

**Which tertiary institutions are educating
young, low-skill Māori men? A research
note**

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Abstract

School data indicate a significant number of young Māori males leave school with no or very few level 1 National Certificate of Educational Achievement credits. Tertiary education providers potentially give these young men a second chance to gain basic qualifications, with the possibility of then adding to these qualifications. Ministry of Education tertiary enrolment data from 2001 to 2008 show that no type of tertiary institution stands out as being highly successful in enrolling Māori men in level 1–3 courses, although in recent years the polytechnic sector has been the most successful. Wānanga have achieved success in attracting Māori students, both numerically and as a percentage of their overall rolls, but they are attracting relatively few young Māori men in level 1–3 courses

While improving outcomes for young Māori men is partly in their own hands and those of their wider whānau, outcomes could be influenced by individual tertiary providers better targeting or tailoring their courses. However, the government and other organisations could also offer more support to young Māori men. This could include scholarships and other financial support targeted at young low-skilled Māori men.

Key words: Māori men, tertiary education, low skills

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Introduction

Much has been written about the difficulties Māori students face in the New Zealand schooling system. The difficulties can be shown by a variety of statistics (Ministry of Education, 2009). However, the news media cited a simple statistic from National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) data. In May 2009, the *New Zealand Herald* reported that in 2008 the NCEA pass rates by main ethnic group for level 1 at year 11 were European 79.2%, Māori 52.8%, and Pacific people 47.8% (Smith, 2009).¹ Although these pass rates indicate difficulties for Pacific people as well as Māori, this research note focuses on Māori.² An important gender dimension needs to be added to this ethnic dimension. Based on the same criteria as the statistics above, the pass rate in 2008 for Māori boys was 49.8% and for Māori girls 55.9%.³

School data indicate a significant number of Māori boys leave school with no or very few level 1 NCEA credits. This also shows up in 2006 census data in terms of those recording no formal qualifications. In the group aged 25–34, a group where a large proportion of people have completed tertiary education, one-third of Māori men and one-quarter of Māori women record having no formal qualifications. By comparison, across the total population, 16% of men and 12% of women in this age group had no formal qualifications.

Tertiary education providers potentially give those with no or few formal qualifications a second chance to gain basic qualifications, with the possibility of then adding to these qualifications. On the New Zealand qualifications framework, the first level is level 1, but in this paper I consider levels 1–3, which are generally certificate courses. While some people with a higher a qualification will also be undertaking level 1–3 courses, most undertaking level 1–3 courses will have few or no formal qualifications. To give readers an idea of levels, courses at levels 1–3 are offered at secondary school, a bachelors degree is level 7, and postgraduate qualifications range from an honours degree at level 8 to a doctorate at level 10.

This paper aims to identify which, if any, tertiary education institutions have been successful at bringing young Māori men into basic level education. It primarily describes the trends rather than providing the underlying reasons for them. The analysis is carried out at a broad level of university, polytechnic and technical training institutions,⁴ wānanga,⁵ and private training establishments (PTEs). Individual

¹ Not noted in the *New Zealand Herald* was the Asian pass rate of 74.1%.

² There are a range of measurement issues when considering ethnicity and education (for example, see Leather, 2009). However, for the purposes of this article they are not considered significant.

³ Data downloaded from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority website (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz>).

⁴ For simplicity, in the text polytechnics and technical training institutions are referred to collectively as polytechnics.

institutions are not identified. Enrolments in colleges of education are shown in Table 1, but by the end of the period considered in this paper all colleges had merged with universities, so they are not separately identified in the other tables.

All broad institutional groups are considered, but particular interest is paid to how wānanga have catered for young, low-skilled Māori men. In early 2007, Matt McCarten argued that, ‘if the Government and the people who manage education really want to lift education achievement for Maori and other under-achievers they need look no further than the wanangas’. Equally, in the conclusion of the 2005 Waitangi Tribunal *Report on the Aotearoa Institute claim concerning Te Wānanga o Aotearoa*, a report on the largest of the three wānanga, the tribunal cites the *Wānanga Capital Establishment Report* (1999, p 53):

Two of the principal reasons for the development of modern wānanga by Māori were to address the current underachievement of Māori in tertiary education and to help in the development of New Zealand society generally. Another primary objective of wānanga is to help revitalise te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori.⁶

More recently, in an opinion piece in the *New Zealand Herald*, under the title “The Maori education revolution is here”, Garth George praises Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and suggests that wānanga have an important role to play in educating young Māori men (George, 2009).

