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## **Kia whai taki: Implementing Indigenous Knowledge in the Aotearoa New Zealand Library and Information Management Curriculum**

**Spencer- Lilley**

Massey University, Palmerston North, Aotearoa New Zealand

**Te Paea- Paringatai**

Tumuaki, Te Rōpū Whakahau, Kāpiti Coast, Aotearoa New Zealand



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### **Abstract:**

*The purpose of this paper is to describe how in New Zealand Māori principles have been incorporated into the library and information curriculum and the impact of the inclusion of indigenous knowledge paradigms into the body of knowledge that library and information management professionals must demonstrate if they wish to obtain and subsequently retain their professional registration status.*

**Keywords:** Indigenous, knowledge, Māori, curriculum, professional

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Formal library education was first introduced into New Zealand in 1941. Prior to this, those interested in receiving a library education were able to take correspondence classes from the Library Association in London or were sponsored through Carnegie grants to attend overseas institutions (McEldowney, 1960: 45). Although these overseas programmes probably had an excellent focus on the necessary technical skills to provide a professional library service, they were also most likely not to have included any amount of significant local content. The New Zealand Library School was established and administered through the New Zealand Library Association and continued to operate under various models until 1979 when a postgraduate diploma programme was established at Victoria University and an undergraduate certificate programme at Wellington Teachers College. Neither institution had a particular emphasis on Māori issues in librarianship in the first years of operation. However, in line with the paradigm shift in attitudes to Māori society and biculturalism that took place in the 1980s mainly due to the policies and actions of the Fourth Labour Government, the postgraduate diploma programme at Victoria University came in for some intense scrutiny. This was due to the actions of a group of concerned students (Te Rōpū Takawaenga – the bridge builders) who believed that the review of the programme undertaken in 1987 (Saunders, 1987) failed to address curriculum issues relating to the delivery of services to Māori clients and the

importance of developing bicultural institutions. The attention received through the actions of Te Rōpū Takawaenga was the start of the development of a curriculum that was more inclusive of the interests and needs of Māori.

### **Library and Information Management education**

In 2013, library and information management education in New Zealand is undertaken by three institutions, The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (TOPNZ), Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) and Te Wānanga o Raukawa. There are distinct differences in the type of educational programmes offered by the three institutions. The programmes at TOPNZ are all focused on undergraduate level study, with students being able to staircase their way through Certificate and Diploma programmes on their way to a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Applied Science degree. All of the courses at TOPNZ are delivered by distance education.

The programmes at VUW are delivered in the School of Information Management (SIM) and are at the postgraduate level. Like TOPNZ the students are able to staircase their study, so they can enrol in a postgraduate certificate level, followed by a postgraduate diploma and then the Masters in Information Studies. Direct entry into the Masters is also available to those who have the necessary academic qualification or extensive practical, professional or scholarly experience. Students are able to study the SIM programmes in an internal (face to face) or by distance. The SIM also offers a Master of Arts (by thesis) and Doctor of Philosophy programmes.

Te Wānanga o Raukawa like TOPNZ offers its programmes at the undergraduate level, but is primarily focused on delivering their diploma and Bachelors programmes in a framework that has an emphasis on kaupapa Māori (Māori philosophy). The programme at Te Wānanga o Raukawa was established in 1998, mainly out of Māori frustration that the programmes at VUW and TOPNZ were still not inclusive enough of Māori issues. The development of the Te Wānanga o Raukawa programme was managed through an agreement between Te Wānanga o Raukawa and Te Rōpū Whakahau (Māori in libraries and information management). The Te Wānanga o Raukawa website states that the purpose of their Poutuarongo Puna Maumahara qualifications are:

to produce graduates who are able to design, implement and manage information systems to suit whakapapa based rōpū as well as other Māori groups and organisations. This qualification develops bilingual and bicultural managers of Māori information resources in Māori and non-Māori organisations. (Te Wānanga o Raukawa, 2013 )

Although most graduates from the diploma and degree programmes at Te Wānanga o Raukawa end up working in cultural repositories in hapū (sub-tribe) and iwi (tribe) organisations, their graduates are also eligible to work in library and information agencies.

The programmes at TOPNZ and VUW have slowly integrated Māori content into their papers, but a level of general dissatisfaction is felt by those who believe there should be more, including compulsory papers on Māori services and resources. However, the website for the information studies offerings at Victoria University does set out bicultural objectives for their programmes, as follows:

The School is aware of its key role in the professional education of information specialists in New Zealand. We aim, in the structures and content

of the individual course, to include an awareness of the relevance of the Treaty of Waitangi, and the ways in which it can be implemented in the information professions.

Bicultural aspects are integrated in two ways: through specific classes relating to biculturalism in New Zealand, and by addressing bicultural issues in taught courses as appropriate.

