culture being here (#2).

Theme 5 Summary

Theme 5 reminds organisations that inclusion can occur when there are no kaimahi Māori or even a single Māori employee. It is the organisational culture and climate that helps shape the working environment. Inclusion focuses on belonging and uniqueness are not restricted to supporting Māori culture, or Pacific people's culture, or any individual's culture. Inclusion is about supporting all cultures and peoples.

A workplace with 100% Pākehā might fully support all differences and this might capture those differences (e.g., differences of sexual orientation, seen or unseen disabilities, mental health issues) for inclusion. Theme 5 reminds us of the powerful strength of providing broad support for all, not just one group. This theme also highlights the benefit of having a strong inclusion culture because it creates a climate that attracts a diversity of people into an organisation where current and potential employees can exist, feel supported, and thrive.

Topic 1 Summary: Inclusion Benefits

The five themes in this topic show that inclusion experiences of kaimahi Māori are positive and common, and the findings align well with the inclusion literature. The inclusion commitment from Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations is largely beneficial for kaimahi Māori work behaviours such as retention. Furthermore, we found that these benefits can also extend to other minorities and indeed, create a positive workplace climate even if the organisation is all Pākehā. Overall, the themes from these interviews suggest positive and strong inclusion experiences for kaimahi Māori, which bodes well for the Māori workforce – notwithstanding the limitation around generalisability.

The next set of themes relate to some of the approaches that facilitate a positive inclusion climate, and some of the specific challenges to achieving this.

Inclusion Theme 6. Avoiding Tokenism

A strong theme amongst several respondents was that sometimes they felt that their organisation's attempts towards inclusion and supporting Māori employees and culture were disingenuous and potentially 'fake'. Indeed, researchers have critiqued inclusion and diversity policies in organisations, finding some offer no more than 'tokenism' towards these issues[48]. For minority groups like Māori, tokenism often results in setbacks, and runs counter to meaningful inclusion[49]. Some kaimahi Māori thought that they were in their workplace to be the 'token Māori'. One states:

> I think sometimes it can feel a bit tokenistic. I think in general; my organisation is pretty inclusive of Māori. But I feel like sometimes it can come off as tokenistic or trying to meet a quota. I think that comes across a little bit…it feels tokenistic (#18).

Another participant notes some aspects of their work being 'tokenistic', stating:

> I think sometimes it can be quite tokenistic. So, you can have like a strategy or something like that, and has inclusive language, or you might have some imagery, but if the whole kind of way people behaving is not necessarily inclusive…it is a little bit of window dressing. So, I think for me, it's about genuinely looking at it and all the different layers within an organization rather than just the easy stuff, which is the imagery and words on a page (#19).

Another kaimahi Māori participant notes the danger for organisations to be tokenistic in their Māori cultural activities. They state:

> *In terms of like taking that step to be able to bring in some Māori. Yeah, the first thing that I suggest is that can't just be a tick box, it can't be a, 'hey, we're going to go and do this tikanga workshop'. We've done it now. Now we've done our tikanga. [It is over]. So, it requires strong role modelling so the organisation knows what this [inclusion] looks like (#26).*

A particular focus of inclusion is around belonging and uniqueness, but the latter can be undermined if the kaimahi Māori feel they are only a token. It is even worse if a co-worker confirms those suspicions, as the following comment illustrates:

> *In one organisation I was the only Māori. And it was like, I remember that whole first year I was there. I literally thought I was like the 'token Māori'. Like, that's the only reason I'm in here is because I hold that space. Like they've going back to ticking that box. They've got a, you know, represent some form of Māori. So, it's you. And I even had a comment like that from one of my co-workers: 'Oh, you must be the token one'. And then they laugh. And, you know, I guess I laughed along with them. Because I guess that again, like being that people pleaser. But yeah, there's just so many of these instances of being the only Māori in the room a lot of the time (#22).*

This latter theme also highlights the importance of belonging and how this can be a challenge if a kaimahi Māori is the only Māori in the workplace. Thus, representation and belonging are improved when there are multiple kaimahi Māori in the workplace, organisational size willing of course. The following quote highlights a strong case of tokenism:

> *Historically, my organisation engaged Māori culture, but it was like, it was token, so it would just be like having a haka group perform, but then not caring about the meaning (#13).*

One participant talked about their organisation offering online te reo Māori language courses for all employees. They state:

> *I think the te reo [Māori] courses are good. But I think they just run these courses as a thing maybe to tick boxes as well. Saying that they've been doing something [beneficial for Māori culture]. I think it is a tick box exercise. I think it is something that they feel they should so they can say that they actually are doing something, right? (#27).*

When probed why he thought the action was just a 'tick box', he thought about it and then notes:

> *They ran a te reo course* [Māori]*, but there's nothing more other than that (#27).*

When reflecting on a previous workplace, another participant said:

> *I think it's difficult if you try to practice diversity, from the purpose of just paying lip-service (#23).*

Another issue associated with tokenism is that many kaimahi Māori had mixed feelings about the use and support of te reo Māori in their workplace. For the most part, organisations trying to use te reo Māori in the workplace was seen as positive, but the attempt needed to feel genuine and authentic. One participant states that their organisation offer te reo [Māori] classes but failed to follow up, offer anything more, or even use it in the workplace. They said this made it feel like it was only a token gesture.

Another participant felt things were more genuine and authentic in their workplace, stating:

We have all these online trainings, and it's like product trainings and all of that, well, they have specifically now got to learn te reo Māori course it's simple, like, you know, normal, like how to say hello, all of that sort of stuff. The store that I work in. It's genuine. I can only speak about my store. It's yeah, it's very genuine. And they really care about the effort. Like they won't just slip some koro patterns on a board and go welcome to Māori language week (#16).

Theme 6 Summary

The findings in theme 6 highlight a danger for organisations seeking a positive inclusion climate. Kaimahi Māori may question workplace commitment towards inclusion if they perceive that their appointment, or some organisational activity, is tokenistic. This is especially true to the limited or infrequent use of te reo Māori, or training in te reo Māori but without further extension and organisational use.

This theme provides a useful warning for organisations: engage in inclusion in a tokenistic and piecemeal fashion and the very people you are trying to attract and retain are not likely to be fooled; instead, they will exit your business. It has been noted that meaningful inclusion requires that marginalised groups and peoples, like Māori, are not included merely for institutional benefit. To be genuine and non-tokenistic requires a transformational effort that genuinely works to remove barriers that drive inequity[50].

Tokenism is understood as being largely detrimental[51] because it can lead to loneliness and alienation for affected groups[52]. Findings in this research indicate that tokenism may also produce counterintuitive effects, relating to the positive approach of kaupapa Māori. In response, we draw on research in resilience[53] that states that growth happens when issues are resolved and grown from. Indeed, this is important because broadly across Aotearoa/New Zealand workplaces, the use of te reo Māori is growing and is positive for both Māori and non-Māori[54]. Thus, businesses need to consider their inclusion strategy and implementation, looking to view any beginning as a start only. They should see inclusion activities (e.g., Māori cultural lessons) as something to build on, rather than just randomly offering cultural elements like te reo Māori classes – and then never doing anything else. The long-term commitment to inclusion will make a difference.

Inclusion Theme 7. Leadership

Beyond the use of language and customs in a genuine and authentic manner (theme 6), kaimahi Māori also acknowledged the need to see Māori in leadership positions to know inclusion attempts were genuine. Many participants note this, for example:

I would say that even we have all the top positions all held by white male...we [Māori] are not represented at top leadership (#4).

One participant stated that they would like to see:

More people in like leadership positions. For me it's like, okay, if we are genuinely about diversity and inclusion, do we have it across the different levels of the organization? And not just at say lower level? For example, are we [Māori] at decision-making levels? (#19).

A kaimahi Māori participant in a large consulting firm notes things had changed a lot in the past year, stating:

> *The partners are trying to change things. But traditionally, a lot of the managers are white and male, which won't surprise you. But they've had to be quite purposeful to change it. So, for instance, the chief executive purposefully brought in someone who is Māori and is really trying to change the organization within the last year or two (#7).*

Another participant comments about the importance of leadership around inclusion of kaimahi Māori, stating:

> *It doesn't matter, you know, no middle manager, and no matter how big the organisation is going to create the institutional changes that are required if it's not done at the top level. So if the if the CEO isn't, it doesn't have an interest [in Māori], then, you know, it just doesn't work. It'll just always be lip service, because there'll be one part of the company that isn't practicing it, because it's not the, you know, looked after (#23).*

Another kaimahi Māori notes the positive influence leadership can play, stating that:

> *There's just some amazing leaders like in my organization that do that [support Māori]. And yeah, it is vital the organisation is living the tikanga. It needs to be driven right from the leadership, the executive team downwards (#22).*

Supportive leadership needs to go up the whole hierarchy if the organisation is a large one. A participant states:

> *But I think for me, not only is my manager supportive, but so too is her manager – who is the head of people and culture (#25).*

The following quote acknowledges the importance of Māori representation in management and leadership. This kaimahi Māori want to become a leader in an inclusive organisation to be able to make it even stronger. They state:

> *I was a team leader, then I was a manager. I wanted to become a manager because I felt like I could actually create more change, rather than working on hands with customers – even though I liked that side very much. Ultimately, I loved the vision behind this organisation and wanted to help drive it (#22).*

Theme 7 Summary

The findings in theme 7 indicate that kaimahi Māori perceive leadership as a key focus for inclusion. This might be summed up by asking: if there are no Māori leaders, how can an organisation be inclusive? This finding aligns with public sector work around minorities asking for greater representation, specifically in leadership roles[55]. Indeed, research on Māori leaders has offered unique models towards Māori leadership, including the importance of "the principles of tino rangatiratanga (autonomy and self-determination), mana (respect and influence), whānau (extended family), whakapapa (shared history) and whanaungatanga (kin relations, consultation and engagement)" (p. 25)[56].

Other Māori leadership research has identified unique traits, specifically cultural authenticity, humility, altruism, long-term orientation, and collectivism[57]. These are characteristics that organisations might look for when recruiting and selecting Māori leaders.

Overall, the theme around leadership provides organisations with a useful reminder that without leaders who are Māori, kaimahi Māori – even in organisations that feel initially very inclusive – will begin to doubt that there is a genuine commitment to kaimahi Māori and Māori cultural values in general. This finding should encourage organisations to recognise the importance of Māori leadership. Without seeing a Māori leader in the workplace, kaimahi Māori are unable to realise how they can fully fit into the organisation[58].

Inclusion Theme 8. Strategy and Commitment

Like the commitment to putting Māori in leadership positions, participants also note the importance of trying to change things by funding inclusion initiatives and measuring efforts, not just through affirmations and words. This kaimahi Māori state:

> *If we are going to state something in a strategy, then what are the KPIs? [key performance indicators]. What's the reasoning behind it? What is the genuine intention that's been reflected in the bottom line and the people that are employed in particular roles? And the KPIs that those roles are being measured against (#19)?*

They went on to state what happens if these aspects are not done:

> *Sounds like a nice to hear or you know, we're a 'bicultural organisation' and there's no KPIs that are necessarily connected to that - so it doesn't get done. [To be inclusive] the organisation needs to fund it properly. And this is what success looks like and we can get there because we've got the resources to do it (#19).*

It is also noted that inclusion needs to be experienced by all employees within an organisation, with one kaimahi Māori illustrating this point by saying it was similar to a marae:

> *On the marae in that regard, where everyone regardless of who you are, has a role that you play. You know, one role is not more important than the other. And, and this has taken me a while to kind of come to that idea, but just, you know, we say the person who stands out the front, the korero is the important person, but actually, without the person standing in the kitchen or without the person doing the call – we are nothing. So, it's just that idea that we see the equal value in everyone who is present (#26).*

This was echoed by another participant, who has had both positive and negative inclusion experiences. Unfortunately, their most recent experiences have become so bad that they are considering quitting their current employment. The point here is that the organisation's commitment to inclusion and Māori culture has changed. They report:

> *My experiences have been mixed. They had been very positive. To start off with, I am a fluent speaker of te reo Māori and I am deeply embedded in Māori tikanga. I've done a lot of community work in my job. And initially, my employer was very supportive of my cultural roles, because I did quite a few roles in the Māori community due to my tikanga and te reo [Māori] proficiency (#28).*

They also note that now their work experiences have become quite negative:

I am constantly clashing with management about my work role being too Māori and whether our ideas for the role (that I have been doing for years!) have now radically changed. There have been talks about getting lawyers in – from me and my boss. And so that's been quite distressing in some respects because I just feel like they're just going back on what they promised and what I had been doing. What they used to really like about me work…I have felt very culturally safe up until recently. So, my experiences are this kind of U-turn on things, which has left me feeling a little bit hōhā [angry]. And that's why I'm job hunting. And I have an interview next week. And this issue hasn't been resolved. Which is rather sad (#28).

Another kaimahi Māori participant had a very negative experience with their last workplace, where they were initially happy for him to spend time at a tangi, but this changed very quickly, so he left. However, his current workplace is very happy with his duty to the Māori community:

So, when there is a tangi and I'm going they'll ask: 'you're going to be speaking?'. You know, if I say no, well then, they know it's just going to be a day. If yes, it could be three [days]. And because they're supportive of me, I am trying to keep it to a minimum, like if only you only have to speak on the last day, well, then I'll only have one day. But if I'm going to be speaking across the tangi [i.e., multiple days], they are understanding I will be away for days. And they are cool to me, I try and do as much extra for them as well. So, it's kind of like reciprocation, you give them something they you know that you both help each other. Pay it forward as well. I'll put on a couple extra hours and my managers and middle management are quite aware of it (#14).

Aligned with organisations applying a firm-wide strategy towards inclusion, it was also noted that if an organisation is going to support kaimahi Māori and any Māori cultural activities, then this needs to be done wholeheartedly. Especially, this includes not going back on previous commitments made by the organisation. Several kaimahi Māori note the importance of their organisation letting them be Māori and practice their culture, as it was agreed to. One suggests the genuine lack of commitment to them using te reo Māori and tikanga practices in the workplace was due to some kind of unconscious bias (#26).

Finally, one kaimahi Māori participant discusses the importance of doing inclusion properly:

> *There is a difference between teaching cultural competency or tikanga to non-Māori versus bringing it for Māori. Because sometimes what we end up with is, you know, the person who has that 'Māori hat' on is looked upon as the, the representative or the leader or the 'go to person'. But also, that can be a little bit confronting for both sides. So, ensuring that a safe space is created for the work to be done before you even bring in any training or learning or tikanga (#26).*

Theme 8 Summary

The findings in theme 8 provide useful insights for organisations that are seeking to create, support, and realise a genuine inclusion climate for kaimahi Māori. This can be achieved through a dedicated strategy that includes KPIs or a firm commitment to understanding the time involved in important cultural events such as tangi. This aligns with the notion of aronga takirua (the double cultural shift[59]) and how an organisation can show strong inclusion by supporting cultural activities in work time. This also aligns with person-organisation fit[60], which reflects the compatibility between people and their place of employment. It might be that kaimahi Māori have expectations around how inclusion – including support for Māori values – are enacted in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This is consistent with growing attention and support for Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi)[61].

Overall, this theme encourages organisations to understand that inclusion needs to be a genuine focus in the organisation, and this requires a strong commitment at the strategic level. Further, aligning with theme 3, there are mutual benefits when supporting inclusion, consistent with the notion of utu[62] and reciprocity between employee and employer.

Topic 2 Summary: Achieving Inclusion

In summary, these three themes (themes 6-8) provide insight into how Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations can implement inclusion. This includes avoiding tokenism, providing a clear strategy and commitment for inclusion, and including Māori in leadership positions. Overall, the themes suggest the key to strong inclusion experiences for kaimahi Māori rests with organisational leadership and their commitment to implementing and supporting inclusion of Māori culture.

The final set of themes relate to some of the workplace challenges organisations face in developing supportive inclusion climates. Again, insight is drawn from resilience and positive literature to provide a backdrop for developing more promising futures.

Inclusion Theme 9. Racism

While perceived discrimination or racism is not the most consistent issue facing kaimahi Māori, it was perceived as the most detrimental factor of work in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The following comment reflects a participant's past workplace experience with a colleague over a kapa haka performance at work. They report that their co-worker said:

> *Ah, you f#@ken Māori, go over there and do your ogggiboogiee dance and then come back! It was just so bloody ignorant. More ignorant than anything else (#13).*

An interesting focus around racism experienced by kaimahi Māori was that many of the participants did not feel that they had been discriminated against in their workplace, but they had experienced racism from the customers they served. Thus, inclusion may need to be tailored towards customers as well, to show that discrimination and racist views are not tolerated by the organisation.

One participant talked about how some of the fellow tradespeople he works with were racist towards him, but the organisation stepped in to address this. He states:

> *They don't say stuff like that [discriminatory comments] anymore. Some of our customers were rude to us Māori. But they're not so rude these days. But the, like, epic negative experience, it's from customers. It's not like your employer or your boss or your co-workers. And my managers are more than happy to go and fight for me [against this type of discrimination] (#14).*

When asked about workplace challenges, a participant states:

> *I have personally experienced racism and discrimination, but nothing that really grinds my gears. I mean, maybe at the time, but afterwards, just like just one or two customers, really (#9).*

Several participants working in retail noted that safety in their workplace was an issue. These staff also had a lot of abuse levelled at them. For example:

> *So the customers say the worst thing! I've had to stop a customer from stealing. And the first thing they said to me is "It's because I'm Māori aye!? It's because I'm black!?" [insinuating that I was racist]. And I had to pull up my sleeves to show my tā moko that I have scattered all over my body. Like, actually, no I'm Māori! I said, "It's got nothing to do with our culture, my bro". That's always the worst! (#16).*

Similarly, one of the participants who works in education notes that a lot of the issues were not with their school or co-workers, but with the students. They report:

> *I haven't experienced racism from my school. Not with the staff or the management, but the kids are rife [to other students]. So, it is something that we deal with on a daily basis. Actually, there's discrimination with events [e.g., a global event, leads to memes being created, and then spread quickly amongst students – such as those relating to Black Lives Matter]. And it [the discrimination] kind of comes in waves…There's lot of talk around colour. I'm always trying to stamp it out. And like we're always trying to teach it and, and just advocate for being inclusive (#3).*

The following kaimahi Māori talk about having discrimination experiences early in their work career, but things are changing more positively. They said:

> *I have faced challenges because I have a very Māori name, but there has been such a shift. Straight out of high school applying for jobs, I used to be scared of having my name. I remember applying for really basic jobs where I had experience, and I wouldn't get them because of my name – that was my perception. I've had experiences of people judging me for my name*

versus who I am. I was treated negatively. Indeed, people would say "Oh, you're a different Māori?" [because I was a good worker]. Like, that was always a surprise to some. I think those kind of things have impacted me and still impact me. I think there is a bias of how people think of Māori. But I definitely think it's changing – the new social climate we're in. I even think people want to admit it when you prove them wrong (#22).

Theme 9 Summary

Only a few participants report incidents of discrimination or racism in the workplace, but those who did describe these incidents as very detrimental to their workplace experiences. This infrequency does not align with recent research in Aotearoa/New Zealand on perceived discrimination in the workplace[63]. This might be because we ask about challenges to inclusion, rather than discrimination directly.

An interesting finding was that for some kaimahi Māori, the discrimination was more likely to come from customers, not co-workers. This shows that despite organisations achieving a strong inclusion climate within the organisation, kaimahi Māori can still suffer discrimination and racism. One participant acknowledges that management did "back them up" when customers were discriminating against them.

Overall, while a strong inclusive climate does appear to reduce workplace discrimination for kaimahi Māori, it does not prevent customers from engaging in these negative behaviours. This should encourage organisations to ensure they are vigilant in supporting staff against customer-based discrimination.

Inclusion Theme 10. Other Workplace Challenges

Many of the kaimahi Māori participants note that they felt if there was a problem with inclusion that it could be overcome by talking to their managers. Thus, there is an acknowledgement that organisations with a strong inclusion climate are able to react quickly and positively to workplace challenges for kaimahi Māori. However, there are other challenges, as described in the following paragraphs.