Decisions about participating in tertiary education are influenced by a wide range of factors, but broadly there are demand-side and supply-side factors. Demand-side factors are influenced by the sorts of skills and qualifications potential learners perceive to be useful and the qualifications they already hold. Supply-side factors include what individual institutions offer in terms of courses and the types of education the government supports through its various funding mechanisms.

In 2004 the Tertiary Education Commission | Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua (TEC) released *Te rautaki mō Te Mātauranga Matua: Working with Maori 2004–07*. This report aimed to provide the TEC with an overarching framework within which to address Māori needs and aspirations in the tertiary education sector. The strategy aimed to:

- assist Māori learners to succeed in education
- encourage education providers to be responsive to Māori aspirations and needs
- ensure the education system had the capacity to be inclusive of Māori.

This report referred to the earlier *Tertiary Education Strategy 2002–07*, which set out the direction of tertiary education for 2002–07 and was based on six broad strategies (Office of the Associate Minister of Education (Tertiary Education), 2002). The strategies were:

- strengthen system capability and quality

⁵ In New Zealand, a wānanga is a type of publicly owned tertiary institution that provides education in a Māori cultural context.

⁶ It is worth noting that although wānanga have focused on Māori, access has always been open to all ethnic groups, as will be shown in the data.

- te rautaki mātauranga Māori: contribute to the achievement of Māori
- develop aspirations
- raise foundation skills so that all people can participate in our knowledge society
- develop the skills New Zealanders need for our knowledge society
- educate for Pacific peoples' development and success
- strengthen research, knowledge creation and uptake for our knowledge society.

Te rautaki mō Te Mātauranga Matua also referred to the *Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities 2003/04* (Office of the Minister of Education, 2002). Amongst the statement's priorities were the raising of foundation skills and improving access to the tertiary education system for all New Zealanders, in particular under-represented and underachieving groups. It was noted that the TEC would encourage the development of a foundation skills framework that integrated te ao Māori – the many and diverse Māori world views – as a key component.

The specific actions from 2005 included increasing the range of methods to deliver foundation skills to better meet the varied learning styles and needs of Māori learners and increasing the types of learning environments within which Māori learners could access foundation skills. Clearly, there was government support for level 1–3 type courses at this stage.

In late 2006 the Ministry of Education published *Tertiary Education Strategy 2007–12, incorporating Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities 2008–10* (Office of the Minister for Tertiary Education, 2006). This strategy shifted the focus away from the then quickly growing level 1–3 courses by noting that over the next 5–10 years New Zealand needed to increase the number of New Zealanders achieving qualifications at higher levels (eg, trades training, diploma, degree, and postgraduate education). The needs of young people also generated a stated goal of ensuring more young New Zealanders complete their tertiary education qualifications before the age of 25. The document had a specific section on the group of wānanga, including a goal to strengthen the provision of education at the level of diploma and above within the sector (ie, above levels 1–3).

Description of data

Although the focus of this note is on young Māori men, it begins by establishing overall patterns of level 1–3 tertiary sector education for young people. In this analysis enrolments of only domestic students are used. It is recognised that completions data are also important, especially as young men are less likely to complete qualifications than are young women, but broad educational patterns can be seen in enrolment data (Callister et al, 2008). In addition, those in industry-based training are not specifically measured. However, many in such training schemes will be doing block courses with tertiary education providers so will be counted. I define 'young' as those aged under 25 in this report. Most of the data is for 2008, but where a time series is used it is from 2001 to 2008. In the initial part of the analysis, I consider enrolments of young Māori men primarily in relation to enrolments *within* each type of tertiary institution. However, in the latter part of the analysis I compare *across* institutions. It needs to be

noted that people can be enrolled in more than one qualification level at the same time. They can also be enrolled in more than one institution. In this analysis all enrolments are included, not just enrolments in highest qualifications. It should be noted that all data are based on a census of the population in each institution. Therefore, statistical significance of any finding does not need to be reported.

Most of the data was directly downloaded from the Education Counts website.⁷ Additional data on level 1–3 enrolments was supplied directly by the Ministry of Education.

Trends in tertiary education

Over the long term, the proportion of young people studying at tertiary education institutions has dramatically increased.⁸ Although under-represented, Māori enrolments have also been increasing in number. In 2008, 80,608 Māori were enrolled in formal tertiary education in New Zealand. This represents 19.2% of total enrolments in these institutions. Māori enrolments as a percentage of total enrolments changed little between 2001 and 2008, but increased numerically from 65,524 to a peak of 90,681 in 2004 before, then decreasing to 80,608 in 2008 along with overall decline in enrolments across the tertiary sector. Since the mid-1990s, more female domestic students than male have enrolled in formal tertiary education, and the differences in enrolments of Māori women relative to Māori men have been particularly strong. Māori women represented 63% of Māori tertiary enrolments in 2001, declining slightly to 61% in 2008, but these ratios indicate a first challenge in attracting Māori men of any age into tertiary education.