By the end of the programme, students are expected to:

- Have a basic understanding of Māori culture, the significance of the oral tradition, the role of whakapapa, and te reo
- Have some understanding of marae etiquette, and be able to conduct themselves appropriately in the event of their being required to visit a marae in the course of their professional duties
- Be able to pronounce Māori personal names and place names in a way acceptable to speakers of Māori
- Have some knowledge of the tāonga in libraries, archives, and museums
- Know the requirements of Māori in seeking access to these tāonga
- Understand the special needs of Māori as one of a number of groups for whom, as library and information clients, libraries and archives can seem threatening and unfriendly places. (Victoria University of Wellington, 2013)

The VUW programme also has an optional paper (INFO 530 Māori Information Resources) that is taught every second year, but TOPNZ has no course focusing specifically on Māori issues available. In 2012, the VUW programme was reviewed and included in the recommendations delivered by the review panel was that the MIS programme undergoes a bicultural audit (Dr Brenda Chawner, personal communication, September 25, 2012).

### **Professional Registration**

A framework for such an audit was established in 2007 through the decision by the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) to introduce a professional registration scheme. The scheme provides a framework of professional standards of competency in the body of knowledge and ethics required for professional library and information work. This body of knowledge was based on the core elements identified in the IFLA Education and Training Section's Guidelines for Professional Library / Information Educational Programmes (IFLA, 2003) at that time and included:

1. The Information Environment, Information Policy and Ethics, the History of the Field
2. Information Generation, Communication and Use
3. Assessing Information Needs and Designing Responsive Services
4. The Information Transfer Process
5. Organization, Retrieval, Preservation and Conservation of Information
6. Research, Analysis and Interpretation of Information
7. Applications of Information and Communication Technologies to Library and Information Products and Services
8. Information Resource Management and Knowledge Management

9. Management of Information Agencies
10. Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation of Outcomes of Information and Library Use.

The New Zealand framework (LIANZA, 2008) contains an additional element which recognises the value of indigenous knowledge paradigms which in the New Zealand context refers to Māori knowledge systems (known colloquially as BoK eleven). This element is described as follows:

11. Awareness of indigenous knowledge paradigms, which in the New Zealand context refers to Māori.

Under this element, New Zealand library and information professionals are required to demonstrate that they can:

- Understand importance, diversity and structure of Māori knowledge frameworks (mātauranga Māori)
- Show awareness of the influence that tikanga (cultural practices) and te reo Māori (Māori language) assumes in the development of Māori knowledge constructs and principles (concepts)
- Recognise the importance of kaupapa Māori (Māori research) methodologies in researching the needs of Māori clients

For many library and information professionals, particularly those who have not had much experience with things Māori, demonstrating that they fulfil these three areas is quite difficult. For current and future students of the different library and information management education programmes, it is expected that this content be incorporated into their courses. For this purpose a fuller description of the content requirements (LIANZA, 2008) was developed and includes:

- Understanding the importance, diversity or structure of Māori knowledge (mātauranga Māori)
- The influence that Māori processes, philosophies and language (kaupapa, tikanga and te reo Māori) is intrinsic in Māori knowledge frameworks
- The importance of Māori research methodologies when assisting Māori clients with their information needs.

The Professional Registration Board (LIANZA, 2008) with assistance from Marie Waaka and Hinureina Mangan, further developed BoK eleven to include guiding kaupapa Māori values such as:

- Tāonga (Treasure, property; prized and protected as sacred possessions of the tribe)  
Understanding the place of tāonga tuku iho (the prized and sacred possessions of the tribe that are handed down from one generation to the next) in contributing to the survival of Māori as a people.
- Whakatupu mātauranga (Creating knowledge, and new knowledge)  
Affirming creative activity (commonly referred to as 'research') to enhance the information and recreational needs of clients.

- Manaakitanga (Mana-enhancing behaviour towards each other, where mana is equated with influence, prestige, power)  
Committing to giving care and respect to clients, the organisation, and the tāonga that they hold.
- Te Reo Māori (Māori language)  
Understanding that Te Reo Māori is vital to the identity and survival of Māori as a people  
Recognising that competence in Te Reo Māori has intrinsic value to the client, organisation and staff.
- Whakapapa (Tacit and explicit knowledge frameworks)  
Recognising whakapapa is the backbone of Māori society  
Recognising whakapapa represents the growth of knowledge  
Recognising all things are connected, both animate and inanimate  
Recognising collections (as in libraries) have direct links to an original source  
Recognising whakapapa is the layering towards both the future and the past.
- Kaitiakitanga (Preserving, maintaining and protecting all knowledge)  
Practising at all times the ‘five-way test for eligibility to be a recipient of restricted knowledge’.