Several workload issues were suggested, especially *the intensity of the workload* (#5) and the bureaucracy, reflected in the comment of frustration around *extensive and ridiculous processes and policies* (#7). Similarly, issues around aronga takirua[64] were raised, such as *the burden of doing the karakia at every meeting* (#10). The latter was raised as being quite distracting to getting their 'normal' work done.

One critical issue was workplace bullying, which highlights some interesting challenges for organisations, even those with a strong inclusion climate. A participant states:

I guess it depends on what the problem is. If it's cultural, if it's got something to do with Māori culture, then definitely – our leadership team is amazing. When it comes to that sort of [cultural] stuff. But bullying can sometimes happen, because we do get leaders that care more about keeping people happy and not upsetting people. Sadly, bullying is not kind of common, but it can happen anywhere. And it's a very difficult thing to solve as well (#16).

Recent research in Aotearoa/New Zealand has shown that bullying occurs amongst 91.3 percent of the sampled Māori workforce[65]. While a strong inclusion climate can reduce the incidents of workplace bullying[66], the sheer volume of bullying across industries and sectors in Aotearoa/New Zealand means inclusion is not a 'magic remedy'.

Theme 10 Summary

Theme 10 provides some insights into the other workplace challenges faced by kaimahi Māori, other than discrimination. Workload is a critical issue for kaimahi Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand[67] and might relate more broadly to the cultural double shift. This reflects the additional work roles that kaimahi Māori typically undertake in the workplace, acting as cultural guides and navigators – at the expense of managing their own workload and wellbeing[68]. The issue of bureaucracy[69] is also one facing many workers internationally, including Aotearoa/New Zealand[70]. Bullying is a proverbial issue within Aotearoa/New Zealand workplaces[71], with Māori reporting higher bullying experiences[72].

These challenges are experienced by other workers in Aotearoa/New Zealand, but different cultural experiences affect workload (e.g., aronga takirua) and workplace bullying. While these issues are influenced by positive inclusion climates (i.e., better workloads, less bureaucracy, lower bullying) these relationships remain untested to date.

Topic 3 Summary: Inclusion Challenges

Themes 9 and 10 in this topic provide some insight into the challenges facing kaimahi Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations. While racism and perceived discrimination has been found to be rampant in Aotearoa/New Zealand[73], in this research racism largely occurs from customers. This is an interesting finding and requires additional research.

Potential Differences

A focus of this research was to include a wide range of participants, including roughly half wāhine Māori (Māori women), a quarter rangatahi Māori (Māori youth, under 25 years), and a quarter older Māori workers (over 55 years). This was to enable us to explore potential differences by gender, tenure [years in current job], and age. We note that there were no differences by gender (wāhine and tāne) or tenure amongst the sample of 32 participants, showing similar levels of inclusion experiences and positive effects from Māori of both genders. We also explore the respondents' comments by those who are a Māori manager or boss. We found their experiences were not largely different, although the small subset (n=9) makes determining potential differences difficult. However, we did find some differences by age.

It was clear from our older participants that things were changing, and that the younger generation were far stronger in not tolerating discrimination and a lack of inclusion. An older participant observes:

> *I think that might be a little bit of my upbringing I've probably been used to not necessarily being completely and utterly Māori in context and so I'm probably more okay with some situations [not being supported for being Māori]. But I think I'm pretty okay with it being used to not being necessarily everything Māori, or everything about Te Tiriti. But I do notice that that's no longer accepted by a lot of new younger staff coming through (#19).*

Age differences likely reflect time spent in the workplace and living through workplaces/ societal expectations that were not so aware of diversity or inclusion. While some of this trend is also reflected in the earlier themes (e.g., theme 3: *but these individuals, not the same as those who came through the door 30 years ago (#26))*, this additional analysis demonstrates that older workers seemed to be more grateful for inclusion efforts. They were less worried about how it 'actually looked' in terms of organisational interventions, and more focussed on wider community inclusion. Many of the older age group participants also appear to be open to inclusion being about all cultures, rather than 'just' Māori issues, as per the comment above about *not being necessarily everything Māori* (#19).

Alternatively, the younger cohort appears to be more aware of inclusion and have higher expectations of organisations in terms of inclusion. They also have a stronger way of articulating what they needed or expected. For example, *I want effort from my organisation* (#17) and *I like making sure everyone's doing their part. Especially here, make sure that everyone's doing their part. With inclusion, I like to teach them, like the different jobs are there* (#8), and *we have to be mentors* (#1). The following comment sums this up by a young kaimahi Māori: *you are treading the line of two worlds. I guess I see myself in two worlds* (#29). Overall, older kaimahi Māori appear to be more satisfied and gave more examples of being grateful for positive changes in the workplace, while young kaimahi Māori were perhaps more aware and looking for inclusion from their employers.

In summary, we did find some differences by age group, with most differences being around expectations and experiences of inclusion.

Finally, our sample includes three tāngata whaikaha (disabled Māori) and three takatāpui Māori (Māori who identify with diverse sexes, genders, and sexualities).

We largely found no differences or special challenges from takatāpui Māori, with their workplace inclusion experiences being the same. The only difference found was for a kaimahi Māori who was both tāngata whaikaha and takatāpui Māori. They note that there was no difference in their treatment because they were gay, stating any issues *seems so last century* (#32). We acknowledge that this subset of respondents is very small at only three kaimahi Māori. However, that last individual is also neurodiverse and that was raised as being a slight challenge in their workplace. They state:

> Well, my organisation does want to know more about neurodiversity – I am the first (or at least the first open one!). But there is a slight lack of support around its effects on my work performance – at least to my boss. They worry my lack of attention might lead to lower job performance, which is a bit s#@t of them! I have my strategies for managing! (#32).

Potential Differences Summary

Overall, the only real differences between participants were in the age cohorts, where older Māori note that the whole societal workplace context has improved towards Māori culture and how rangatahi Māori (younger kaimahi Māori) appeared less tolerant of poor inclusion. This aspect supports theme 2, whereby kaimahi Māori appear happy to leave organisations that do not support Māori cultural values.

Theoretically, we would expect positive inclusion experiences to reflect good support of belonging and uniqueness in the workplace. Across the 32 respondents, this appears to reflect their current experiences, although many mention a lack of inclusion as a rationale for leaving previous organisations. The overall differences really reflect the extent of work experiences – at least 30 years between younger and older kaimahi Māori – which seems logical. We found little experience of differences between our quite diverse kaimahi Māori sample.

Overall Summary of Interviews

Phase 1 of our research reports on the inclusion experiences of kaimahi Māori. Several themes were found, and we presented the most important and coherent ten. The themes found were:

Topic 1: Inclusion Benefits

Theme 1. Defining Inclusion

Theme 2. Positive Experiences

Theme 3. Benefits for All

Theme 4. Historical Referencing

Theme 5. Inclusion is Beyond the Workplace

Topic 2: Achieving Inclusion

Theme 6. Avoiding Tokenism

Theme 7. Leadership

Theme 8. Strategy and Commitment

Topic 3: Inclusion Challenges

Theme 9. Racism

Theme 10. Other Workplace Challenges

The first five themes were captured under the topic of Inclusion Benefits, and the themes clearly supported the importance and benefits of inclusion. The definitions of inclusion markedly aligned with the literature – especially that inclusion means employees felt they belonged, including those with unique characteristics. Not only was there convincing evidence of strong inclusion climates for many of the study participants, but this study also provides much needed insight into this topic in the research literature. To date, there have been no large-scale empirical studies that examine inclusion climate levels amongst kaimahi Māori (or any other ethnic group) in Aotearoa/New Zealand workplaces. Consequently, these findings from interviews with kaimahi Māori present the first research exploration of inclusion and does indicate that inclusion experiences are positive. Further research that explores the levels of inclusion climate, how these might differ between kaimahi Māori and Pākehā, and their effects on key work factors (e.g., retention) and wellbeing outcomes (e.g., mental health) is encouraged.

There was also evidence that a strong inclusion climate supported enhanced behaviours from kaimahi Māori, including higher retention and superior work attitudes. This aligns well with the inclusion literature[74]. An interesting finding was in theme 5 (Historical Referencing), in which kaimahi Māori often used past non-inclusion experiences to benchmark their present workplace experience. This reflects the notion that having previous poor experiences enables kaimahi Māori to better recognise when their workplace culture is positive and supportive of Māori. Finally, this section ended with a theme that examined how inclusion is for all workers, and not just Māori. This also aligns well with the literature[75].

The second topic of Achieving Inclusion provided numerous lessons for organisations that want to implement and support inclusion in their workplaces. This included making sure their actions are genuine, authentic, and not tokenistic. There was also a recognition of the need to ensure that there are kaimahi Māori in leadership roles. Fundamentally, only an organisation with Māori leaders is going to be viewed as being genuinely inclusive. The last theme was a reminder that words and affirmations need to be followed up with commitments and sufficient resources to ensure inclusion genuinely occurs.

The last topic was Inclusion Challenges. Not surprisingly, perceived discrimination[76] dominated this theme. Interestingly, many of the discrimination incidents experienced by kaimahi Māori came from customers, not co-workers, which provides new insights into discrimination. Given that workplace discrimination experiences of kaimahi Māori have only recently been documented[77], this suggests a new avenue for further research to better understand where workplace racism occurs. Finally, other traditional workplace challenges were mentioned including workload, bureaucracy, and workplace bullying, which was especially pertinent. Workplace bullying deserves greater attention to determine whether a strong inclusive climate can reduce these negative behaviours.

Interviews (Phase 1) Conclusion

Overall, phase 1 answers three research questions regarding inclusion experiences of kaimahi Māori. The first two questions are (1) how do kaimahi Māori define inclusion and (2) how can workplaces be more inclusive for kaimahi Māori? We find that kaimahi Māori see inclusion as belonging and uniqueness, and that organisations are doing a good, but not perfect, job in providing supportive and inclusive workplaces, at least amongst our 32 respondents. A third research question focused on operational tools or policies

that may aid in developing and maintaining this inclusion climate. We determined several actions and approaches that employers could engage to be genuinely inclusive.

As an initial study into inclusion for kaimahi Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand, phase 1 produced supportive findings and lots of suggestions for organisations. Finally, apart from expected age-related differences from differing work experiences, we find little evidence of differences by kaimahi Māori in the present sample of respondents.

Detailed Case Studies (Phase 2) Findings

Overall, our analysis of the case studies led to six major themes being identified. These were:

Case study theme 1. It's not policy but leadership.

Case study theme 2. Inclusion is genuine and authentically expressed.

Case study theme 3. Enhancing inclusion pathways.

Case study theme 4. Māori cultural values.

Case study theme 5. Inclusion extends beyond the business.

Case study theme 6. Basic business needs first?

All 15 case studies are provided in Appendix E. We draw specifically from each case study in general, although we do not utilise direct quotes to illustrate the meaning behind the themes. We encourage exploring the case studies for specific examples. In all cases, we have slightly modified some quotes to make them easier to read and to remove comments with the potential to identify organisations. We have also indented large quotes. We use the term 'inclusion climate' to reflect employee perceptions of inclusion within their organisation. This is similar to an organisational culture, but the term climate acknowledges that many different aspects make up a culture[78] and thus that reflecting inclusion is better termed an inclusion climate.

Theme 1. It's Not Policy but Leadership

Our first major finding was that mainly large-sized businesses had a formal inclusion policy. While large-sized firms and corporates were more likely to have a formal policy, this doesn't guarantee inclusion. The larger-sized businesses within the study tended to have formal inclusion policies and these were either developed from an international Head Office or the New Zealand Head Office. However, this policy did not necessarily make the staff feel like their workplaces were highly inclusive. The true ability to generate a strong climate of inclusion – where staff feel they belong, and their uniqueness is included[79] – was found to be via leadership. Many cases (#2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 13, 15) illustrated strong examples of how leaders – CEOs, owners, or senior managers – were able to ensure inclusion was actualised in their workplaces.

We found that the leaders in most of the case studies, those with a strong commitment to inclusion, discussed the importance of knowing staff, and staff knowing one another, in order to get the best out of each other and the workforce in general. Leadership and social cohesion appear to be central players in developing a strong inclusion climate. The importance of all employees feeling that they belong was a central tenant of inclusion, and a formal policy does not necessarily mean that employees will feel included. Thus, it is the leadership and expression of inclusion within a business

that is most important [more on this in Theme 2]. We do acknowledge that the large telecommunications business case study (#15) did have a formal policy and workers reported strong positive feelings of inclusion across the worksite we visited. As such, this more likely reflects that the workers' experiences did align with the policy. Indeed, many managers (and their employees) talked about inclusion being 'the norm' or even 'part of the business's DNA' (see case studies #3, 13, 14). Again, this illustrates the embedded nature of inclusion, rather than it being an add-on.

In summary, a key to inclusion is not defined by having a formal inclusion policy. Indeed, some comments alluded that a formal policy cannot be relied on to 'magically do the inclusion work', because management felt their commitment towards inclusion has been 'captured' in a formal policy. Rather than a formal policy, organisational leaders and managers who are committed to inclusion – even if informally – appear to be the key. As such, owners, leaders, and managers need to consider that it is important to think about how inclusion is applied. Living inclusion is the key. We do acknowledge that, especially in large-sized organisations, inclusion policies can signal intent. Indeed, this might be the mechanism for managers to realise their organisation takes inclusion seriously, and for staff to feel that inclusion issues are being embraced. Such policies – especially in large-sized firms, might also encourage accountability, and thus the importance of a formal policy should not be discounted.

Theme 2. Inclusion is Genuine and Authentically Expressed

Building on theme 1, we found that inclusion is propelled by credible and genuine interactions. In most cases, we found that authenticity was another key approach for organisations to embrace. In a workplace context, authenticity refers to being self- aware and acting in accordance with a person's true self, expressing what one genuinely believes[80]. At the leadership level, this involves meaningful relationships throughout the organisation and creating processes that support significant values[81] – here, inclusion. Hence, an authentic approach towards inclusion means that leadership, including that practised by supervisors, and business owners, creates the 'glue' by which employees feel they belong, and in terms of which their uniqueness is embraced. Indeed, we suggest that inclusion involves a flow of authenticity through all aspects of the business, whereby leaders express inclusion through instilling belonging within workers – including those with unique characteristics, and this extends beyond the workplace, to employees' homes, their whānau, and the community. So, for employees to feel greater inclusion a key is that they feel like genuine partners in the business. Employees across many case studies (# 4, 6, 9, 13, 15) reported they felt supported by their organisation and leaders towards being included, and this was reinforced by their managers' and employers' positive, genuine, and high regard for inclusion. Thus, it is the authentic expression of inclusion that 'actualises' this within a business.

In summary, a second key to inclusion is being authentic about inclusion, including how this is actualised throughout all interactions, and with all stakeholders. Leaders who did this were viewed as genuine and authentic in promoting inclusion.

Theme 3. Enhancing Inclusion Pathways

We found that when organisations and their leadership encourage open dialogue with employees, and employees being able to voice issues and have a 'say' in the organisation around inclusion, they tended to have more successful outcomes in generating high levels of inclusion. This aligns with the importance of employee voice[82]. Many of the case studies (#2, 4, 5, 8, 13, 15) spoke of employee confidence to voice issues of inclusion. This included providing employees a voice and input into the business and how things are done throughout the business. At the highest levels, this included a pathway to sharing intellectual property or some ownership in the business. This is exemplified by our case study on the mechanical engineering company (#5) that shows the importance of innovation and giving staff the ability to take ownership over a particular new product line that they want to introduce in order to thrive within the business.

The sharing of intellectual property rights enables the business to maximise the innovation of their workforce by sharing profits or ownership. This aligns with the literature around profit sharing and firm ownership, and how these can have a small but significant effect on firm performance overall[83]. Relatedly, an academic study[84] found that profit-sharing benefits organisational performance more when there is a management philosophy aligned with high employee involvement. Hence, applied to inclusion, the potential for profit sharing and firm ownership are likely to be most beneficial (and motivational) when combined with a management approach focused on maximising employee interests.

We know from theme 1 that inclusion does not have to be a formal policy. Shared ownership could be seen as the highest level of inclusion because the diverse employees of the organisation hold some connection to the overall business. Beyond the pathway to ownership, our farming case study (#1) showed another route to stimulating inclusion through the importance of giving workers access to business resources, in that case, the many physical and natural things that the farm had to offer. Similarly, the mechanical engineering case study (#5) highlighted the sharing of tools and associated resources with employees.

In summary, there are multiple pathways for businesses to build inclusion and simple ways are to provide autonomy, voice, and involvement in the business to create belonging, with more extreme examples including profit sharing and even ownership. Overall, welcoming, supporting, open communication, and sharing with employees is the easiest way for firms to develop inclusion climates.

Theme 4. Māori Cultural Values

Across several case studies, the expression of Māori cultural values, beyond welcoming whānau, was attributed to a strong inclusion climate. These values included the use of tikanga Māori as a way to cement the goals, strategy, and vision of the organisation. Indeed, one business talked about this being Te Tiriti o Waitangi led or inspired. This approach is supported strongly in case studies (#3, 8, 13). This also aligns with theme 2, especially for Māori businesses, where being genuinely inclusive of Māori culture meant that tikanga Māori plays a central role in the organisation. Importantly, non-Māori organisations were also found to be able to adopt and embed tikanga Māori, for example, case study #8. In that case, the business owner encourages (and pays for) staff to not only learn te reo Māori, but also embrace Māori cultural values. In addition, popular Māori cultural values were used to express or define how inclusion was offered to employees and this was especially around awhi in case studies (#4, 7, 8). For example, case study #7 uses whanaungatanga and awhi and provides employment opportunities for family of her networks, and then supports them as they study or develop their skills. This also provides temporary

staffing for her business. Together, it represents a win-win situation for the business and her networks. Thus, Māori cultural values can be used to describe how inclusion operates for employees within these businesses.

Similarly, owners and managers used the cultural value of kaitiakitanga to acknowledge their role as guardians of their employees and wider communities, and how inclusion fits into this important cultural value. Other cultural values included whanaungatanga and utu, highlighting the natural use of Māori cultural values in highly inclusive businesses. This represents the importance of networking within business and with the wider community, and how positive engagement with others can lead to positive benefits for the business.
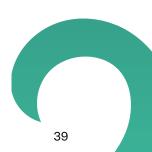
In summary, we acknowledge that most Māori businesses but also some non-Māori businesses saw inclusion aligning positively and beneficially with different Māori cultural values. This provides useful insights and directions for all businesses – including non-Māori – around actualising inclusion, and approaches to facilitate it. However, we also acknowledge that theme 2 reminds us that, without a genuine and authentic approach to these values, they are less likely to create a positive inclusion benefit.

Theme 5. Inclusion Extends Beyond the Business

A key for successful inclusion appeared to be welcoming workers' wider family into the business to enjoy businesses resources. This includes the farming case study (#1) and the mechanical engineering case study (#5) which highlight the nature of offering firm resources to whānau. This aligns with Māori cultural values of whānau and the wider family, but also whanaungatanga, and the importance of relationships and creating close connection between people. Beyond this, many firms having strong inclusion also had a strong interest and engagement with their community. For example, many case study organisations sought to be inclusive of their respective communities, whether this was customers in the café case study (#7); or the local Māori community such as iwi, including working with a local marae (case study #1); employee whānau as staff of business networks (case study #7); and staff bringing their children to work, including being babysat by colleagues, which creates a genuine sense of belonging and whānau (case study #13).

Many of our case study organisations also participated in significant levels of community outreach and engagement. The outreach can be seen by connections to local iwi and marae as well as other community groups. A clear example of this level of inclusion was from the engineering case study (#14), which highlighted a significant shortfall in representation of Māori and women in the profession. From this identification of the problem, they were able to actively work in their community at a grassroots level to build a larger educational pipeline that the industry would benefit from. This dedication to inclusion would raise the level of commitment to inclusion but also the connection to community for their business. In turn, this whanaungatanga and enhancement of relationships benefits the whole industry.