Table 1 shows enrolments in each type of educational institution from 2001 to 2008. Several patterns stand out. One is the steady increase in university enrolments, but with the latter part boosted by the absorption of colleges of education. Polytechnics had rapid growth in enrolments to a peak in 2007, before dropping back. Equally, wānanga had rapid, but unsustainable, growth to 2004 before a substantial decline in enrolments. This had been on the back of very high growth in the 1990s. PTEs had very strong growth in the 1990s, but numbers were relatively stable from 2001 to 2008.

⁷ *Education Counts* is a Ministry of Education website that provides access to statistical data, quantitative information and research about the education sector (<http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz>).

⁸ More detail on the longer-term trends, including enrolment of Māori, can be found in Callister and Newell (2008).

Table 1: Total enrolments by institutional type, 2001–2008

Year	Universities	Colleges of education	Institutes of technology and polytechnics	Wānanga	Private training establishments
2001	133,511	13,957	122,315	16,454	68,977
2002	135,999	13,505	132,015	43,358	74,586
2003	136,274	13,452	157,101	65,157	63,561
2004	135,939	13,672	177,491	69,736	69,130
2005	139,944	6,596	200,371	62,159	74,923
2006	139,605	6,637	204,117	48,793	73,262
2007	146,923	0	206,837	42,339	70,504
2008	147,128	0	186,948	40,327	65,472

While there had been growth in total enrolments across the whole tertiary education sector, between the mid-1990s and 2005, growth had been particularly strong in levels 1–3 and level 4 courses. In part, this was driven by the establishment of wānanga, but it was also in response to overall government support for foundation-level courses. Although total enrolments across the whole sector have declined since 2005, the decline was particularly strong in levels 1–3, reflecting some shift away from government support of such qualifications. Yet despite the decline in level 1–3 enrolments overall, a significant number of students have been enrolled in level 1–3 courses over the whole 2001–2008 period, varying between a high of 45% in 2005 to a low of 38% in 2001 (Table 2). Part of the latter decline was due to the numbers in wānanga coming back from peak enrolments in 2004. When gender is considered, men formed just under 45% of enrolments in 2001, rising to just under half by 2008.

Table 2: Level 1–4 enrolments and total enrolments, 2001–2008

Year	Enrolments (levels 1–3)	Enrolments (level 4)	Total enrolments (levels 1–10)	Levels 1–3 as percentage of total (%)	Males as a percentage of levels 1–3 (%)
2001	128,856	29,765	342,460	38	44.4
2002	153,355	42,128	378,720	40	43.5
2003	166,863	62,149	408,792	41	45.0
2004	189,448	68,445	434,533	44	45.0
2005	206,431	72,658	454,192	45	47.8
2006	195,329	70,090	447,324	44	50.4
2007	187,040	70,006	443,836	42	50.8
2008	164,367	65,226	420,634	39	48.5

The trends in level 1–3 courses at an institution level vary significantly (Table 3). Universities have low and declining proportions of students enrolled in level 1–3 courses. As both PTEs and wānanga grew, the proportion of students enrolled at this level also declined. Only in polytechnics has there been growth in these students as a proportion of total students. However, overall, even by 2008, wānanga were still the most likely to have students enrolled at level 1–3 when measured as a proportion of their own rolls.

Table 3: Level 1–3 enrolments as a percentage of enrolments in each group of institutions, 2001–2008

Year	Universities (%)	Institutes of technology and polytechnics (%)	Wānanga (%)	Private training establishments (%)
2001	6.0	48.7	84.8	73.0
2002	5.6	51.4	74.5	70.0
2003	4.7	51.1	72.2	66.0
2004	4.7	54.5	73.7	66.0
2005	4.2	58.8	72.7	63.5
2006	3.8	59.4	67.6	58.6
2007	2.1	59.7	67.9	54.2
2008	1.8	56.2	69.0	51.9

Wānanga have been particularly successful at drawing in students with no school qualifications (41% of their students in 2008). However, both PTEs and polytechnics also strongly cater for those with no formal qualifications (31% and 29% respectively of their students in 2008). Not surprisingly with the general requirement for university entrance to gain entry to universities, only 3% of universities' students have no formal school qualification.