The five-way test consists of:

1. Receiving the information with the utmost accuracy
  2. Storing the information with integrity beyond doubt
  3. Retrieving the information without amendment
  4. Applying appropriate judgement in the use of the information
  5. Passing on the information appropriately.
- Rangatiratanga (Acknowledging the attributes of others)  
Demonstrating the ability to lead and unite people  
Demonstrating the ability to recognise the potential of others.

The eleven core elements that make up the body of knowledge for the professional registration scheme were reviewed and subsequently revised over the 2011-2012 period. With regard to the discussions and decisions around the status of BoK eleven – indigenous knowledge paradigms, it was recognised that the Māori and bicultural content needed to be strengthened throughout the other ten elements, as bicultural elements should be embedded in all aspects of professional practice. The first element relating to the information environment already had a requirement that professionally registered members have knowledge of, and be able to apply the Treaty of Waitangi in practice.

The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 and was an agreement between the British Crown and hapū. The Treaty consisted of three articles, that firstly, gave the British Crown governance rights, secondly, protected and gave Māori tino rangatiratanga (self-determining rights) over their land, forests, fisheries and other tāonga (treasures) and thirdly, Māori were guaranteed all the rights and privileges as British subjects. In 21<sup>st</sup> Century New Zealand, the Treaty of Waitangi has a strong influence on public policy, service delivery and resource allocation and there is an expectation that libraries and information agencies will deliver services and resources in line with their Treaty obligations. This is becoming increasingly

important in an environment where iwi and hapū are asserting their cultural and intellectual property rights and many iwi are determined to ensure that they can negotiate with institutions of cultural memory for repatriation of tāonga. In addition libraries and information agencies need to ensure that their staff members are knowledgeable about the Treaty and the responsibilities of their institution. The library and information education providers also need to ensure that this is included in the curriculum.

### **Registration and Revalidation**

For those professionals already practicing and who have attained their professional registration, there is a requirement that they revalidate their registration every three years. To be revalidated they must first demonstrate that they have undertaken professional development activities across the eleven elements that constitute the Body of Knowledge. It is expected that this will include at least ten activities per annum and no more than 40 over the revalidation period. The professional activities that qualify for inclusion range from reading professional literature, attending training programmes, on-line training courses, actively participating in committees, developing social media materials.

Anecdotal feedback has revealed that many of the registered professionals find it difficult to undertake activities or to demonstrate they have developed competencies in the area of BoK eleven – indigenous knowledge paradigms, with many of the revalidation activities being at a low level such as learning to sing a waiata (sung poetry), attending a pōwhiri (formal welcome) or learning basic greetings in te reo Māori (Māori language). While these are all important components of tikanga Māori (Māori protocols), undertaking them does not always mean that the cultural significance of these are always understood or can be applied more widely by these individuals.

One initiative that has been developed to assist those with little or no knowledge of things Māori has been the development of a one day workshop by Te Rōpū Whakahau. The mātauranga Māori workshops have been offered in a variety of cities throughout New Zealand. The workshops are always held at marae (traditional meeting places), meaning that all attendees must start the learning process by participating in the pōwhiri. Before and after participating in the formal welcome, the significance and relevance of the pōwhiri is explained and discussed within the context of a Māori worldview. This is then built on further by sessions that cover the relevance of whakapapa (genealogy) to human interaction with the environment and other living beings; the taxonomy of Māori knowledge through the analysis and organisation of Māori subject headings; pronunciation of te reo Māori; and the philosophy of Māori values. At the end of the day, participants are fare-welled through poroporoaki (formal farewell). A key feature of the day is to put Māori beliefs, practices and knowledge into a cultural framework that participants can build on through further learning. Attending one of these workshops will fulfil the criteria required for revalidation, but it is only the beginning of the process as like most cultures, tikanga Māori cannot be learned in one day. Although there is scope for an advanced programme being developed, there should not be an expectation that Te Rōpū Whakahau will provide all the training in this area. There is also a strong belief that like in other areas of professional development, individuals need to take some responsibility for their own learning and growth.

In conclusion, although library and information management education in New Zealand has been offered since the 1930s, the inclusion of bicultural or Māori focused content is still in a state of development. The creation of a professional registration scheme, based on the core

elements identified by IFLA's Section on Education and Training with the addition of an added element of Indigenous knowledge paradigms has assisted to sharpen the focus of the two mainstream tertiary providers (Victoria University and The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand), although there is considerable room for further growth. The scheme has also recognised that the curriculum of the Poutuarongo Puna Maumahara programme at Te Wānanga o Raukawa is highly relevant to the practice of library and information management in New Zealand. The requirement that all registered library and information professionals revalidate their registration on a three yearly cycle by demonstrating they have undertaken and reflected on their continuing professional development has led to these individuals pursuing training and development in the area of mātauranga Māori. For many this will have been the first time that they had engaged with mātauranga Māori and if they wish to maintain their registration status they will have to continue to growing their knowledge and skills in this area.

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