Another example of community inclusion was our farming case study (#1), where the owners of the property would share access to their property with a wide range of whānau of workers and contractors. Cases #9 and #13 also included community, iwi

and whānau in daily interactions. Including an employee's whānau in the organisation – or at least its physical location –helped cement perceived inclusion from the staff. This is because everyone belongs – including employees' families. Businesses can also enhance inclusion for Māori workers through enhanced relationships with iwi and whānau. For example, irrespective of Māori employees' tribal whakapapa, Māori staff may enjoy engaging with a local hapu or iwi, even if it is not their own. This creates inclusion for Māori as they are connected and belong to these social groups. Further, the low number (14.2%) of Māori employees in workplaces[85], means these wider community connections provide a sense of connectedness that can enhance kaimahi Māori identity.

This suggests that wider community involvement, is important in inclusion as it provides kaimahi with their sense of uniqueness (Māori identity) *and* belonging (with iwi, whānau, and community). For example, case study #1 provided help to their local marae and wider community when events were on, and when the farm needed help the marae could offer many hands. In case study #9, iwi and whānau were invited to events at the workplace, and in case study #13 whānau were welcome into the workplace, and indeed childcare was offered by other staff members if needed. Fundamentally, good inclusion behaviours appear to be wide ranging and extend beyond the business. Indeed, this sense of developing a belonging with the wider community – and all the differences that occur within such broad communities – reflects belonging and uniqueness in line with inclusion theory[86].

In summary, while the above themes focus on the workforce, this theme identifies that inclusion can extend beyond the borders of a firm and this might provide a useful way for a business to develop and show their inclusion practices – by readily engaging in the wider community.

Theme 6. Basic Business Needs First?

Some of the case study organisations did not present themselves as exemplar case studies for inclusion. These organisations tended to have some kind of financial burden that was holding them back from genuinely creating a positive inclusion climate. In effect, this referred to the inability of the business to meet its 'core' basic needs around financial security, akin to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.[87] While the literature suggests inclusion leads to better performance[88], these businesses talked about inclusion being a 'nice to have' <u>when</u> the business was performing sufficiently well. This might simply highlight that some businesses see inclusion as a core function of their operations, while others see it as something to strive for, when they can afford it.

Our case studies also show that positive inclusion perceptions are affected by work demands. When staff feel like their work demands are unreasonable, that impacts how inclusive they feel their organisation is (see case study #12). If staff are completely overwhelmed by their work demands, then perceptions of inclusion are lower because workers don't see a genuine commitment to them belonging in the organisation. In addition, the trucking case study (#2) shows the importance of providing basic needs like accommodation/housing to staff because, without these necessities, it is impossible to employ staff and include them within the organisation. A low-cost alternative might be providing potential employees with help towards finding accommodation because this might enable them to make selection decisions.

Finally, some organisations appear to consider financial stability to be a requirement to offer inclusion, as we can see in our tech case study (#15) and building case study (#11). If staff know that they are being restructured or laid off, this doesn't feel very inclusive, or if a whole industry is facing difficult times, inclusion can find itself off the priority list of management. We acknowledge these business challenges do represent serious concerns for firms but also acknowledge that other competitors (see other cases) do show that having inclusion as a core value of the business from

the beginning might help businesses continue inclusion in challenging economic times. For example, case study #7 (café) found whanaungatanga and the support she received from the relationships with her business networks enabled her to manage in challenging economic times. Thus, the inclusion extended out beyond staff kept the business operating when other competitors closed.

In summary, we acknowledge that some organisations saw inclusion as something that they will commit to when economic conditions allow, rather than as a fundamental part of their business. It may be that inclusion is good business[89], but some cases didn't recognise this. As such, emphasising that inclusion **is** good for business – and that it may even be one of the fundamental needs – may be important to ensuring it is then filtered throughout the very essence of the organisation.

Overall Summary Case Studies (Phase 2)

The present Phase 2 reports on case studies of inclusion, and across the 15 case studies, six main themes were identified. We also acknowledge that each case study tells its own story and is a useful standalone case. The themes found were:

1. It's not policy but leadership.
2. Inclusion is genuine and authentically expressed.
3. Enhancing inclusion pathways.
4. Māori cultural values.
5. Inclusion extends beyond the business.
6. Basic business needs first?

One challenge of the case study focus is the generalisability of findings. Each business has its own history, background, leadership, and approach. Indeed, Theme 6 identified that for some businesses, the focus of challenging economic conditions could sometimes supersede any commitment towards inclusion. Thus, these findings should be viewed as broadly applicable to businesses of similar size in their own industry, with individual businesses seeking out insights that best apply to their business and its context. Overall, the findings highlight that inclusion does not only need policy, although an inclusion policy is one way of showing commitment. Businesses need to do more than just have an inclusion policy and say they are inclusive: they need to 'walk the talk' if they are to receive the benefits of inclusion.

Beyond our analysis, we re-analysed the data drawing on the firm demographics outlined in Appendix D. We found little discernible difference by firm maturity or whether it was located in rural or an urban setting. Māori businesses were more likely to have stronger cultural values (theme 4), although that aligns with business research[90]. While larger-sized firms were more likely to have a formal inclusion policy, the small number of large-sized firms makes a comparison difficult. It is likely they will have a formal policy but again, it is the commitment to the policy that is key.

Aligned with this, ensuring the inclusion approach is genuine and authentically expressed is the best way to have employees feel and experience inclusion fully. Our findings also highlighted several pathways towards enhancing inclusion, including giving employees a strong voice in their work and organisation. We also identified several key Māori cultural values that any business might seek to embrace to aid their

inclusion journey. There is also clear value in seeing businesses extending into their communities and working with the local community to add value for all parties. However, we reiterate the value of being authentic and genuine in the way any values are adopted and engaged to be most beneficial for employees and employers.

Case Studies Conclusion

Overall, Phase 2 sought to examine inclusion via 15 business case studies. The cases selected offer a wide range of industries and experiences, and indeed, they offer a unique story, but together, they provide insights via shared themes. Critically, the case studies highlighted the importance of genuine and authentic inclusion interactions, and how this is especially critical for business leaders and owners. It is through leadership that businesses create pathways of inclusion, and community-based interactions for all kaimahi – including kaimahi Māori – aid the sense of inclusion. Finally, the case studies identified that in large-sized businesses, formal inclusion policies are more likely, but small-sized businesses do not need a formal policy if their leaders are positive and authentic towards inclusion. However, businesses dealing with issues around financial instability appear less likely to engage in creating an inclusion climate.

4. Conclusions

Research Questions and Answers

Overall, we summarise the results for our research questions from both phase 1 and 2.

1. How do kaimahi Māori define inclusive workplaces? How does this vary for the specific priority groups?

Participants could easily define and articulate what inclusion was, and what it meant to them. Their comments focused predominantly on a sense of belonging and being culturally supported and feeling culturally safe. It represented feeling their organisation was the right place to be and feeling accepted and valued irrespective of their unique characteristics. There were common references to the use of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in the workplace, which would normalise the uniqueness of Māori in the workplace setting. The comments show the reality of inclusion was broadly similar for priority groups (i.e., gender, age, ability, and sexuality). Wāhine Māori, rangatahi and older Māori, disabled and takatāpui, all reported similar definitions of inclusion, although only disabled and takatāpui readily acknowledged their 'uniqueness' was more evident but also largely supported. In summary, perceptions of inclusion were noted as building a strong positive engagement between kaimahi Māori and organisations.

2. What challenges (including racism and sexism) do kaimahi Māori experience in the workplace? Do they vary for the specific priority groups? How can these challenges be resolved to make workplaces more inclusive for kaimahi Māori?

Kaimahi Māori do experience challenges, but inclusive environments help address these challenges. Some priority group experiences were distinct (i.e., ability), but for the most part, did not differ largely from other groups. One finding was that discrimination experiences appeared infrequent but when they were experienced, this was powerful and detrimental to wellbeing but also attitudes towards their work and workplaces. An interesting factor of this discrimination was that it was more likely to come from business customers rather than from within organisations for the kaimahi Māori we spoke to. While a strong inclusive climate does appear to reduce workplace discrimination for kaimahi Māori, organisations need to be vigilant in supporting staff against discrimination including customer-based discrimination. In one case, a business owner cancelled a contract with a supplier due to discrimination aimed at their workers. This shows how businesses might manage discrimination.

Beyond discrimination, a few other challenges were raised by kaimahi Māori around their workplace experiences. These are additional challenges for businesses to be aware of and address in addition to building inclusion. The first issue was high workloads, which might relate more broadly to the cultural double shift. This reflects the additional work roles that kaimahi Māori typically undertake in the workplace, acting as cultural guides and navigators – at the expense of their own workloads and wellbeing. One-way businesses might address the double cultural shift is ensuring workloads adequately capture the extra duties associated with cultural navigation, whether inside an organisation or outside, such as having a liaison role with iwi. Being aware that kaimahi Māori might be psychologically inclined to do extra cultural duties at the expense of wellbeing and their usual job

performance highlights the importance of exploring this factor. The issue of bureaucracy was raised, whereby excessive red tape can create issues for employees around endless paperwork to accessing work resources. While bureaucracy does have benefits, the focus on red tape is another key detrimental factor (alongside the cultural double shift and workplace discrimination), and thus organisations are encouraged to explore their processes to ensure they are not overly onerous. Finally, respondents noted that workplace experiences around bullying were especially detrimental to wellbeing and workplace attitudes, again encouraging organisations to care and foster a safe climate for all employees.

3. What are the key features that make workplaces inclusive for kaimahi Māori? Are these features different for the specific priority groups?

The research shows that there are many ways that organisations can build inclusion and different pathways to achieve it. Importantly, inclusion takes strong leadership and needs to be genuine and non-tokenistic. It requires a transformational effort, that genuinely works to remove barriers that drive inequity. Businesses need to consider their inclusion strategy and implementation, looking to view any actions as the start, and by taking a strategic approach, create a long-term commitment to building inclusion. The research identified a number of key features:

- In most cases, leadership that supports and role model inclusion is critical.
- All levels of a business – especially leaders, but also team members, need to genuinely show and apply inclusion.
- For inclusion to be 'real' it needs to be expressed towards everyone in the workplace – especially those who are distinct and unique.
- Inclusion doesn't need to be big and expensive – but a continual commitment and ongoing practices where possible is vital.
- Māori need to play a role in organisational leadership.
- If needed, businesses might utilise recruitment or training to develop their kaimahi Māori into leadership roles.
- Representation at a leadership level highlights an organisations commitment to building true inclusion. This likely extends beyond Māori to the priority groups including gender, age, disability, and sexuality.
- Māori cultural values in the workplace need to be supported.
- Māori can have additional time commitments placed on them via cultural activities and within organisations. This requires better understanding, attention, and adequate time allowed for cultural roles in job contracts.
- Genuine inclusion commitment means businesses need to understand and make space for Māori cultural nuances.
- One-off actions are likely to be viewed as a token gesture and be detrimental to perceptions of inclusion. This ties into taking a strategic and long-term approach.
- Inclusion doesn't need to stop at the organisation's boundaries. Including whanau, friends, and community where applicable can be a powerful way to enhance inclusion. Extending beyond the workplaces illustrates to kaimahi Māori that their organisation sees inclusion as important and valuable.
- Giving workers greater autonomy and input (giving them a voice) are effective options to build inclusion.

4. What is the importance of the use of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in the workplace?

The role of language and customs does play an important role for Māori workers. Kaimahi Māori reported that when their organisations used te reo Māori and tikanga Māori it reflects positively on making them feel they belong. Kaimahi Māori noted that organisational use of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori showed Māori and all employees that they are supported, cared for, and belong. They also felt tikanga Māori applied via Māori cultural values were useful. Kaimahi Māori and business owners noted that adopting a whānau focus within the organisation made all employees including Māori and non-Māori feel valued and respected. A broad interpretation of whānau including treating employee whānau as members of the organisation appears especially valuable. Business owners and leaders also talked about adopting a Māori cultural value of kaitiakitanga, viewing themselves as guardians of their employees and wider communities. This showed how Māori cultural values can be embraced – including in non-Māori businesses – to aid the commitment to inclusion. Further, Māori cultural values of whanaungatanga and manāki were often utilised or implied, with them representing the importance of networking and building relationships. Importantly, these are not siloed values but entwined. So, whanaungatanga and manākitanga are applied to the wider community (representing whānau), highlighting a cumulative value. Finally, it is important to reiterate that non-Māori businesses can also embraced these Māori cultural values because, at their essence, they represent an organisation that is supporting, nurturing, and has family values at their core. This suggests that in Aotearoa/New Zealand, te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and Māori cultural values play a strong role in actualising inclusion and thriving under an inclusive climate.

5. Are the features that make workplaces inclusive for kaimahi Māori the same features that make workplaces inclusive for other groups? If not, what are the differences?

The interviews of kaimahi Māori (Phase 1) identified the types of activities that businesses might undertake to illustrate a strong commitment to inclusion. In Phase 2, while Māori workers were included, we conducted case studies which included multiple interviews with non-Māori business owners, leaders, and employees. Overall, we find that inclusion is similar for non-Māori kaimahi. All people respond positively to being treated like they belong in their workplace, irrespective of any differences or unique characteristics they might have. The implication here is that for inclusion to be 'real' it needs to be expressed towards everyone in the workplace – especially those who are distinct and unique.

6. What are the drivers for change (tangible and intangible gains but also barriers) for businesses to have workplaces that are inclusive for kaimahi Māori?

Several pathways and barriers were identified that challenge inclusion. Businesses need to show good leadership and commitment, but also be strategic about how they develop inclusion. Starting small is a good approach but business should look to develop and commit to a strategy that builds inclusion over time. Drivers and outcomes of inclusion included:

- Inclusion provides a real chance for employers to gain a competitive advantage through offering a workplace culture that understands and embraces inclusion.
- Inclusion benefited employers through greater retention and productivity from Māori workers. Being able to retain skilled workers and top talent and have a high performing workforce – better than competitors – might provide a unique advantage to a business.
- Kaimahi Māori who reporting feeling included (belonging and uniqueness) were happier, perceived themselves as being more productive, and more committed at work. They were also more interested in going the extra mile for their employer.
- The mix of personal wellbeing benefits employees while greater retention and performance benefits the employer, highlighting a win-win situation through inclusion.
- A business that extends itself to others – especially community – signals to its workforce that they care about others. Some businesses shared resources (e.g., tools) to help others. These are low/no-cost activities that show heart and care for others, which employees perceive as highlighting inclusion.

Barriers to inclusion included:

- Some organisations believe that building an inclusion culture would incur a financial burden to the business. This holds them back from genuinely creating a positive inclusion climate. It might suggest that businesses struggling with survival are unable to focus on any strategic initiative including inclusion.
- Economic challenges including workforce reorganisation represent serious business challenges, but other case studies show that having a strong inclusion climate can aid businesses in such challenging economic times. For example, in one case study they were able to survive a challenging business environment through tapping into their whanaungatanga and whānau, receiving valuable support from their business networks.
- Another barrier is failing to continue and build inclusion activities. This was raised specifically around te reo Māori and tikanga Māori training. Kaimahi Māori felt such activities that are only outside of business hours and that might be at a low level and not continued or extended signal that such activities are tokenistic only. Research warns that tokenism can be counterproductive and encourage turnover of staff.

Summary

Overall, the present study shows kaimahi Māori do see inclusion as belonging and uniqueness and businesses developing and supporting inclusion are likely to do better for a kaimahi workforce. There are workplace challenges for kaimahi Māori, but these are broadly applicable for all Māori workers – including those with unique characteristics. Several key workplace characteristics were identified to show how inclusion can be developed and this includes using Māori language and tikanga to show greater inclusion. Importantly, these Māori cultural values appear universally beneficial for building inclusion including in businesses with few or no kaimahi Māori. This suggests that in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Māori culture may play a key role in the development and support of inclusion. The research also highlighted a number of barriers to inclusion which may need to be addressed for businesses to ultimately build a strong inclusion climate.

Appendix A. Glossary

Āwhina	Care, nurture, support, embrace
Hapu	Sub-tribe
Hōhā	Annoyance
Hui	Meeting
Iwi	Tribe
Kai	Food
Kaimahi	Worker
Kaimahi Māori	Māori worker
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship
Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face-to-face
Karakia	Blessing, prayer, incantation
Kaupapa	Philosophy; principle; policy
Koha	Gift
Manāki	Support, care
Manākitanga	Hospitality, kindness, generosity, support. The process of showing respect, generosity, and care for others.
Marae	Meeting house with whakapapa (genealogical) roots
Pepeha	Process of introducing oneself
Rohe	Area/region
Tamariki	Children
Tāngata	People
Takatāpui	All Māori who identify with diverse sexes, genders, and sexualities
Tāne	Male
Tau iwi	non-Māori, including both Pākehā (New Zealand European) and other ethnicities/backgrounds

Te Ao Māori	Māori worldview
Te Reo Māori	Māori language
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi
Te Tiriti	The Treaty
Tikanga Māori	Māori customs, protocols
Tino rangatiratanga	Self-determination
Tuakana-teina	Relationship between teacher and student; elder/expert and younger/less expert teina
Utu	Reciprocity
Wāhine	Female
Whakapapa	Genealogical links
Whakataukī	Proverb
Whānau	Extended family
Whanaungatanga	Networks, relationships, belonging, close connection between people, kinship
Whenua	Land

Appendix B. Methodology

Overall, the research has two phases:

Phase 1: Interviews with kaimahi Māori experiences around inclusion. A total of 32 interviews with Māori are undertaken.

Phase 2: Case studies of 15 Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations with interviews from 47 stakeholders.

Research Kaupapa

Both phase 1 and phase 2 follow a kaupapa Māori research methodology. A core concept of a kaupapa Māori research methodology is by, with, and for Māori[91] and the aim of the research should be to ultimately benefit Māori. A kaupapa Māori research methodology can be used to explain and understand Māori knowledge and experiences[92], and it "affirms the right of Māori to be Māori"[93]. Importantly, a kaupapa Māori research approach represents conducting scientifically rigorous research, being culturally sensitive, and validating the contribution that Māori bring to the research[94]. This approach has been well utilised in research on kaimahi Māori[95]. A kaupapa Māori research approach offers the following guidelines for Māori researchers to follow[96]:

1. Conduct research that is culturally safe. For example, following appropriate tikanga.
2. Be scientifically rigorous. Ensure robust findings and interpretations to provide weight to any recommendations.
3. Goal of empowerment. In this research study, this aligns with seeking to provide insight into making workplaces more inclusive for kaimahi Māori.
4. Have research undertaken by a researcher with empathy for Māori and with an adequate level of Māori cultural competence.

Our kaupapa Māori research was guided by these principles. We sought to understand workplace experiences of inclusion for kaimahi Māori in a culturally informed and respectful way.

Phase 1 Methodology

Following a kaupapa Māori research methodology encourages a te kanohi ki te kanohi approach. We followed Māori protocols around conducting culturally safe and informed research including karakia, extending hospitality by offering kai, and providing a koha.

For the selection of kaimahi Māori to interview, the three researchers generated lists of kaimahi Māori they knew, with a focus on kaimahi Māori working in private sector businesses and in Māori businesses, but also looking to cover a broad range of industries, occupations, and other characteristics (noted in-depth below). We excluded all academic contacts because that criterion did not fit the profile. We cross referenced our potential participants to ensure we were gathering participants from a wide range of occupations. Then, we extended our invitations out to wider networks, including other whānau, to tap into individuals they knew who we might invite. This was especially useful for capturing participants in the rural sector and kaimahi Māori in less common industries. Initially, all potential respondents were contacted, and the study described to them so they

could decide whether to participate or not. Some were unavailable, but supported the kaupapa of the study and they passed the invitation and information on to other kaimahi Māori they knew. We asked those invited – whether participating or not, to provide potential other participants. Thus, a snowball sampling[97] approach was used, based on initial invitations to the researchers' broad networks.

A few kaimahi Māori noted in their interview that they were in an especially economically challenged position. We provided them with additional koha and/or additional kai to these individuals at the end of the interview. We felt it was important that our kaupapa supported kaimahi Māori most in need. Additionally, to make participants feel comfortable, we offered a range of locations (e.g., café, marae, workplace, home, virtual), with the majority choosing a café. Two participants were able to participate, but we could not work out a suitable time for a meeting, and so these interviews were done virtually. The kai and koha were provided to acknowledge the time and commitment of our kaimahi Māori participants, which aligns with kaupapa Māori principles of manākitanga. All interviews began with whanaungatanga to provide a culturally safe space and to build rapport between the researchers and the kaimahi Māori participants.

All participants were asked if they would like the interview to be opened and closed with a karakia (blessing), and not all participants requested that option. Overall, our methodology was culturally safe, culturally appropriate, and allowed for relationships (established, emerging, or new) to be acknowledged and developed. Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 70 minutes. All interviews were recorded and transcribed, although we only transcribed the components of the interviews relating to our research questions. We did not transcribe karakia or elements of manākitanga or whanaungatanga. Full transcripts of the interviews are available from the first author. Some transcripts have been edited (e.g., changing names, locations, occupations, workplaces) to protect participants' anonymity, in line with kaupapa Māori, ethics requirements, and safe research protocols.

Our interview guide is shown in Appendix C.

Phase 1 Analysis

The interview transcripts were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analytic techniques[98], which aligns strongly with kaupapa Māori research and has been well used in analysing qualitative data from kaimahi Māori[99]. An interpretative phenomenological analytic approach refers to the way researchers and research participants engage with each other, with the aim of asking (and answering) questions, whereby people describe events in their own words, with their own meanings, and from their own life experiences. This aligns with a kaupapa Māori research methodological approach of by Māori, with Māori, and for Māori[100].

The interpretative phenomenological analytic approach involves a two-stage process:
(1) initial thematic analysis (significant themes), and then
(2) detailed thematic analysis, cross-referenced back to the data.

The initial thematic analysis (stage 1) was conducted individually by the three researchers, who initially analysed their own transcripts. Then each researcher shared their set of transcripts with the other researchers for their analysis. As such, we conducted a few waves for the initial thematic analysis, ensuring triangulations between the three researchers[101]. Once coding consensus was broadly achieved, we initiated stage 2 (detailed thematic analysis). In this stage, we engaged back to the transcripts and achieved consensus on our themes through multiple triangulations of themes across the researchers. Aligned with our kaupapa Māori research methodology, we also applied a strength-based approach, where we sought to draw out and illuminate the positive experiences of kaimahi Māori. Finally, various qualitative software packages (e.g., Otter AI, Nvivo) were used to codify themes, adding more validity to the analysis.

Phase 1 Sample

Phase 1 required interviews with 30 kaimahi Māori, although ultimately 32 interviews were conducted to ensure a broad range of demographic and work characteristics was achieved. MBIE requirements included: a half wāhine Māori (Māori women), a quarter rangatahi Māori (Māori youth, under 25 years), and a quarter older Māori workers (over 55 years). At least three participants were required to be tāngata whaikaha (disabled Māori) and at least three were required to be takatāpui Māori. (Takatāpui Māori is a traditional Māori term meaning intimate companion of the same sex[102]. It has subsequently been reclaimed to embrace all Māori who identify with diverse sexes, genders, and sexualities[103].)

Additionally, we sought to interview kaimahi Māori across (1) industry (a minimum of 10 different industries), (2) occupations [12 semi-skilled/unskilled], (3) firm size [10 small-sized firms], (4) sector [6 not-for-profit, 24 private sector], and (5) location [6 rural].

Overall, we achieved the following breakdown across our kaimahi Māori sample:

DETAILS	AIM	ACHIEVED
MBIE Requirements		
Sample of kaimahi Māori	30	Exceeded (32)
Wāhine Māori	15	Achieved
Rangatahi Māori	7	Achieved
Older Māori	7	Exceeded (9)
Tāngata whaikaha	3	Exceeded (6)
Takatāpui Māori	3	Achieved
Broad Targets		
Industry range	10 industries	Exceeded (15)
Occupation range	12 semi-unskilled	Achieved
Firm size range	10 small-sized	Exceeded (14)
Sector range	6 not-for-profit	Exceeded (8)
Location range	6 rural	Exceeded (8)

A specific breakdown of respondents and their demographics is shown in Appendix D. This includes how many of the kaimahi Māori we interviewed had Māori leaders or employers, or whether they were in a leader/manager role. Given this sample size was sufficient (n=9), we also explore potential differences at the end of the findings section.

Overall, our sample of kaimahi Māori is broad and covers a range of different personal and organisational characteristics.

Phase 1 Limitations

Like all research, the current study must acknowledge some limitations. This research used qualitative research methods to extract in-depth understanding, and there are debates within this research paradigm as to the 'correct' or 'sufficient' sample size to ensure adequate insight is achieved[104]. Unlike quantitative research, which can execute straightforward statistics-based sample size rules, qualitative research is very complex in terms of the intricacies required to make sample size determinations[105]. With limited resources[106], this study still achieved a sample of 32 respondents, which is greater than the initial, tentative indications of sample sizes of 20-30 respondents[107]. While some researchers suggest that 50 typically be viewed as a maximum[108], others argue that "the most widely used principle for determining sample size and evaluating its sufficiency is that of saturation"[109] (p. 2).

Hence, in the present context, interviews might stop once the data and its associated analysis reveal no new ideas, and thus 'saturation' is achieved. However, saturation reflects theoretical categories and not data per se. Thus, saturation becomes evident when "gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of your core theoretical categories"[110] (p. 113). An important qualitative study which explored saturation analysed 60 interviews and determined that they achieved saturation of themes by their twelfth interview[111]. Part of the rationale for achieving saturation at 12 interviews was their relatively standardised sample and focused research aims[112].

Consequently, saturation should not reflect the more common focus on data repetition[113], but instead reflect that the sample size provides justification of sampling adequacy[114]. While the sample was not 50, as some researchers would argue for, overall, the sample size used in the present study (32 interviews) was clearly sufficient for what many scholars would say is necessary to achieve saturation[115,116]. Overall, it has been argued that the achievement of theoretical saturation remains at the discretion of the researcher – on their judgment and experience[117] – and the present study used a triangular approach (all three researchers analysing data separately and then together) of robust discussions to achieve saturation.

In summary, the sample size was restricted due to financial and time constraints. While 30 interviews were the target, we conducted 32 interviews and the research team agreed that saturation was largely achieved, recognising that there are a wide range of experiences amongst the respondents. However, saturation in a sample of 32 interviews does not give any assurance of generalisability over a much greater population range. This reflects the trade-off between in-depth and rich data from interviews versus a more generalisable sample via quantitative analysis. Clearly, while Phase 1 uses interviews and Phase 2 utilises case studies, our qualitative focus presents a limitation that we did not also include a quantitative component to test inclusion on a larger and broader sample of kaimahi Māori. Indeed, quantitative studies have been used to bolster qualitative research on kaimahi Māori[118] and thus another limitation of the present study is the lack of additional quantitative data to provide generalisability of the present study findings.

Phase 2 Methodology

The same approach for Phase 1 was used for Phase 2 (e.g., kai, koha, location etc.) with a focus on being culturally safe. Some of the kaimahi Māori who participated in Phase 1 also participated in Phase 2. This process included providing invitations to the owner or manager for interviewing and building a case study around their experiences. Most interviews were in workplaces which allowed researchers to also observe the workplace and interactions, and to ask additional questions of workers as they passed by. Not all business owners or managers in Phase 2 were Māori. All interviews began with whanaungatanga to provide a culturally safe space to build rapport between researchers and kaimahi Māori participants. Case study interviews ranged from an hour to half a day, and while direct interviews were recorded and transcribed, many times the research team were involved in observing worker interactions (with managers, other workers, and customers and clients), and thus these were captured in researcher notes, but not recorded. We used limited transcriptions for the case studies because our research questions are more about capturing the 'story' of the business rather than several verbal answers per se. We edited the transcripts specifically around names, locations, occupations, and potential workplaces, where these might be identifiable, to protect the anonymity of participant individuals and organisations.

Phase 2 Background Case Study Methodology

Case study analysis is a research method that involves in-depth examination and analysis of a specific case or situation, in a real-world context. It is commonly used in social sciences and business to investigate complex phenomena and to gain understanding of the underlying causes and effects of human behaviour in context. The primary goal of a case study is to develop a detailed, contextualised understanding of a particular phenomenon or problem. Our focus here is on inclusion. As such, the case study approach provides rich insights into the complexity of issues that are difficult to study through other research methods[119,120,121].

In the field of organisational behaviour, case studies have been used to investigate the challenges and opportunities associated with promoting diversity in the workplace. As such, previous case studies have examined the impact of diversity training programs, or have explored the experiences of employees from diverse backgrounds[122,123]. We use case studies to identify effective strategies for creating inclusive work environments. Overall, by researching, writing, and examining specific cases, researchers can identify the unique challenges and opportunities associated with complex human interaction – such as inclusion at work - and develop effective strategies for creating inclusive work environments[124,125,126,127].

Phase 2 Case Study Approach

In this study, we used an exploratory case study design to investigate inclusion at work, with the aim of identifying fresh information and issues, observing the phenomenon in situ, and generating information from a range of stakeholders[128,129]. In the development of the case studies (outlined in detail below), we observed the organisations in context, spoke to stakeholders such as employers, employees, and customers, and collected policies and processes where appropriate. As such, we collected and analysed data from multiple sources, such as interviews, documents (e.g., HR policies, inclusion policies, corporate websites), and observations (employees, customers), to gain a detailed understanding of the cases presented. We analysed the cases using several steps (outlined below), including reading, and familiarising ourselves with the case, identifying the central problem or issue, regathering information where needed, then analysing the overall case study data for themes or pertinent issues raised over the 15 cases.

Phase 2 Case Study Development

In all case studies, we visited and observed the organisation to provide context and thus observed interactions and spoke to stakeholders (employers, employees, customers if relevant). Where appropriate, the researchers also discussed and collected policies and processes around inclusion. Overall, the researchers collected and then analysed data from multiple sources, such as interviews, documents (especially HR and inclusion policies), and observations, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the organisation. We then drew on this information and constructed the case study. After writing each case study, it was sent to the other researchers for review, and for checks on readability, and clarity. At this stage, if there was a lack of comprehensiveness of an issue/s (within the case study), the researchers engaged in a hui, and/or revisited the organisation. Next, case study contacts (i.e., owners, manager etc.) were approached to see if they wanted to review the case. All did look at the final case study and approved them. In only two cases were there a few suggestions around changes. These were typically minor and involved clarification and anonymising.

Phase 2 Case Study Analysis

Overall, we used the following steps to analyse the 15 cases together:

1. Read and familiarise ourselves with the total range of case studies.
2. Identify key issues and challenges faced by the individuals and organisations involved.
3. Identify the issue and themes.

The three researchers then moved to a formal analysis of the case studies, and this involved identifying patterns, themes, and relationships in the data and drawing conclusions based on the cases presented. Because we had already worked on the 15 case studies together, we felt we had conducted the initial thematic analysis and simply focused on conducting a detailed thematic analysis[130]. We carried this out individually at first, and then we shared the analysis and deep-dived into analysis of each other's themes, seeking consensus on the overall case study themes. This occurred across a few waves to ensure triangulation between the three researchers[131.] Once coding consensus was broadly achieved, we went back to the notes and achieved consensus on our themes through multiple triangulations using qualitative software packages (e.g., Otter AI and Nvivo). This added additional validity to the analysis.

Phase 2 Sample

Phase 2 required 15 case studies, with MBIE requiring a broad representation of different case studies and associated industries and firm sizes. This was to provide broader findings and implications through providing case studies on a wide range of (1) firm types (Māori versus non-Māori), (2) industry breakdowns, (3) firm size, and (4) location (urban versus rural). We followed the self-identification Māori firm definition[132]. Further, we ensured this categorisation as a Māori business aligned with the Statistics New Zealand definition:

> *A Māori business is a business that is owned by a person or people who have Māori whakapapa, and a representative of that business self-identifies the business as Māori*[133]*.*

Overall, we achieved the following breakdown across our case study sample:

DETAILS	AIM	ACHIEVED
MBIE Requirements		
Sample of case studies	15	Achieved (15)
Broad Targets		
Firm Type	Mix of Māori and Non-Māori ¥	Achieved (N=7 Māori businesses)
Industry range	Minimum 10 industries	Achieved (N=11 industries)
Firm size range	Mix of small-sized firms versus medium- and large-sized firms†	Achieved (8 small, 4 medium-, and 3 large-sized firms
Location range	Urban v. rural mix‡	Achieved (N=6 rural)

¥ = non-Māori businesses are those not specifically self-identified as a Māori business (i.e., all other types).

† = small-sized 1-50 employees, medium-sized 51-250 employees, large-sized 251+ employees.

‡ = based on Statistics New Zealand urban and rural classifications[134].

A specific breakdown of case study respondents and their demographics are shown in Appendix D. Overall, our sample of case study organisations is broad and covers a range of different industries and other organisational demographics.

Phase 2 Limitations

Like all research, the Phase 2 research has some limitations. Ultimately, there is a trade-off between the depth of detail and richness of data from the case studies but there is a limited number of case studies. Ultimately, while many of the Phase 1 limitations equally apply here (because there are interviews), the multiple interviews per business does provide deeper and richer detail. Similar to Phase 1 our focus on case studies in Phase 2 means that our single business focus means we lack broad generalisability around inclusion amongst a broad sample of kaimahi Māori. Similarly, undertaking a quantitative study on inclusion climate would bolster the generalisability of the present study findings.

Appendix C. Phase 1 and 2 Interview Guide

Phase 1 of the research project will address three main priorities:

(1) Defining inclusive workplaces,

(2) Key features of inclusive workplaces,

(3) Inclusion challenges.

Introduction: Overview of the project, the role of the research team, and karakia [if the respondent desires it].

We will detail respondent anonymity, and their ability to feedback and check on their transcript [if desired].

Interview Procedure:

- Manākitanga
- Whakawhanaungatanga
- Employer demographics [industry, firm size, sector]
- Respondent demographics [occupation, location, gender, age, job skill level, tāngata whaikaha, takatāpui Māori, and whether manager/boss is Māori.]

Our semi-structured questions follow the stem "Regarding your current place of work:"

1a. How would you define an inclusive workplace? (Prompt: seek examples)

1b. What have been your own experiences of inclusion? (Prompt: seek examples)

1c. How have these experiences been? (e.g., largely positive/negative/mixed) (Prompt: seek examples)

1d. In general, how well does your workplace support Māori workers? (Prompt: seek examples)

2a. What are the key features that make your current workplace inclusive for Māori?

2b. Can you provide some specific examples?

2c. Do you feel culturally safe as Māori?

2d. [If there are no positive features] What are the kind of things your workplace might do to become better at inclusion? What would this look like? How likely are they to do this?

3a. What challenges do you personally face at work? (e.g., discrimination) (Prompt: seek examples)

3b. How does this influence your perceptions of feeling you are included? (Prompt: seek examples)

3c. How well have these challenges been resolved? How important is this? How manageable are some challenges? [please provide examples]

Those with particularly positive inclusion experiences will be inquired about participating in a case study (e.g., introducing the research team to someone in Management).

Case study differences.

Given the nature of Phase 2 around case studies and additional interviews, these typically included just a sample of the items above.

Closing remarks and thanks (and koha)

Appendix D. Phase 1 Study Participant Demographics

ID#	Age (Yrs)	Gender[a]	SIC[b]	NGO[c]	Rural[d]	Non-Skilled[e]	Firm Size[f]	Tenure (Yrs)[g]	Priority[h]	Manager[i]
1	20	M	8	N	N	N	M	1		N
2	38	F	13	Y	N	Y	S	1		N
3	38	M	16	Y	Y	Y	S	4		N
4	46	F	5	N	N	N	L	5		N
5	39	F	17	N	N	Y	M	1		N
6	56	M	9	N	N	Y	S	5		N
7	44	F	13	N	N	Y	L	1		N
8	25	F	8	N	N	N	M	4		N
9	35	M	7	N	Y	N	S	5	TW+TM	Y
10	22	F	7	N	N	N	S	2		Y
11	41	F	11	N	N	Y	S	5		N
12	19	M	7	N	N	N	S	0.5		N
13	40	M	12	N	Y	Y	L	2		N
14	45	M	9	N	Y	Y	S	0.5		N
15	70	M	15	Y	Y	N	S	20	TW	Y
16	22	F	7	N	N	Y	L	2		N
17	22	F	8	N	Y	N	S	1		N
18	26	F	17	Y	Y	Y	S	2		N
19	57	F	18	N	N	Y	M	5	TW	N
20	45	M	6	N	N	N	L	2	TM	N
21	60	M	17	Y	N	Y	L	2	TW	Y
22	23	F	17	Y	Y	Y	M	1		Y
23	33	M	16	N	N	Y	M	7		Y
24	55	F	15	N	N	Y	M	1	TW	N
25	36	F	1	N	N	N	L	3		N
26	24	F	14	N	N	Y	S	7		N
27	45	M	4	N	N	N	L	5		N
28	55	M	14	Y	N	N	M	5		Y
29	23	M	15	N	N	Y	L	1		N
30	23	M	17	Y	N	Y	S	2		Y
31	57	F	14	N	N	Y	S	5		Y
32	33	M	16	N	N	Y	L	0.5	TM	N

^a**Gender:** F=female, M=male, D=gender diverse.

^b**SIC:** 1=Agriculture, forestry and fishing, 2=Mining, 3=Manufacturing, 4=Electricity, gas, water and waste services, 5=Construction, 6=Wholesale trade, 7=Retail trade, 8=Accommodation and Food Services, 9=Transport, postal and warehousing, 10=Information media and telecommunications, 11=Financial and insurance services, 12=Rental, hiring and real estate services, 13=Professional, scientific and technical services, 14=Administrative and support services, 15=Public administration and safety, 16=Education and training, 17=Health care and social assistance, 18=Arts and recreation services, 19=Other services.

^c**NGO:** Y(yes)=not-for-profit sector, N(no)=private sector.

^d**Rural:** Y(yes)=rural location, N(no)=urban location

^e**Non-Skilled:** Y(yes)=semi-skilled and low-skilled profession, N(no)=skilled profession

^f**Firm Size:** Small (less than 20 employees), Medium (20-100 employees), Large (101+ employees)

^g**Tenure:** Time (years) in current job.

^h**Priority:** TW (tāngata whaikaha, disabled Māori) + TM (takatāpui Māori, gender diverse/gay Māori).

ⁱ**Manager:** Respondent is in a supervisor/manager role.

Appendix D. Phase 2 Study Participant Demographics

Case ID#	Business Type	SIC[1]	Māori Business[2]	Rural[3]	Firm Size[4]	Maturity[5] (years)	Methods[6]
1	Farm	1-Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	Yes	Yes	Small	50+	2xO. 3xE.
2	Trucking Company	9-Transport, postal, and warehousing	No	Yes	Medium	15	1xO. 2xE.
3	Health Care	17-Health care and social assistance	Yes	No	Large	20+	1xO. 1xM. 2xE.
4	Retail Store	7-Retail trade	Yes	No	Small	20+	1xM. 3xE.
5	Mechanical Engineering	3-Manufacturing	Yes	Yes	Small	20+	1xO. 1xE.
6	Consultants	5-Construction	No	No	Medium	5+	1xO. 1xM.
7	Café	8-Accommodation and Food Services	Yes	No	Small	10+	1xO. 2xE.
8	Consultant	13-Professional, scientific, & technical services	No	No	Small	2	1xO. 2xE.
9	Education	16-Education and training	Yes	Yes	Medium	4	1xO. 1xE.
10	Software/IT Company	19-Other services	No	No	Medium	10+	1xO. 2xE.
11	Home Construction	5-Construction	No	Yes	Small	5	1xO. 2xE.
12	Health Care	17-Health care and social assistance	No	Yes	Small	20+	1xM. 3xE.
13	Consulting	8-Accommodation and Food Services	Yes	No	Small	3+	1xO. 1xE
14	Consultancy	5-Construction and 13-Professional, scientific, & technical services	No	No	Large	10+	1xO. 1xE. 1xHRM.
15	Retail Store	10-Information media and telecommunications	No	No	Large	20+	1xM. 3xE.

[1]**SIC:** Standard Industry Codes.

[2]**Māori Business:** Yes=Māori business[135], No=non-Māori business.

[3]**Rural:** Yes=rural location[136], No=urban location

[4]**Firm Size:** Small (less than 20 employees), Medium (20-100 employees), Large (101+ employees)

[5]**Maturity:** Firm age in years

[6]**Methods:** How many people were interviewed (as a number), O= owner, M=manager, E=employee, HRM=Human Resource Management Department.

Appendix E. Case Studies

Case 1: Farm
Manaaki whenua, manaaki tangata, haere whakamua
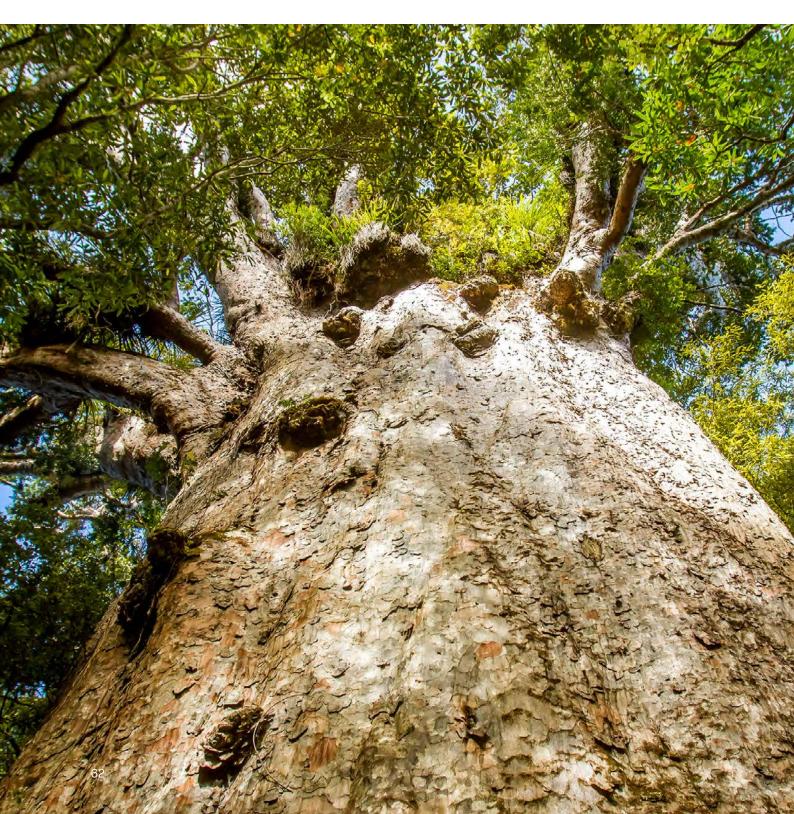### [Care for the land, care for the people, go forward[137]]

Background: This case represents a large sheep and beef family farm, owned by Māori Sharron and her husband, Steve. Located in the central North Island, the farm has been financially successful and has expanded multiple times over the past five decades.

Sharron is a fluent speaker of te reo Māori. This is a largely family- operated farm with only three full-time staff. However, their operation employs many seasonal workers for fencing, stock work, sheep shearing, collecting hay, mustering, and other key farm tasks. The success of the farm has come down to how the owners hold themselves in their local community, and how they treat many of their workers – including seasonal workers – from all walks of life. They also have a deep understanding of Māori culture and how this fits not only into their business, but also within the context of their community. They are closely connected to conservation projects and water projects in their local area and see themselves as stewards of the land. The exemplifies the Māori cultural values of kaitiakitanga [guardianship] with respect to their farmland and the nature on it.

They live within 20 kilometres of their local Marae [a meeting house with whakapapa (genealogical) roots], which is a very active Marae in their area, hosting many community events and cultural events including tangi [funerals]. They frequently provide sheep, beef, and other produce to the Marae, as the Marae must frequently cater for hundreds of guests at a time. Many within the Marae and local Māori community have deep connections to this family farm. The shearing gangs [contract workers who come to farms to conduct shearing and wool work in season], and other farm workers frequently hunt deer, pigs, goats, and rabbits on the farm; they also let people fish for eels and pick watercress. This aligns with Māori values around manākitanga with options of gathering kai [food] through hunting. The farm owners also allow people to place beehives on their farms, as they have a large mānuka block [flowering plants used to produce honey], and for people to collect firewood for the cold winters.

Offering access to kai and a deeper connection to the whenua [land] not just for themselves but for their Māori workers has been a key factor for their success. The farm simply cannot match the high salaries from the neighbouring cities, but they can provide a deeper level of cultural support, kai, learning and development, from the land to their people that work on their farms. This access to kai, learning and development has a profoundly positive impact on their local community. Workers will often learn how to train their working dogs on the farm, further connecting them to farming and this way of life. The owners see the farm as a communal property in most sense, as typified by this comment: *We are happy for people to come and hunt, collect wood, and walk around the farms and enjoy them like we get to*.

The farm is not only a place for employment and hunting, but it is also a home for training and knowledge for anyone who is willing to give things a try. A seasonal worker has typified the level of support, saying: *working in a place like this is so much more than just work, you're surrounded by nature, you have the sun on you, and you're welcome to be here*.

The business also provides accommodation for workers who are staying to work on the farm on a long-term basis. This reinforces their whānau approach to business, with a worker noting *it's so hard to find a home these days, we have one here*. Sharron and Steve have credited their Māori-centric business values as having important impacts on their workforce. This includes successfully reforming ex-gang members and training them on how to farm. These opportunities have provided unique career avenues that might otherwise not be available. *We do this because we can – and helping grow our people is a core way of doing business here. And our community are thankful for the way we can aid the rehabilitation of some local Māori* says Steve. One of their recent workers left a gang and spent months working on their farm before taking up a role on a larger sheep station as a full-time employee nearer to their family. They stated *this place is amazing. They have given me opportunities and trusted me. I love my new career and it's all because they can see past my tats* [tattoos].

Sharron and Steve see the best in everyone, welcome those people with open arms and provide so much more than just a wage. They use this is whakataukī to encapsulate their philosophy about their business:

Manaaki whenua, manaaki tangata, haere whakamua
Care for the land, care for the people, go forward

Applying Inclusion

Inclusion refers to belonging and uniqueness[138] and this case highlights the approach of the business (farm) owners to reaching out and engaging fully with their local community, particularly Māori. This shows their inclusion approach is viewed as extending beyond their business per se, and the engagement with community and with whānau [extended family[139]] reinforce this inclusion approach/philosophy. The farm's approach to workers is they will give anyone a chance – if the potential employees show up to work, they will give them the opportunity of paid employment. This is highlighted strongly by the inclusion of a gang member as an employee. Further, the business is happy to hire anyone local – especially Māori – someone local who needs a break and a chance to learn some skills and earn some money. We suggest this highlights a strong focus on belonging[140] by ensuring that all people are welcome. Further, the inclusion element of uniqueness is reflected in their ability to hire anyone, such as the unemployed, recently divorced, even ex-convicts and gang members, because they firmly believe in offering a second chance.

The business enables the wider family of their employees to make use of their land for hunting, kai via beehives, and other land-based activities such as gathering firewood. This reflects the wider alignment of whānau and collectivism[141] and how they see individuals not only as workers but part of a wider work-family, where the workers' own whānau are viewed as part of the wider farm business. Hence, the wider families of employees are included and made welcome within the business and the land for broader non-work activities (e.g., hunting). This also ties into the Māori tenet around whenua and its importance for those who whakapapa [have genealogical links] to the region. Steven and Sharron don't have a formal inclusion policy, in fact the farm doesn't have much formal policy other than health and safety. But they have taken stock of what they can offer the community and are happy to offer the help when they need. Indeed, talking to another local, the farm is known as an inclusive place *where people are welcome*.

Applied to other Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations, the lessons here show that organisations could think about what resources they have in their business and offer it to staff when they need it, as these gestures can be very helpful for the employee and wider family. Letting the wider family have access to equipment (providing it is safe, and there is an understanding about how things should be looked after) can make employees feel like they are really included in the business. This type of trust can build strong and fruitful bonds benefitting both employer and employee.

Background: Steven built his transportation company over the past few decades expanding upon the initial business started by his father. It is located in the North Island and has been enjoying financial success and expansion over the last decade.

The business runs over 30 trucks, with 40 staff, and hauls a wide range of products such as milk, fruit, and wine. The biggest challenge they've faced in the past few years has been an extreme staff shortage, which aligns with the long running driver shortages and media attention around The Great Resignation[143]. Beyond a lack of staff, their central base (located in a large rural town) has been impacted by a lack of housing in their area, and the rising costs to run their trucks (increased fuel costs). Indeed, Steven stated *these challenges had the potential to kill my business! I had to think of something*.

In response to these challenges, the business has been extremely innovative when trying to overcome this, using a unique set of HR practices that align strongly with inclusion. Steven stated *Over the past few years recruitment has been a massive issue within this industry, there is a real driver shortage at the moment*. This aligns with media reporting in Aotearoa/New Zealand[144]. While the business has a small number of Māori employees, the business supports their Māori workers to attend cultural events such as hui [meetings], kapa haka [cultural performances], including such examples as Te Matatini [kapa haka Olympics], and undertaking tangi [funeral] leave etc. They see supporting all employees as key, which aligns with inclusion theory[145]. However, this case highlights a unique cultural extension of inclusion beyond Māori. Over half of Steven's workforce are from India, and he has a deep respect for their culture and way of life. This captures how inclusion focuses on belonging but also uniqueness[146], and thus is applicable to all ethnicities and differences.

Many of the workers love working with the company as they offer high levels of support, and good pay. In light of the housing shortage, they also provide good quality accommodation that is priced fairly. The housing they offer their workers is brand new, warm, and well maintained, with Steven stating, *I wouldn't let my workers sleep in something that I wouldn't put my family in*. They took inspiration for this idea from other accommodation-stretched locations in Aotearoa/New Zealand, as many business owners in Queenstown had to offer accommodation to their staff in order to attract their employees. Steven notes *this housing shortage is a big issue nationwide, and in our region it's a big barrier for trying to attract people in, I've got mates over in the Hawkes Bay who are finding the same, they have the work, and the jobs, but people can't find homes to live in. So, their people shortages remain. We had to be innovative to be successful*. Again, this business context aligns with the wider Aotearoa/New Zealand situation[147]. It also shows how inclusion can be extended to capture perhaps unlikely aspects of a workforce – housing. This inclusive approach provides the potential workforce with housing that increases their willingness to come and work at this location.

The company focuses on the mixed ethnic cultures of its employees, and Steven works hard to live the values of inclusion and has no time for discrimination. He recalled a time last year, *one of our suppliers was joking around and said some pretty disgusting stuff about the race of my guys [workers]. It wasn't really something you expected to hear in 2022! I felt the need to stand up for my guys, and tell them what just happened wasn't alright, and we didn't end up renewing the contract with them a month later. We don't want or need to work with people like that*. Steven said he realised this was a tough decision on

the other company but felt the lack of alignment with basic principles of decency were anathema to his business. *This is just not right – my guys do a great job, and they deserve to be respected*. A driver noted that they thought the reaction of their boss was *amazing, and so supportive!* The worker stated this type of support from the boss was the reason he wouldn't look for work anywhere else.

One of the key drivers of success within this organisation has been the connection to staff, and support to their whānau [extended family]. Many of the workers have wanted to bring family and friends from abroad (typically India) to work for this company. Steven stated, *what we soon found out is these guys are amazing at their job, and they wanted more friends and family here, so we let them fly home for extended periods of time, pay for their flights and trip to see family and sell the New Zealand dream to them*. He notes this focus on inclusion and supporting people from all sorts of cultures, has really benefited the business. He states, *it's been really good from a recruitment point of view, we have had drivers, mechanics come out and fit in really well with our team*. Many of their staff have been recruited from their Indian employees going home, and then recommending family and friends to move over to Aotearoa/New Zealand. They find that these employees seem to have a seamless move, as they have a community here that they know and knows them, friends, and family to work with, and a place to call home. However, getting back to family and friends is important. Steven noted *many are going home for weddings, these weddings are massive and really important for the guys to attend, and we love the fact that our team can leave for as long as they need* [this can be as much as a few months]. He stated *it is just an added benefit. We have enough on the team now to make it work, we are going to have four workers away all at the same time soon*. So, the very inclusion that sends workers away can bring in new workers, to ultimately cover other workers' return visits. It appears to be a very symbiotic and beneficial relationship and one made possible through being highly inclusive.

Steven stated, *it's really hard being away from family and friends, so the guys leaving for a few months at a time has been excellent for them, and great knowing that they will be back and recharged fully, as it's really working for us*. Steven noted that they wanted to make New Zealand their home, and feel like home, but getting back to family and friends in India when they needed it really helped their overall wellbeing. The ability to have this flexibility and option to them was working well for both employer and employee. Overall, this case aligns with the following whakataukī:

Hokia ki o maunga kia purea e koe
I nga hau o Tawhirimatea
Return to your ancestral mountains to be
cleansed by the winds of Tawhirimatea

Applying Inclusion

For this business, inclusion is about finding out what their staff need to thrive and doing their best to support them. That is why the business gives their workers the time they need to fly home and practise/attend significant cultural events. The owner states: *because we have enough staff here now, we can really cover the time they want to be away for months at a time*. The owner also affords the same option to all employees, including those kiwis who might want to travel home, and Māori employees who might want to visit their ancestral lands. Many organisations involved in transportation might feel they cannot do this because of the current large driver shortage, and that this might exacerbate the shortage for the organisation. However, the concept of inclusion includes utu [reciprocity] and trust. Especially amongst the Indian drivers, this trust has been well repaid and has aided the overall performance of the business through workers not only returning to the business, but also bringing much needed skilled labour with them.

Applied to other Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations, the inclusion focus is to understand what employees want and seek to meet these needs. It must be noted that this company doesn't have a formal inclusion policy; they just live inclusion through giving staff the cultural support they need in order for both employee and employer to thrive. While there may be no formal policy, having the CEO champion the inclusion approach reinforces the importance of leadership. The CEO argues that inclusion can be critically important in very challenging times (e.g., driver shortage). The acts of helping employees secure decent housing, providing a community to belong to, and giving flexibility around time off for personal and cultural events, gives the company a competitive advantage with their human capital (e.g., employee knowledge, skills, and abilities[148]). The business suggests that inclusion does not have to be a policy or involve any formal paperwork. Instead, it is about finding out what the needs of your staff are by getting to know them well, and then the organisation doing its best to address those needs and support their workers fully.

Case 3: Māori Health Provider
Ki te kahore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi
[Without foresight or vision, the people will be lost[149]]

Background: Mere is the CEO of a medium sized organisation that is an incorporated iwi charitable trust (the Trust) located in the North Island. Founded in the 1990s, this organisation stems from Māori whakapapa [genealogy] and was set up to provide services supporting whānau [extended family], aiming to reclaim the health and wellbeing of their iwi [tribe] due to a failure of the current health care system, at that time and currently, to deliver equitable health outcomes for whānau and iwi. They employ many Māori staff as well as other nationalities.

The Trust's vision is to achieve a prosperous and thriving life for iwi members. To this end, the organisation provides a broad range of primary and community health care services in numerous communities, available at a low cost. The services are designed to be easily accessible for whānau of all ages and backgrounds, and as such, the Trust has established several smaller satellite clinics. Iwi health providers depend on hiring highly qualified and experienced health professionals to service their patients. However, the recruitment and retention of staff go beyond medical qualifications. The Trust places a strong emphasis on attracting and keeping those who possess a strong understanding and commitment to a tikanga Māori [Māori traditions] approach to health.

As CEO, Mere has made it a priority to ensure that staff not only possess medical qualifications but are also culturally competent. This is because culture has long been recognised as a critical factor in Indigenous health, and Indigenous health providers have a significant role to play in the health of iwi. In fact, a lack of cultural alignment between whānau and healthcare providers has been linked to decreased patient satisfaction, reduced access to health services, and non-compliance with treatment plans[150]. As a result, Mere emphasises Māori tikanga and culture as the primary focus in staff recruitment, development programs, and retention, stating *tikanga is our starting point for all that follows*. However, this is challenging given current staff shortages. Regardless, Mere notes that development programs still need to be linked to cultural competency, stating that *we tie performance bonuses to te reo Māori, we provide time-off for study, and of course our HR recruitment and leave policies are all embedded in tikanga processes*. For example, annual performance and pay reviews are linked to te reo Māori courses completed for all staff. Mere further states that the trust, and its whakapapa [legacy], ensure that the experience within the organisation – for patients and staff – from entry, to meeting and working, to leaving – is entrenched in tikanga Māori.

The staff value this embedded nature of tikanga Māori in the trust. An employee suggests that being Māori, young, and female, brings challenges in terms of bringing her full self to work. She states, *in some ways I felt unsure of my own level and competence in te reo* [Māori] *and tikanga, and questioned my own ability*. However, the trust's legacy and commitment to iwi has had a huge impact on her personally as a practitioner. She states, *so this organisation has been around for a while. It started with iwi seeing that the needs of their people weren't being met, specifically through health. They stepped in and since working here – it has opened my eyes*. For this worker, the inclusive approach is significant, with her stating *I loved the vision behind this organisation!*

Staff inclusion, even when staff are not Māori, raises issues of the diversity within Māori at work. An employee stated *for me specifically, there's lots of ways to be Māori*. One employee offered the following about the way the organisation develops inclusiveness. She stated, *I think it's about being inclusive and accepting that there are different ways to be Māori, that there isn't just like this one gold standard. And I think people can do that.* They further state, *But I have so many amazing people who work at my organization, I think, I would identify inclusion as a place who practices full tikanga Māori of being inclusive – you can walk in there like this as your whare [home], even though it's a workplace, you feel comfortable as a collective – it's like, you're not an individual anymore, you are part of something much bigger. You are more collective than the individual.* While it may be assumed that being a Māori service provider with Māori whakapapa and history, makes it simpler for the organisation to be inclusive, this case demonstrates the diversity within Māori and the need for employers to move beyond a homogeneous approach to being inclusive of Māori staff is needed. Finally, an employee highlights the importance of leadership in driving inclusion. They state that inclusiveness in this organisation stems from organisational leaders, noting that there are *some amazing leaders in my organisation that are living tikanga. They understand and model positively all* [the] *ways to be Māori – with strength and humility*. This is encapsulated in the following whakataukī:

Ki te kahore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi
Without foresight or vision, the people will be lost

Applying Inclusion

This case exemplifies how inclusion operates within a health organisation that is based around tikanga Māori, whereby inclusion encompasses both a sense of belonging and uniqueness[151]. The significance of comprehending the Trust's heritage, purpose, and rationale for existing, in the context of being Māori, is underscored by this case. The organisation is shown to be thoroughly engaged in the vision of enabling health for iwi members, with tikanga Māori interwoven into its recruitment, retention, and professional development practices. This, in turn, means that staff feel part of a collective, even though they maintain their own uniqueness. Furthermore, at a policy level, performance is linked to the ongoing acquisition and application of mātauranga Māori [Māori cultural knowledge] by staff. In this instance inclusion is not simply a business ideal but is integrated into the Trust's very fabric: from vision, values, leadership and internal culture – to create a sense of belonging and acceptance of all individual's uniqueness. The case exemplifies how other Aotearoa/New Zealand firms can actualise inclusion – making it core to their organisation. The case also highlights the importance of Māori leadership[152] and how this can help a business make inclusion a reality.

Aotearoa/New Zealand, and most western economies, are suffering staff shortages and skill scarcity within the health sector. This case demonstrates that a company might see making inclusion a priority because it may be fundamental to business success. The business has a very diverse (nationalities and identities) workforce and exemplifies that inclusion is a collective, and sustained, effort. This is significant as this ongoing emphasis creates a sense of belonging where everyone feels welcomed. Lessons for other organisations include the importance of providing staff with opportunities to explore their own identities while encouraging diversity within those identities. This aligns with uniqueness within inclusion theory[153]. The organisation has created an inclusive climate whereby staff describe the organisation as 'whānau-based' and their 'home'. This also reflects the wider alignment of *whānau*[154] and collectivism[155] in the workplace and how the organisation sees others at work as an extension of the wider workplace and community.

These case insights can be applied to other Aotearoa/New Zealand organisations, highlighting the importance of vision and values (and then) developing HR policies and procedures that promote inclusion[156]. Additionally, the case demonstrates that having support from the organisation's leadership ensures that such policies are actualised and truly integrated into an organisation's culture. This fosters a sense of belonging among staff, who feel like they are part of a community. Ultimately, this creates a more inclusive culture for both staff and management, benefitting the organisation, its patients/customers, and all its employees.

Background: Joanne runs a successful retail store in the Central North Island, and she has been managing the store for seven years. This store is frequently one of the top-performing stores within the franchise, which has over ten stores in the major centres across New Zealand.

Joanne is of Māori descent and has a small staff of six full-time and three part-time employees at her store. Most of her staff are Māori. Joanne left her last employer (another retail chain store) due to the toxic environment of fear, lack of trust and a culture of bullying and harassment. Joanne recalls *that they* [management] *frequently made people cry at work, and all they cared about was money, they would stop at nothing to make more at the expense of their staff. When I left, I knew that I wanted to do the total opposite of this when I was made retail manager at this job*. Looking back at her old workplace, she stated, *when you reflect on how bad things are, and the impact it has on people, you know what you can do to make things good for people, I just want people to have a really positive experience at work*.

While the shop gave a lot of great examples of things they did, Joanne started explaining her approach by saying *we are just one big 'cheesy family' here*, before she spoke about the support their organisation offered. During observations in the store and chatting with the staff over the day it was clear that this store has a genuine "family vibe" and the workers spoke positively about the business and their manager. One worker stated *this is the best retail store I have ever worked in.* The staff talked about the amazing support they received and specifically around Māori cultural support. A worker stated *the tangi* [funeral] *leave and support has been really generous – it genuinely made a difference.* The workplace has a strong focus on being very flexible, and everyone appeared to be very interested in each other's (co-workers') lives. This enabled staff to know when they had certain personal, cultural, and/or sporting events on and meant that everyone could support each other, and swap shifts as needed. One noted *getting time off is never a problem here!* The workplace was also incredibly accommodating around tangi leave, and they always chipped in for birthdays and enjoyed celebrating them at work. They also play social sports together after work.

The level of support and care within this organisation can be summed up with this quote from Joanne: *When a staff member's family member has died – we all get together – and we all chip in. The workers will do a koha – they will do amazing things. So, anything that has happened, you know, in our own personal lives, they've been very supportive.* Management also supports their workers' wider family, taking a strong whānau [extended family] approach to the workplace. For example, a worker noted the store *supported some of our kids' kapa haka* [cultural performances] *groups, their sports teams, heaps of stuff like that. You can go to them with anything, whether it be cultural, or you know, like sports related, and they'll be keen to sponsor and support them.*

Many workplaces attempt to be inclusive, but the store – and its manager and workers, provided authentic experiences of inclusion and enthusiasm towards being inclusive. Indeed, walking around the store, you could feel the positive vibe between staff in the store. Indeed, the staff talk about the feeling within the store or what they call 'the vibe'. For example, they all felt very calm and relaxed at work due to the music and loved to play music from their different backgrounds. When asked about the type of cultural support they offer the workers, Joanne stated *most of us are Māori, so it's kind of like we don't even think about that, we just do what we do, we take it [cultural support] for granted probably and we're all so diverse here it's just one big melting pot*.

The key to the support was not only the fact that Joanne supports their staff, but the staff support her. This reiterates the importance of utu [reciprocation]. Furthermore, she notes that her managers [at the national level] are always calling her to ask what they can do to help. One of Joanne's staff said, *[we] are very much focussed on solving problems, but actually solving them. They always follow up to see what can be done to help, and* [what] *we need. At my last place a problem was bought up and always found its way to the too hard basket*. And another staff member noted *they really care here, I can't really put my finger on it, but it is like a family, and I want to keep working here*.

This 'family vibe' was also felt by their customers and many of their original customers were still shopping with them after years as customers, with their kids now starting to come in to shop at the store. They had a deep connection with their customers and wider community. Some of the challenges the organisation faced were not related to staffing and support, but more to the current economic climate. Joanne has suggested that, after the Christmas holiday (2022/23), retail spending was down so much that they might have to start reducing hours for their staff. In addition, many of their stores were targets of ram raids and crime, with Joanne stating *we are a bit of a target because of what we sell*. Staff safety was becoming increasingly challenging to the point where they felt like they may need to move their shop into a mall or internal shopping complex that didn't have street access and had more security available. Overall, they hoped to overcome some of the challenges they face in the business environment, by supporting all their staff to their fullest and continuing to build connections with their customers. Joanne suggested their kaupapa [philosophy/principle] at work was best typified by the following whakataukī:

<div align="center">

He taonga rongonui te aroha ki te tangata

Goodwill towards others is a precious treasure

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Applying Inclusion

The key implications for this case relate to the idea that an organisation can develop a strong inclusion culture by simply spending time getting to know and understand their staff and their customers. Working hard to meet their needs and share their successes and challenges, enables a business to develop and grow positive relationships in the workplace. This organisation does not have formal inclusion policy, nor does it have a standalone HR management unit. Instead, they take the initiative by getting to know one another and supporting each other where possible. Māori cultural values around āwhina [embracing others] play a key role, with the manager building her management approach on this core value. Interesting, the manager sets the 'tone' in the business but everyone – including co-workers – actively listen to one another and awhi each other to try to solve problems rather than sweeping difficult problems to the side. Observations of interactions within the store and from discussions with staff, highlight that the business is a high functioning organisation through genuine care and respect for workers, which aligns with inclusion theory[158] and evidence from within New Zealand[159]. This case highlights that inclusion does not require large resources to be spent. It can be developed and strengthened through a genuine kaupapa of care for all workers. Providing authentic inclusion can be achieved simply by looking out and caring for everyone in the business.

Case 5: Collective Engineering
Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari kē he toa takitini
[My success should not be bestowed onto me alone, it was not individual success, but the success of a collective[160]]

Background: Ian runs a small mechanical engineering firm, employing under ten full-time staff in the North Island. They have been relatively successful, although acknowledge that at times – especially with Covid-19 – the business has operated less profitably due to cost pressures. The business does light and mechanical engineering jobs for a range of agricultural companies within New Zealand. They also produce light and commercial truck parts for the transportation industry.

Like many companies presently, they struggle to find staff. But, added to this, Ian states, *there aren't enough people coming out of our trade schools, and many times they still aren't equipped with the basic skills they need in this space. They* [trade schools] *simply don't train people like they used to in the Ministry of Works*. Ian is of Māori descent, has several Māori workers within his organisation, and works hard to be inclusive. Ian states, *we try to make the workplace as good a place to work as any, but the real secret to our success is lifting people up and getting them passionate about what they do*. Ian is referring to their company's entrepreneurial spirit, whereby employees are encouraged to come up with ideas for products that aren't being sold or have some margin left in them. *We really encourage our staff to think about how they can make things or fix things outside of our current product lines, and we give them a good cut if it's a success! If people have a good idea, we're keen to support them to produce it; we have had a few staff come up with great ideas and sell these products; we can produce them for them, it's really a win-win for us all.* Ian thinks inclusion is more than just providing a good place to work for a wide range of people. He believes it's about giving people the knowledge for their tino rangatiratanga [self-determination]. He states, *we want people to stand on their own two feet for their family and community.*

The company sees inclusion as giving workers the best of the business. Interestingly, this support and sharing of things goes beyond the boundary of property with staff. The business also shares its resources with other local businesses and sometimes even their competitors. Ian sums this up as follows: *You know, sometimes you need a type of press or specialist machine, but you don't really want to own it, and your competitor also doesn't need to own half the stuff you own. Quite often, we share equipment with each other* [other businesses and competitors]*, and it helps that they work on the same street as us*. Ian suggests this extension of inclusion to other businesses enables them to keep costs down without the need to buy things they don't use a lot of the time. This is because *while we started sharing with other businesses, we have enjoyed some quid-pro-quo, and are able to enjoy the same thing from other businesses. This saves me buying more equipment that won't get used often enough to be a viable option to buy.*

Ian ensures that everyone in the company can thrive. He suggests that work doesn't just need to be a transaction, where an employee comes to work and goes home with a wage. It's about supporting and including the workers to thrive in their workplace and within the local community. The business sees engagement with the local community including hapu *and* iwi [sub-tribe and tribe groups] as important. *You don't just include people, you make them an owner in what they do, that gets the best out of them*. Sharing with the staff, and competitors has enriched everyone in the area. Ian agreed that this whakataukī represented his business philosophy well:

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari kē he toa takitini.
*My success should not be bestowed onto me alone;
it was not individual success but
the success of a collective*

Applying Inclusion

This case highlights that inclusion can be extended beyond supporting and wanting the best out of your own employees and go further to include other businesses and business owners. This really stretches the interpretation of inclusion and provides a unique context about how belonging and uniqueness[161] can be extended beyond the workforce. Within the company, not only are workers made to feel included, but they are also given ownership in what they do. This even includes profit sharing for new ideas that create new business or new approaches. Again, this highlights some unique interpretations of inclusion and illustrates a deep level of inclusion around self-determination[162], that extends beyond a formal or informal inclusion policy. It enables employees to see the importance in what they do and work harder for it. Giving part-ownership and not just a wage enables higher job performance, and people can see a real career path in front of them. They know the more innovative they are at work, the better it will be for both them and the employer. The act of giving at this level of extent (ownership) means Ian gets more back, and this level of inclusion – including employees owning the intellectual property – could be seen as one of the highest levels of inclusion.

Case 6: Tau Iwi Consultancy
Te amorangi ki mua, te hapai o ki muri
[The leader at the front and the workers behind the scenes[163]]

Background: This consulting business has offices in two main centres in Aotearoa/New Zealand and offices in Australia. The company's purpose is to support business organisations to mobilise people, to tackle challenges the organisation – or society – faces. Most of their work comes from changes in policy or legislation, and as such many of the employees are in legal-related areas. Clients include a range of government and non-government agencies, private sector, and international companies.

Karena was raised in the central North Island of Aotearoa/New Zealand and has whakapapa to several iwi within this rohe. Karena's family moved from their tribal land to a major city so she could undertake a new role as a Senior Consultant with a business consultancy firm. The role required having a business background as well as being grounded in tikanga Māori. The business, like many others in the private sector agencies, is looking to improve how they understand and build Te Titiri o Waitangi into their work and offer this service to customers. The business has embarked on a process of internal improvement with staff and with their strategic partners. They have established a high-profile internal group tasked with developing their own strategy to ensure staff engage in tikanga Māori in a genuine and appropriate way. This group also works externally with Māori and community organisations to build a greater network of external partners. The CEO, Peter, states *we are proud of the projects and growth but recognise that this is going to be an ongoing journey of continuous learning and improvement.*

The consulting business recognises the need to provide insight into areas of strategy and/or policy needs for clients and emphasise this as a culturally safe and tikanga Māori-based approach. Their vision and values suggest that they place people and the energy of others at the centre of their projects. Karena acknowledges the authenticity of this approach, stating, *this organisation – they are trying to be more inclusive – I think they are making good steps towards developing a true Te Tiriti strategy.* Karena notes that this is also evident at the policy level, where she suggests that these projects are being developed appropriately and that it is clear that one of the *key tenets is to protect Māori staff so that Māori can be Māori, they can be themselves as Māori in the organisation.*

Karena highlights the importance of traditional tikanga Māori in all aspects of the organisation, stating that *things like when people come into the organisation, whether that be visitors or new employees, they are properly <u>brought</u> into the organisation. So those ceremonial things are included.* She also notes *they ensure everyone in the organisation has undertaken some treaty training, and extensive decolonisation training*, and acknowledges that the business *looks at all of the policies, strategies, documents in the organisation, to make sure that everything from the HR right through to the strategy are included – to*

ensure all business activities – both internal and external with clients – are inclusive of Māori perspectives. She further states this level is what is needed for the non-Māori organisation to just be a *credible treaty partner.* It does illustrate that a non-Māori organisation can be a strong treaty partner, but there is a depth and commitment to it that is required.

However, Karena notes that her own *strong sense of cultural authenticity and her sense of self that is unwaveringly Māori,* ensures that she feels 'included' in the organisation, and '*comfortable to be herself*'. She clarifies, stating, *I think part of that is because I know who I am and what I'm about and what I do*. She described the importance of having a strong and clear voice, and that the organisation encourages this. Finally, she states she speaks te reo Māori as often as she can, and that her sense of inclusion may be because, her role *is strongly Māori-focussed*, and she is in a *position where I'm leading that stuff.*

The organisation is largely tau iwi, and as such only a few Māori work in the organisation. As such, Karena, while feeling included around her mahi, also recognises that the organisation – and indeed society in Aotearoa – is on a journey, she states, *I've only been in the organisation for a short time. So, I'm probably still considered new. However, I feel that there is generally openness around bringing a stronger Māori kaupapa* [Māori philosophy] *to the business*. She says it is this journey that she deems as *most important.* Her journey in the business is captured by this whakataukī:

Te amorangi ki mua, te hapai o ki muri
The leader at the front and the workers behind the scenes

Applying Inclusion

Māori are underrepresented in the professional population and small professional organisations may struggle to recruit, retain, and develop Māori staff to take on specialised consulting roles in the business space. As such, and as a minority in the workplace, experiences of belonging[164] may be diminished for Māori workers in these occupations. In this case, however, the organisation has made steps to engage in the journey by honouring Te Titiri. Further, they demonstrate a good understanding of cultural values in this space[165] and encourage their staff to also undertake relevant training and development. Despite having strong growth aspirations, the business is taking a long-time orientation[166] to its view of inclusion and developing culturally authentic strategies. The case also highlights the individual's role in inclusion. Karena acknowledges her own strength is a source of stamina for her, and for the organisation. She acknowledges that the journey of developing an organisational climate strong in belonging and uniqueness is likely to be long and complex. Ultimately this case demonstrates that an inclusive environment is a journey, linked to principles of kaitiakitanga [guardianship] and it also demonstrates the importance of strong Māori leadership to actualise strong Māori values. This is especially true when Māori values are seen as guiding principles to developing a Māori-inclusive organisation. Finally, the case demonstrates that when leadership, strategy, vision, policy, and the work environment are combined with individual Māori employees' strength, a predominately tau iwi organisation can support inclusion as a necessity for the 'journey' for all parties to continue on positively.

Case 7: Café Inclusion

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini
[My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective[167]]

Background: Emma owns, manages, and works in a café in a busy North Island City. The business is quite successful, employing about 12 staff, including full and part-time workers. Her business, like many at the moment, is facing extreme staff shortages and cost pressures from inflation[168]. Furthermore, the business has noticed people are also spending less on sit-down large meals in the café, and instead are focusing on buying cheaper cabinet food and coffee. Thus, her business is operating in an especially challenging environment and is financially stretched.

Emma has a unique business as a Māori business owner and belongs to a local Māori business network where they support each other. The focus of the network is the thriving of Māori business. The network frequently hosts other Māori businesses and cater for their events, including kai from Emma's café. Emma states *I get awhi from the network – and even some business! So, that's excellent. But I also make sure I don't charge my normal rates for this work.* Despite the challenges in the industry, Emma has found great support from their local Māori business community which has given them an advantage, especially in the recruitment and retention of staff. *It's been really good the support I have had. The local support we get from this network, we are proud to support them and give their whānau – the family of other business owners in the network – a go in our business if they want to give hospo* [hospitality] *a go.*

The owner talks enthusiastically about the cultural support and inclusion they offer staff. She stated, *we try to make everyone feel welcome here, and support our staff the best we can. Many of the staff here have been putting in a lot of extra work since we are so short staffed, so when they need something I'm more than happy to help. That is why I spend most of my days here, I open up and I close, because as the owner, you have got to show everyone that you're working hard.* Regarding the way the business operates in terms of inclusion, they noted they have a more informal than formal policy. Emma stated, *we don't really think about inclusion and cultural support here* [as distinct things]. *This is because we are kind of a fish in water here, you know? We don't really think about it because most of us are Māori. I mean half of the staff here are my whānau.* From observations of the business, there is a real strong cultural collective within it – there are a lot of Māori values and practices in play, around support, and language usage, but people aren't overtly talking about them. This might also reflect these practices (e.g., whanaungatanga) are viewed as simply the way the café does business.

The business has given many high school and university students work in their study breaks and on days where they do not have class or study. Emma discusses how this inclusion approach – whereby she will

give work to people who need it – has been a key approach to her business. She states, *it has been great for the young staff we have, we give them skills for life in the kitchen and doing things like making coffee. They can take these skills anywhere in the world*. Belonging to the Māori business network has enabled the business to thrive in a time where, otherwise, the business environment *is especially tough*. Emma states, *the people* [in the network] *know we are going to do right by their kids, we are going to support them, treat them fairly, and it's been great from our point of view. We wouldn't exist without these young ones coming in*. However, while her inclusion approach has been largely beneficial, there are limits to achieving some elements of business success. She clarifies that *finding skilled chefs in the kitchen has been extremely difficult. It's been one thing to find waiters, baristas, and people to wash and clean up, but another altogether to find qualified chefs*. She acknowledges that her inclusion approach does help retain staff, but the whole hospitality sector has been especially challenging around recruitment of those with scarce skills, like chefs. This aligns with broad issues within the hospitality sector[169].

Emma states, *we can't really do much in the hospo* [hospitality] *space with regards to pay and conditions, as we are so squeezed on the costs here. And economically, if we put our prices up people just won't come. Some days really challenge you – you really want to give up – but the network provide us with the hope to go on.* Emma is referring to the support that their overall collective network provides, they provide not only a customer base, but also a base for trusted human capital, something which many other cafés and organisations within the hospitality industry are all struggling with. This aligns with the importance of utu. It also aligns with the following whakataukī:

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini
My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective

Applying Inclusion

The inclusive approach of the business has enabled the owner to gain an advantage around recruiting and retaining staff. Many of the local businesses in the area send whānau and family to work for Emma, mainly for work experience and to get a start in their employment history. She acknowledges that for many people, working in a café is not a long-term career decision. However, despite the current labour shortages, Emma believes her inclusive approach means she is able to attract employees to her organisation through her wider collective network. This aligns with inclusion benefits around employee behaviours[170]. Further, collectivism is often associated with Māori culture and amongst Māori employees at work, and potentially plays an important role for individual workers[171]. Here, we find the business applies inclusion as a collectivistic mechanism whereby she uses whanaungatanga[172] [networking] to share the business's Māori culture across a wide network, and she has enjoyed benefits around recruitment and retention as a result. By employing other business's whānau [extended family], she also engages in utu [reciprocation] by rewarding their support of her business with employment of their whānau. This focus on fulfilling utu across her supporters appears to be an important component of how the business actualises inclusion. Overall, this highlights a specific cultural approach to inclusion, and it shows that this approach provides the café with some unique advantages.

Case 8: Small Consultancy Built on Inclusion
Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua
[As people disappear from sight, the land remains[173]]

Background: Sally runs a small consultancy in the South Island which provides specialised advice to the agricultural sector around water, soil and other factors associated with the agriculture sector. The organisation employs fewer than five staff and while this it is a relatively new business; it is operating successfully.

The big challenge the firm faces at the moment relates to finding qualified staff[174] who can do a range of key tasks to keep up with the rapidly changing legislation and best practice in this space. In addition, managing steady cash flow for a company that has changed from having one person on staff to several has also been hard; this is because funding comes in high amounts but infrequently. Staff need to have a strong science and legal mind while also being able to engage with a wide range of external stakeholders. Sally is not of Māori descent, and neither are any of her employees, with them all identifying as New Zealanders/Pākehā. However, the team has extensive knowledge of Māori customs and culture because much of their work relates to engaging with hapu and iwi.

Sally has been on a learning journey over the past decade while working for other larger consultancies in the country, but felt they just weren't able to serve the community well enough and were a bit restricted in how they operated. She stated, *my old work wasn't really interested in the smaller growers because they weren't able to pay the big fees on a continued basis, that's where I spotted the gap in the market… they* [the old workplace] *were just interested in the money*. She notes that *a big part of our organisation has been working with iwi and hapu all over the country to work out what they can do on their land. We have really pushed our staff to get to know the history of New Zealand*.

Sally also states *there are also many smaller holdings that aren't in the big farms that just want a bit of help to figure out what can increase their production… and what parts of the land can be conserved*. Further, this group are often not-for-profit such as hapu and iwi, *and so we do a lot of work for free*. But she argues this is culturally the right thing to do and aligned with utu [reciprocity], noting *but it'll come back at some point as you build trust with people, if you do right by them, they will call you up down the line*. Sally has worked a lot with Māori in the last few years, she states *we have done a lot of work up North. Every time I go out in the field, I learn more about the local Māori culture and their needs. You must learn the protocols and customs or you're going to find it real hard*.

As for the team, they are also encouraged to learn about Māori language, culture, and values. Sally sees this as not only useful for employees work but for knowing Aotearoa/New Zealand better too. One staff member states, *Sally has really encouraged us to learn more about Māori values. Māori have a really different set of values when we are out in the field. For example, the money side doesn't come at the top of the list. They want to know what's going to be best for the community and land*. Another staff

member noted *the workplace is super supportive here, we have a lot of flexibility around how we do the work, and when things get harder the others chip in*. So, the consulting business uses inclusion around supporting the learning of staff, with a strong Māori culture focus.
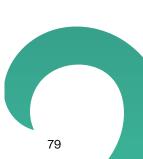
The company has not yet considered inclusion formally, because it did plan on growing to its current size. Sally states, *our little company has only really grown in the last few years, it used to just be me! I really had a tough few years at the beginning – getting started on my own – and establishing the business. And it wasn't until recently that I've been bringing staff in, which has been a big learning curve for me.* Given the organisation's size, Sally doesn't have formal HR policies, stating much of the HR advice comes from external consulting parties. The approach around inclusion and support can be summed up by Sally stating *I've always thought that I was pretty easy to get along with, we are all just trying to do things well for our staff and clients, we are all on the same page with our aims and just get stuck in*.

As for the future, Sally thinks they will be well placed to include a diverse range of employees, stating, *I think given how small the company is, and how it's kind of grown unplanned I didn't really think about who I was bringing in. I just needed people to do this work… it would be helpful if we had someone on the team who is Māori given the work we are trying to do, but I think that will come in time, and when it does, we know we are ready to accommodate and support all people well*. Sally loves the work they do, stating *it has meaning, and adds a lot the community,* and she believes that *our land is something we need to cherish and look after*. She thinks this whakataukī sums up her business well:

Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua
As people disappear from sight, the land remains

Applying Inclusion

Sally runs a small-sized business like the majority of businesses in New Zealand[175]. Given that Māori make up around 14.2% of the workforce in Aotearoa/New Zealand[176], it is not surprising that her business does not employee any Māori staff, at least at present. However, they have a good understanding of not only Māori cultural values and beliefs, but also the importance of these values for Māori stakeholders, who dominate their customers. The business has taken a strong inclusion approach around upskilling and supporting staff to learn te reo Māori [Māori language] and tikanga Māori [Māori customs and culture]. Like many other businesses, the business serves the quickly growing Māori economy[177] and this is likely to expand as the Māori economy grows into the future. However, the business also applies inclusion principles by doing pro bono (free) work for Māori stakeholders who lack financial resources. This inclusive approach around whanaungatanga, utu, and awhi are Māori principles being embedded and applied by this Pākehā business. As the business continues to grow, they are looking to employ Māori staff in future. In the meantime, they will keep learning and growing their understanding of all things Māori. In addition, the workplace offers high levels of support to its staff more generally (e.g., all staff work on flexitime, can move between part-time and full-time work over the seasons, and have good access to wellbeing services and education budgets each year). This could easily be extended to accommodate a broader range of ethnic cultures within the workplace.

Background: Tane is Māori, and the owner manager of three successful and profitable childcare centres in the North Island.

Four years ago, Tane recognised an opportunity in the childcare industry. The childcare industry in New Zealand has grown significantly in recent years, and Tane bought three childcare centres that had been owned and operated by the same person for decades. This meant the centres had several existing values and ideals, driven from the western (Aotearoa/New Zealand) worldview. On becoming CEO, Tane set about changing the internal dynamics of the organisation towards one that was geared towards the development of a te ao Māori perspective, with a mātauranga Māori [Māori knowledge] emphasis.

We focus on one of the childcare facilities, located in a suburban area, catering to children aged six months to five years old. The facility has a maximum capacity set out in regulations, and Tane employs twelve full-time staff members (qualified in childcare/teaching and support workers), as well as a centre manager, administration assistants, and domestic support that includes the preparation of kai [food]. The first thing Tane did was to develop a strong internal culture with staff, where he took staff through a process of change, and also introduced professional development in Māori tikanga [Māori customs and values] and te reo Māori [Māori language]. Tane stated *my goal was to grow a childhood centre that was immersed in Māori tikanga, and one that included all staff, Māori and tau iwi*.

After only a few months, staff noticed that they were living the changed ethos of the organisation. Despite only four of the twelve staff being Māori, Tane further set about developing a strong relationship with local hapu and iwi and built further relationships with whānau [extended family] and the wider community, especially other Māori. He aimed to create a sense of belonging to ensure that staff and wider whānau felt valued, included, and respected.

The centres' revised ethos or mission is that by incorporating Māori culture, they are helping develop a better Aotearoa/New Zealand that is recognising and honouring the Indigenous People of Aotearoa [Māori]. The vision statements of the centres outline the importance of acknowledging the unique identity of Māori and the richness of their cultural heritage, including local hapu/iwi. By doing so, the centres also aim to promote a sense of identity and belonging among all children, but particularly Māori children, in their care by enhancing their self-esteem. As far as Tane is concerned, this aim also means that staff members' sense of cultural inclusion needs to be developed through being supported.

One way Māori culture is ingrained into childcare is through the use of te reo Māori [Māori language] in daily conversations, greetings, and songs. Staff rely on stories, myths, and legends, relayed to children through picture books, videos, and storytelling sessions that are in te reo Māori. This was a change for many staff, but one that they have taken on with enthusiasm. Karen, an employee, stated: *the support and development has really helped my understanding and confidence of te reo Māori. I like to use it a lot now.* Demonstrating Tane uses an approach of tuakana-teina, where the centre focuses on ensuring that learning is not one-directional but is modelled in a relationship and methodology between an older [tuakana] person and a younger [teina] learner. Another long-term staff member noted: *I love engaging with the children – it really helps me shape my reo. And at the same time, I learn something too! Furthermore, reciprocal processes and knowledge of culture are embedded in all oral interactions*.

Part of the change process involved staff delving into their own identities. Staff not only learnt their own pepeha and karakia, but Māori staff were encouraged to return to their own marae to gain greater

understanding of their own whakapapa and identity. For this, Tane established a new type of leave, allowing Māori staff to (re)engage with their own whānau and spend time at their marae. He paid for travel costs, and time off work was paid. Discussion with Māori staff reveal a sense of satisfaction and engagement, and these staff highlight that, in addition to having their Māori identity supported by the organisation, they felt they were part of a larger picture in developing inclusion in Aotearoa. Māori staff state that being in this environment is not only important for their own cultural development, but that a sense of importance stems from developing tamariki. It is significant that the Māori staff felt that they would never leave the centre because they were helping create a better future for Aotearoa.

Staff are like whānau for Tane. He encourages staff to use the centre after hours for functions and he encourages staff to bring their own whānau into work, to deepen a sense of community and belonging. Tane ensures that he provides manāki to staff, notices when issues of culture are handled well with children and provides positive feedback in public staff hui. He states he is very specific with feedback and provides this as a way to reinforce staff engaging with and maintaining Māori culture in the workplace. For example, at one observed hui, he stated to a staff member that she had "really nailed the 'r'" pronunciation in reading to tamariki. He noted they had really improved after struggling with this pronunciation issue, and he was very proud of their improving te reo Māori.

Staff are able to eat hot kai at work and take home any they need. As such, the centres have a feel of whānau, family, support and belonging. Tane believes that great support given to staff enables them to grow their own identities at work. Tane sums up his values as being optimistic about the future for Māori and he supports how the country and world are approaching inclusion *just the way in which the world, you know, our country is moved in, we were at the moment*. The following whakataukī exemplifies the leadership of Tane.

Te amorangi ki mua, te hapai o ki muri
The leader at the front and the workers behind the scenes

Applying Inclusion

Many organisations face the issue of changing the existing organisational climate, around the method of working, the culture, and staff expectations[179]. This case highlights how inclusion can be incorporated into an organisation as a process of change. The sense of inclusion is gained through staff learning their own diverse identities, as well as ensuring that staff are aligned to the vision of inclusion. This strongly aligns with the values of belonging and uniqueness within inclusion theory[180]. The case study also demonstrates that achieving a sense of belonging has implications not just for staff, but for customers, their whānau, and the wider community.

Tane's organisation is also unique in adopting tuakana-teina in its approach to teaching culture. Moreover, the case demonstrates how leading from the top, encouraging development, and using specific developmental and positive feedback enable inclusion to flourish. This highlights the importance of cultural authenticity amongst Māori leaders[181]. Interestingly, in this organisation, Māori staff are encouraged to

seek and understand, with much greater depth, their own whakapapa, and are duly supported by special leave and financial support by the organisation. In this way, the individual's unique identity is developed, which they then bring to work a place of belonging[182]. Finally, with this multilayer approach (iwi, whānau, staff, leadership, and tamariki), we suggest a ripple of inclusion is created, whereby the importance and power of inclusion flows outwards from the centre. This case outlines the steps taken by Tane's organisation to develop inclusion, but it potentially provides a blueprint for other organisations that seek to develop more inclusive practices.

Case 10: Software Company
Ki te kahore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi
[Without foresight or vision, the people will be lost[183]]

Background: This software company is owned internationally, and the New Zealand branch is located in the South Island and employs around 70 workers. After a successful number of years, the current economic environment has become highly challenging.

Jane sits within the executive level management team for the medium-sized branch. Their biggest challenge at the moment is the looming recession[184], as this has driven a reduction in sales of their key products and services. The company already has high levels of ethnic diversity, with Jane stating *we have a super diverse company here, so inclusion is kind of a given! We all have to work together well to make things work, we have a formal inclusion and diversity policy from the higher ups [international office], but to be honest, I couldn't tell you everything the policy says*. The company, like many in this sector, is facing potential layoffs because of the large hiring runs they completed in 2021 and 2022. Within the wider sector, these layoffs have happened at scale in the USA[185], and may start to be seen at scale within New Zealand[186].

When discussing the company's inclusion policy, Jane mentioned the importance of fairness with regards to benefits and pay, stating *with regards to pay we pay everyone pretty fairly, some of the sales people are a bit skewed* [the pay range can be wide] *on this, because it is mainly commissioned-based and bonuses, so if you sell more you get more, so it really comes down to the seller's skill. If you can't show people that you're even valuing them the same that's not really inclusion*. Jane highlights the importance of 'walking the talk', as their organisation, from a base salary point of view, has very good equity between all staff based on ethnicity and gender.

Jane talks about why the organisation is so diverse compared to many other New Zealand companies. *As I said it's a super diverse company, many of the team are from India and from Asia, we have a lot of Māori and European staff, but I don't think we have many from the Pacifica community. When asked why this was, she sated, I think it really comes down to the pipeline and the tertiary sector for us. Whatever people choose to study is where they end up, here the roles are highly technical, so we tend to get a lot of applicants from overseas. Tech draws in people from all cultures as it's a really big growth area.* Jane infers that if there is a lack of representation in some ethnic groups then it's because there simply aren't many workers from such communities.

Jane discussed the foreseeable challenges to their inclusion, stating *I expect inclusion to become even more to the forefront for us* [the business]. *But as time goes on, it will be inclusion at a distance! More recently the talent* [staff] *we want to employ want to work here in our company, but they don't want to move here* [to New Zealand]. *So, we're going to have to figure out a way to make people feel included over Zoom* [online meeting software] *or something. But that might just mean we check in with people, but this is a hard one because some people want to be left alone to do their job and some people want a bit more interaction, that's why I'm not a big fan of policy! I've always just been about getting to know my staff, getting to know what makes them tick, knowing their needs and figuring it out from there.*

When asked about why Jane didn't focus too much on the formal inclusion policy, she stated: *it's not that I don't care about policy – I just really like [prefer] getting to know*

people. The thing is a lot of teams are focused on becoming lean at the moment because of what's going on in the [United States of America] at the moment, we're just trying to keep the cash flow up and keep the business healthy, because if we start to lay people off I can't really praise our company as being inclusive when we are kicking people out the door. Inclusion, while important, is not our main priority. Our priority is being able to pay our staff still, which means we must serve our customers well and grow our business.

The whakataukī for this case is provided by the researchers. Here we argue that the focus on the bottom-line and on financial performance may be dangerous for the business, identifying inclusion as a 'nice to have' rather than a fundamental core part of the business. This is especially prevalent when New Zealand research shows employees with stronger inclusion perform better[187]. Thus, the failure to put people first might be a critical issue for firms and their development of inclusion. We offer the following:

Ki te kahore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi
Without foresight or vision, the people will be lost

Applying Inclusion

This business noted the importance of maintaining a healthy business (profitability) before they focus on inclusion. They acknowledged the importance of inclusion and support, but also note that the health of the business must come first from a cash flow point of view in order to stay afloat. The businesses noted that, while they would investigate more inclusion practices in future, the current direction of a deep recession made that somewhat challenging. Thus, for larger established firms with an international head office (and thus strategic direction), there is less autonomy around spending on inclusion. The media coverage about the hard times ahead has been covered extensively[188], and at the time of these observations and interviews business[189] and consumer confidence in New Zealand were near some of their historical lows[190]. Thus, inclusion in this organisation appears almost like an afterthought or 'additional practice' to engage in once the business is profitable. However, other research suggests inclusion might be the way to get better performance out of a workforce[191].

One interesting inclusion addition from this business was the focus on including overseas workers as new staff members – with them staying overseas. This was an interesting take as New Zealand has had a major change with more employees working from home rather than solely in New Zealand offices[192], but employee workers who live outside of New Zealand clearly represent a special challenge. This might potentially raise many unforeseen challenges in the inclusion space, as many of the formal or informal policies that are in place may not work when people are working abroad, as they may feel inclusion from the country in which they reside. Remote working has gained real traction since 2020[193] and may represent the ultimate in inclusion approaches around belonging and uniqueness[194] including having an employee belong while respecting their uniqueness of working in a different country.

Case 11: Construction Company
Ki te kahore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi
[Without foresight or vision, the people will be lost[195]]

Background: Eric owns and runs a building franchise in the North Island that focusses on residential construction. The company has fewer than 10 staff but they work with dozens of contractors to complete their homes.

Eric, who is Māori, noted his business faces challenges similar to many businesses in his sector. He states *you'd think with all the ads on TV and radio that the company is big, but the reality is we're just a local franchise. We don't really employ many people as everything is contracted out.* When asked about inclusion in the workplace Eric said: *I don't think we have much of an inclusion policy from head office, not that I've seen! The last few years has been a real drag with things like GIB[196]* [a plasterboard product] *that you probably know about and just having stock shortages on some of the most important things we need to finish builds[197].* Eric talked about how inclusion and support were important for the business but not something they really spend a lot of time meeting about or talking about.

When asked about inclusion and why it didn't appear to be a priority, Eric stated: *it's not that we don't want to or that we don't care, it's just that over the last few years things have been wild, it's gone from being far more work than we ever needed in having such high demand to being a big stress that we couldn't even get basic things to finish our projects off! And now from what everyone is saying demand is falling off a cliff! You know lots of us might not make it another year the way everyone is talking so kind of like inclusion is not high up on the radar or our contractors for that matter.* When asked more about this it was clear that the focus for the business appeared to be more on survival. Eric stated: *as I said it's not that we don't care about who we work with we all know each other we know the industry is hard at the moment we really just want to keep our head up and finish things off*.

When asked about how they support their staff Eric stated: *so, we support our staff really well and we support our contractors really well and we try to do good by our community by attending and contributing to a lot of community events and working with charities etc. So, I think overall, we're a pretty good place to work for! To be honest you wouldn't get far in this industry if you were a dick, and you kind of need to it's really a boom and bust you gotta keep your head down when times are good and work hard and you've gotta keep your head down and work hard when times are bad, and it looks like times are going to get bad in 2023.*
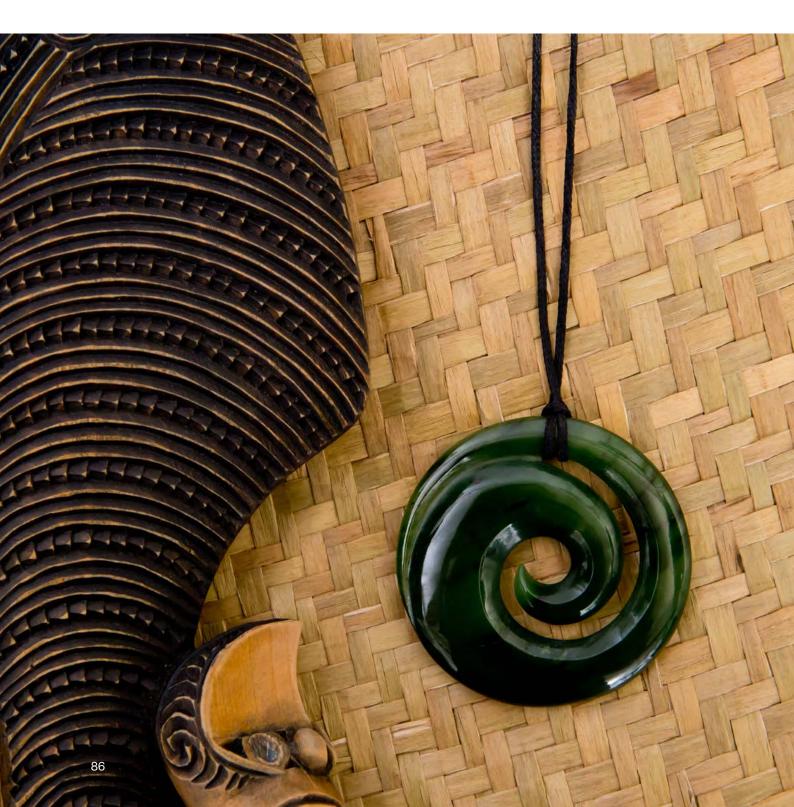
Like Case 7, we provide the whakataukī for this case. Similarly, we argue the focus on financial performance may place inclusion as a secondary and non-fundamental element of the business. This is despite New Zealand research showing better employee performance when their workplace culture is more inclusive[198]. Thus, the failure to put people first might be a critical issue for firms and their development of inclusion. We offer the following:

Ki te kahore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi
Without foresight or vision, the people will be lost

Applying Inclusion

The financial concerns of the owner mirror the media coverage about the hard times ahead for business owners[199], business confidence being low[200] and similarly consumer confidence being low[201]. Thus, inclusion, at least in this case, appears to fluctuate with regard to the organisation focus, depending on the economic times of the business. This case also highlights certain economic norms in the construction industry, where it goes from a boom to a bust cycle[202]. This firm suggests that, across both these cycles, inclusion is less a focus, possibly related to the large, outsourced workforce that is common of the industry. The implication here is that, if economic survival is a major issue for a business, they may place inclusion into the 'too hard' basket and make it a minor focus of their business. This is not the way to create a strong inclusion climate and might suggest such firms are likely to struggle to actualise potential benefits around inclusion.

Case 12: Healthcare Practice
Tama tu tama ora, tama noho tama mate
[An active person will remain healthy while a lazy one will become sick[203]]

Background: This primary healthcare practice is located in the central North Island of New Zealand. The practice employs around 20 staff. Like most healthcare practices, it is profitable, but this does require long work hours.

Erin is non-Māori and runs the practice and when asked about the challenges the business faces, stated: *do I even really need to tell you how bad things are!? If you look at the news you know what's going on in health!* This was in reference to the doctor and nursing shortage[204]. Erin noted that every day things are getting worse, and they dread every day that staff may resign. *It's not that we are a bad place to work, it's just that staff have had enough, and the pressure is getting greater and greater. People* [medical staff] *are just leaving health because it keeps going from bad to worse.*

When asked about inclusion within the practice Erin stated: *for decades we have all been taught about the treaty, and the needs of Māori and even Māori health models which has been a real positive step for what we do and how we run the practice. We do a good job of catering for everyone. That said, we do the best we can with the limited resources we have.* However, she also noted that: *we've had a lot of people leave here in the last few years and the turnover rate was much higher than normal last year. It wouldn't have been because of inclusion if that's what you want to know about* [the high turnover reason]. *Everyone's leaving because the conditions are too hard, it's not safe and it's starting to get to the point where you can do a stress-free job for a little less money.* This might highlight that within the health sector, these challenges are critical.

We observed and talked to staff around inclusion within the break room. A common theme emerged amongst staff. One stated: *a lot of patients' information is in different languages so it's easier for people to make decisions about their health.* Another stated: *I think inclusion is super important. But our managers each day are trying to figure out how to even keep a clinic open or who we can cancel [patients] because we don't have time to see them all* [due to staff shortages]. Another nurse stated that: *inclusion is kind of important, but I don't think they* [management] *are thinking about it at all. They may have been thinking about this before 2020 maybe. But it's been a real shit-show since then due to Covid.* Another nurse stated that *inclusion is a nice to have at the moment for us, but we are in survival mode! It feels like we* [medical staff] *aren't even included at a country level. We are overwhelmed and you know it's getting worse! But no one* [government] *wants to do anything.* Finally, one nurse stated: *imagine this, you're asking about inclusion, but the building is on fire.* Thus, similar to management, workers see that critical priorities around having sufficient staff to run the practice adequately are more critical than developing a positive inclusion climate.

During the site visits and discussions with staff, it was difficult to talk about inclusion in the face of such problems people in health are facing on a day-to-day basis. The staff must face a lot of anger and abuse from the public over the wait times and limited ability to offer help. Importantly, it was implied that this help would have been easier to offer a few years ago. After the questions around inclusion were asked, staff would frequently place it to the side and say, it's important, but not high on the priority list right now. One

staff member stated, *if you think about that needs chart triangle thing* [referring to Maslow's hierarchy of needs[205]] *you know what I mean – we aren't even getting sorted at that bottom level! So how can you even start to think about that top level stuff like inclusion. If inclusion is like support then we are severely lacking support, we don't feel safe in what we are doing.* Many in the practice were worried that more would leave the medical health profession in general making it even harder for the ones who remained[206].

Like Cases 7 and 8, we provide a whakataukī. In this case, there is no doubt that management and the business want to do right by their employees and their patients, but the severe challenges around staff shortages make this almost impossible. Indeed, the New Zealand research links between superior employee performance and inclusion[207] are supported here. The challenge is that there are not enough health workers within the country to aid the business or the sector. It might be that all healthcare providers are struggling to meet these challenges. But we suggest they are 'standing tall' and doing their best – being an active participant in the health of Aotearoa/New Zealand. We offer the following:

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Tama tu tama ora, tama noho tama mate

An active person will remain healthy while a lazy one will become sick

</div>

Applying Inclusion

This case presents a very important insight into inclusion. While it appears that the workplace is inclusive, including using Māori cultural values, and tries to serve a broad range of patients, including those with other cultural languages and values, the reality for the business is that the healthcare sector is facing extremely challenging times. While the inclusion approach talks about belonging and valuing uniqueness[208], there are clearly limitations for a business within healthcare. Fundamentally, they see the value of inclusion – both towards staff and patients. But when the services are so stretched because of such a critical human resource shortage, then the opportunities for inclusion to enhance the workplace appear limited. It might also be that the Covid-19 context means the business is limited in their ability to focus on things like inclusion, because they are simply trying to help as many people and patients as possible in what appears to be a time of ongoing crisis. In this example, it may simply be trying to do the best while the whole sector catches up with providing much needed healthcare professionals.

Case 13: Small Business Coaching
Naku te rourou nau te rourou ka ora ai te iwi
[With your basket and my basket, the people will live[209]]

Background: Rahera is the founder and CEO of a leadership coaching business for Indigenous (especially Māori) women. She focuses on helping them develop the skills and knowledge necessary to become effective leaders within their communities and beyond. Her business employs two other wāhine Māori [Māori women] and is profitable.

Rahera worked in leadership roles before undertaking further training in leadership, coaching, and development. She realised that many Māori women were struggling to reach their potential at work, and her business focuses on empowering Indigenous women to take on leadership roles, overcome barriers, and make positive changes in themselves and their communities. Rahera aims to help clients identify and leverage their strengths and navigate cultural expectations and barriers. Within her business, Rahera ensures that a safe space is created for any hui [meeting] and that this space is based around tikanga Māori [Māori customs] protocols. For Rahera, it is crucial to create an inclusive environment that enables staff to be open and freely discussing issues of tikanga. Rather than adopting a specific vision or model to guide her small business in its journey, she focuses on nurturing an open culture that promotes open communication for staff and clients, so each can bring their own ideas and values into the conversation, rather than it being a model or a framework that you just throw at them.

Rahera has been on her own learning journey through this process. The role of coaching others often ends up with Rahera questioning her own leadership skills, and how she and her team of two other Māori women can understand the nature of inclusion. She reflects on past workplaces that have been neither openly discriminatory nor inclusive, stating *I think some of the experiences that I've seen that just keep the status quo, or the business as usual, is maintained year after year after year*. Rahera recognises that business needs to change *with society or the world outside of that organisation as it moves forward.* She sees inclusion as a way for businesses to better embrace this change.

Needing to retain her two highly skilled Māori coaches, Rahera is aware that the tone she sets, and her overall approach, is highly conducive to inclusion and promotes the cultural welfare of her staff. She states she feels a sense of responsibility to aiding those working for her. She also goes on to suggest that the responsibility for inclusion is based from your own whakapapa and is adamant that inclusion *can't just be a tick box, it can't be we're going to go and do this tikanga workshop. We've done it now. Now we've done our tikanga.* Rahera reiterates the importance of inclusion being genuine and continuous. She believes that leaders need to lead from the front in being exemplary role models for inclusion and inclusive practices. Rahera's business is home-based, with staff coming to her home, and the business operating along the principles of open communication, a clear Māori voice and focus, and the collective importance of the group. As the organisation is small, other staff members often bring their children to work and, if need be, the coaches will babysit each other's children, creating a sense of belonging for all whānau [extended family]. For Rahera, she likes to use her experiences creating inclusion in her own business to aid her clients in how they shape themselves and their organisations, stating *inclusion can really aid our wāhine Māori in the workplace!*

Our whakataukī for Rahera's business relates to the collective, co-operation, and combining resources to get ahead. We see Rahera's expertise and guidance as seeking to provide resources and enable wāhine Māori to be successful:

Naku te rourou nau te rourou ka ora ai te iwi
With your basket and my basket, the people will live

Applying Inclusion

As a leadership coach for Indigenous women, Rahera ensures that inclusion is real, authentic, and ingrained in her own tikanga-based organisation. She exemplifies the 'walk the talk' motto and sees role modelling cultural authenticity as key, which aligns with Māori leadership[210]. Rahera seeks to not only help individuals but also their organisations to identify and address barriers that prevent the inclusion of Indigenous women. So, part of her role is around identifying barriers and providing resources to enable success through meeting the inclusion needs of her workforce – thus, belonging and uniqueness[211]. This case also highlights how inclusion needs to be an authentic process, driven by leadership, and lived in daily interactions with staff. This case demonstrates the importance of leadership engaging in reflective practices and continual efforts to understand inclusion, and the ongoing importance of prioritising this within organisations. The focus on authenticity and long-term views, aligning with positive Māori leadership[212], is important for understanding the mechanism by which inclusion can be developed in work environments.

Case 14: Knowledge Workers and Inclusion
I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho
[A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions[213]]

Background: Jamie is an office manager in a professional consultancy company that employs over 100 people. The company has multiple offices throughout New Zealand. Jamie has worked his way up to the office manager job, and part-owner in the company, since starting as a graduate about 10 years ago. The business is financially successful.

Jamie has been with the business since it began and has watched the company grow rapidly over the last decade. The company grew rapidly because they put staff and their community at the front and centre of the decisions that they make. When asked about inclusion, Jamie stated *it's simple. Everyone has fair opportunities. Opportunities are based on alignment to company values and skills set versus job descriptions. It's up to the individuals to take the opportunities presented to them.* However, inclusion within their industry is not without its challenges. Jamie states: *so, there are times where we struggled to be more inclusive, with actual diversity, there isn't the population of people coming through the universities, if that makes sense.* The type of work they carry out requires staff to be qualified and registered with a professional body within New Zealand, and a university degree is a requirement. Jamie is also referring to the lack of women and other minority groups in engineering. For example, Aotearoa/New Zealand universities aimed to have 33 percent of female graduates in 2020[214], highlighting the lack of gender representation in the sector. A female manager stated: *it is very hard to recruit women in our industry – they are rare and get snapped up very quick!*

Jamie also notes there has been a larger push to get Māori and Pacific peoples into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) as well[215]. However, unlike many companies that see an inclusion problem and think it's outside of their control, the company has taken proactive steps to help in this area. Jamie states: *one of the difficult challenges the organisation faces on the inclusion front is the lack of qualified women as well as Māori and Pacific graduates that come out in the STEM field.* Rather than just accepting that this is a problem, they work with a local girls' college in their main business area. This has enabled them to grow the pipeline of graduates in this area. Jamie notes that: *if it's good for the industry it's good for our business! We might have 10 people that we support to get into the area of STEM, and we might only end up employing one or two of these people as the other eight end up with our competitors,* but Jamie states: *this is all worth it. We are pretty passionate about what we do, we get into the schools and showcase what engineering is as a job in the hopes that they might go, 'oh, this is pretty cool – I could do this'. And then they obviously go to university, they come right out of university, and you've got a job.*

Jamie suggested the business adopted inclusion by focusing mainly on what was good for the industry, stating that *everybody's all about competition. But I think it's really important to play with a 'straight bat'. We don't focus on what other companies are doing, we help a lot of people get into the profession, and some of them come to work with us, and some don't – they work for our competitors. But we still think as long as we contribute in a positive way to the industry it'll be good for us in the long run.* This altruistic focus on the industry will mean that more women and minority groups enter study, the industry, and work in the sector – and even possibly with their business. This appears to be working for the business, with two wāhine noting *this is a great place to be* [as a woman] – *they*

are really supportive of me! And *being Māori means I am very rare in the industry, but this place really looks after me.*

Jamie also talked about the history of the organisation and spoke about how their approach to inclusion has changed since he owned the business [taking it over]. He acknowledged that their understanding and the value of inclusion had strengthened over time. Jamie stated that while they: *hadn't really changed anything over time – we have treated people this way since we've started! But through the organic growth process we have refined what we have done. Fundamentally what we have done – and are doing – comes back to the organisation's DNA around being good to staff and being good to the community around them. But as the firm has grown – from five people to 100, we have really scaled this focus on being good to staff and community more and more.* The organisation also sees a key role in staff training and development. Jamie noted: *few companies in this industry train people these days. They don't develop them. We train people, we care about people, and we develop people. All our office managers bar one has started with this company as a graduate; they've come through the ranks; they've been through our professional development courses – both in the technical and the interpersonal sense – and they know how to run a business effectively and how to treat staff well: the company way.* Training their staff brings a sense of inclusion as they are investing heavily in their staff, something that is not often done in the industry, and this has benefits for how people interact with the company culture, and their willingness to support and include others in the workplace. The organisation is also very inclusive in the sense that it provides staff the opportunity to become owners, which means staff are included at the highest level of decision-making.

The organisation does a lot in their community, designing and working on projects such as playgrounds, public buildings, and public spaces. They also support engineering departments at universities and cultural festivals throughout the country and engaged with local iwi [tribes] to help build parts of a full immersion te reo Māori school. The company doesn't actively promote all they do

on social media; they just like to help where they can and keep a low profile. A manager stated, *it's not our style to brag online like our competitors, we just get in* [to a cause] *and do what we can to help*. Jamie and the organisation have also been spending more time in the past years working with their local iwi and reaching out as they have seen a lot of good that the two parties can do together. *We have been striving to do the same thing from Māori and Pacific perspective, you just have to give your time in kind and give it time.* A Māori employee notes the importance of this work though, stating *for me, this is really special – to be giving my expertise back to my iwi for free – so cool.*
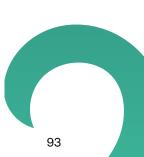
Since the inception of the organisation there has been a large focus on the health and wellbeing of the staff. *The company really promotes physical and mental health as a major pillar to our organisation's success. We provide services such as skin checks, these checks have caught potential cancer early.* They also provide several gym, sporting, and associated wellbeing memberships for staff use. They also run a yearly national conference where every office meets, and Jamie notes they *focus on professional development not only the technical side but also the interpersonal side of work. Nowadays there is a lot of emphasis on this stuff [wellbeing] but it's what we have always done here, it's in our company DNA, we are trying to create a place where we all want to be at.* Their business approach has also culminated in winning many major national awards for their work, their community engagement, and their treatment of staff. They use the following whakataukī drawing on their engineering focus:

I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho
A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions

Applying Inclusion

For this business, inclusion is about supporting staff and the community to get the best out of everyone. The philosophy to develop and enhance the STEM pipeline from a local school highlights the community engagement, as does doing work for local iwi. These all provide a context for the business's culture and show existing staff - and potential clients and employees – what the business' philosophy is. While the business has few Māori or Pacific employees, they have a strong focus on recruiting and supporting female employees, indicating they have had some success with under-represented groups in the industry – just not all. The business takes proactive measures to address these critical shortages, illustrating the inclusion approach around belonging and uniqueness[216]. The business realises that without greater diversity they risk not sustaining their current impressive financial performance. Applied to other Aotearoa/ New Zealand organisations, the inclusion focus supports understanding more broadly what is needed in the industry and seeking to be a key player in that. This includes focussing on skills/education pipelines and iwi connections etc. which might otherwise be ignored in the pursuit of business success. The focus on inclusion through enhancing the ability of the business (and other industry players) to hire minorities largely missing from the industry (e.g., women, Māori, Pacific peoples) all illustrate a wide focus on creating belonging and focusing on attracting uniqueness. Finally, the business talks about inclusion being part of their DNA. It is not a formal or informal policy – it is something they are forever focused on because it is good for the business, the industry, and the communities that make them up.

Case 15: Telecommunications Retail Store
He kākano ahau I ruia mai i Rangiātea
[I am a seed sown in Rangiātea, I will never be lost[217]]

Background: Salman manages a retail store that sells phones as well as mobile and internet plans. It is a part of a large telecommunications company that has many locations in shopping malls and on the main streets of most New Zealand cities and towns. It has a large workforce overall.

When asked about the challenges this organisation faces, like many other companies at the moment, Salman notes they struggle to retain staff due to The Great Resignation[218] and workforce churn. In relation to inclusion, Salman notes that, given they are a large company, they have extensive diversity and inclusion policies. Salman noted he can't name the policies because it will identify his employer, but he is aware of their names and details. He states *we are a retail store and to be honest they do a lot of stuff. And if you want to get ahead here* [in the company], *you just have to be good at your job because your race or gender aren't going to hold you back! So, we have a lot of stuff on the web about what we do. And it's a lot. And when you go and read it you think to yourself 'yep we actually do this here' it's not just some b.s.* [bullshit] *words on a page. The company has won some awards and it's for real what we do and what we say we do.*

When asked to provide examples of inclusion he noted there was a real drive to get a balance between women and men within the organisation. Importantly, Salman noted that the company is very transparent about these numbers. They had also made significant inroads into their Māori communities by offering help and support, and they also had the rainbow tick (https://www.rainbowtick.nz/) within their organisation. Salman states, a*gain I can't really stress this enough, but the company really is interested in promoting inclusion to the staff and I think everyone can feel it here! We have a lot of initiatives going on a lot of formal policy but also informally people are really supportive to each other.* He also noted, *we have a really diverse leadership team, and each business unit has a really diverse set of staff and it shows everyone that it's really possible to get into those positions if you work hard and deliver on the goals of the company.*

When talking to other staff in the store and observing the interactions between managers, staff, and customers, they did echo the sentiment from their manager with one staff member stating *I haven't been here too long, but you know I think it's pretty cool! We get a lot of good stuff and support; I feel really well supported here.* In addition to this example, another staff member stated *so we have a lot of formal stuff from the top. And you want to use it and they encourage you to do it, so you use it, and you actually feel good about it.* They were referring to the support they could take up, and highlighted how important the encouragement from a manager and head office to do so was. When talking with the other staff, they had noted that they had worked for other competitors in this area, noting that the competitors also offered many inclusive and supportive policies. One employee stated, *I used to work for our competition it's just over there* [points to another shop in the shopping mall]*, and we do all talk about what our companies are doing* [referring that they all know each other in the industry]. *It does look like we all get similar benefits or support but to be honest it does seem to be like a bit of an arms race at times. If they* [the competition] *do something we have to do it! So, it's kind of good in that way because we all* [employees] *benefit from them competing.*

Another staff member talked about the industry as a whole but also about how they felt supported in the face of change, *the company we work for works under really fast environment a really fast-paced environment, we're always going through change and the organisation really supports the staff and keeps them in when it's possible, rather than just going through the big layoffs that other companies seem to go*

through all the time[219]. We feel really supported here as a team we know there's a bright future ahead for the organisation and the industry as a whole so we're really happy to be working here, and we feel like there's really good career mobility and growth. Another employee highlighted how the company applies inclusion across the roles they do. They stated, *we have the ability to go into different areas if we think we want to try something else within the company given it's so big. All I can say is that thank you, everything's really genuine you get the feeling that this is real, and people are trying their best to make this work for everyone.*

For this case we provide a whakataukī. The whakataukī refers to the Aotea waka used by Māori to travel to New Zealand from Hawaiki and highlights the important of genealogy and culture. Here, we apply this to the inclusion organisational culture and the way that workers feel strongly included in everything the organisation offers. This supports the notion of inclusion and how this can boost employee attitudes[220] and behaviours[221]. There was such strong reinforcement from across the workers in the store that this highlighted the strength of the business – from the head office down to the retain store – and the way inclusion is genuinely actualised. We offer the following:
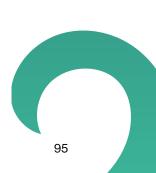

He kākano ahau I ruia mai i Rangiātea
I am a seed sown in Rangiātea, I will never be lost

Applying Inclusion

Both the managers and all the staff within the store highlighted the genuine approach of the inclusion policy and how they all felt exceptionally supported. The staff thought the ability to leverage their organisation's size to train and try new opportunities was especially welcome.

Overall, staff felt well supported from the policy but also actively encouraged to use the various offerings of the inclusion policy. The lessons from an inclusion point of view show us the importance of having policy that can be actioned but also having both management to support it and a consistent and supportive message from head office. The combined and genuine focus on inclusion means all workers feel support that is genuine. Interestingly, there is an example of an 'arms race' approach as other key competitors are likely seeking to attract and retain similar staff, and large sized firms appear to be trying to 'out do' each other with the number of offerings they apply to their inclusion policy. Ultimately, where both belonging and uniqueness are accepted and supported, then both the organisations and their workers are winners.

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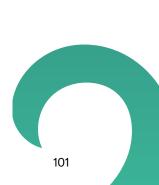89   Ibid. Chung et al. (2020);

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Authors

Professor Jarrod Haar (Ngāti Maniapoto & Ngāti Mahuta)
Associate Professor David Brougham
Professor Maree Roche (Raukawa)