Although over the longer term the number of older students has grown strongly, across the whole sector around 40% of students are aged under 25 (Table 4). But this varies by institution. In 2008, across all qualifications universities had the highest proportion of younger students at 59%, followed by PTEs at 41%, Polytechnics at 33% but for Wānanga only 12% were under 25.

When total enrolments at level 1–3 are narrowed down to students under 25 and enrolled in courses at these levels, then by 2008 these students formed nationally around 12% of total tertiary sector enrolments.

Table 4: Enrolments of students aged under 25 studying at levels 1–3, 2001–2008

Year	Students aged under 25	Percentage of total enrolments (%)	Students aged under 25 studying at levels 1–3	Percentage of total enrolments (%)	Young men as percentage of total young enrolments at levels 1–3 (%)
2001	152,013	44.4	52,424	15.3	49.6
2002	155,914	41.2	53,826	14.2	49.8
2003	158,879	38.9	53,514	13.1	50.1
2004	163,749	37.7	56,680	13.0	50.1
2005	172,303	37.9	62,786	13.8	52.7
2006	169,677	37.9	55,827	12.5	53.2
2007	172,662	38.9	53,847	12.1	54.3
2008	173,756	41.3	51,108	12.2	53.4

Reflecting both the age of students in and the qualification structure of each broad institutional group, PTEs have the largest proportion of young students studying at

levels 1–3, while universities have very few young people at this level (Table 5). The wānanga stand out with a quarter of their students being young and studying at levels 1–3 in 2001, yet the proportion dropped to 8.5% by 2008. Total enrolments at wānanga have changed substantially over this period, with the number of young wānanga students studying at levels 1–3 dropping from 4,183 in 2001 to 3,408 in 2008.

Table 5: Students aged under 25 studying at levels 1–3 as a percentage of total enrolments in each institutional group, 2001–2008

Year	Universities (%)	Institutes of technology and polytechnics (%)	Wānanga (%)	Private training establishments (%)
2001	3.0	18.6	25.4	32.9
2002	2.9	18.8	17.9	26.1
2003	2.4	17.4	11.9	27.7
2004	2.4	17.2	9.7	27.0
2005	2.1	18.9	9.1	25.1
2006	2.0	16.3	7.9	24.4
2007	1.0	16.9	7.9	22.2
2008	1.0	17.3	8.5	23.6

In 2008, Māori, formed 19.2% of total enrolments in tertiary education institutions. Just under 40% of Māori enrolments were in the polytechnic sector, followed by 28% in wānanga.

Table 6 focuses on Māori enrolments *within* each institution type. The table covers all areas of qualification and shows enrolments by age and sex. In addition, it shows the overall proportion of enrolments by Māori women relative to Māori men. Five points stand out.

- Reflecting their initial reasons for establishment, wānanga have been very successful in attracting Māori students. In 2008, nearly 56% of wānanga students were Māori.
- Overall, universities are the least successful at attracting Māori students with only 9.6% of their students Māori. In a major part, this reflects the academic entry requirements to university, which are primarily determined through the schooling system. With Māori, but particularly Māori boys, still being under-represented in those gaining university entry this is a barrier to increasing enrolments.
- Wānanga stand out in regards to a gender imbalance in students, with nearly 70% of wānanga students being female in 2008. Only in polytechnics are enrolments of women and men similar.
- Wānanga also stand out in the proportion of their students that are older Māori women and, albeit to a lesser degree, older Māori men (aged 40 or over). In 2008, just over 19% of their total enrolments were older Māori women and over 9% older Māori men.
- After universities wānanga have the smallest proportion of young Māori men enrolled. No institutional group has a significant proportion of its roll being young Māori men, but in 2008 only 2.5% of the wānanga’s roll was in this group.

Table 6: Māori men and women as a percentage of total enrolments in each institution type, 2008

Category	Universities	Institutes of technology and polytechnics	Wānanga	Private training establishments	Total
Māori men under 25 (%)	2.0	3.4	2.5	4.3	3.0
Māori men 40+ (%)	0.5	2.2	9.1	1.7	2.1
Māori women under 25 (%)	3.0	2.8	6.0	7.9	3.9
Māori women 40+ (%)	1.2	2.7	19.1	4.4	3.8
Total Māori percentage of enrolment at institution (%)	9.6	17.0	55.7	27.8	19.2
Total Māori (N) at institution	14,053	31,848	22,461	18,217	80,608
Māori women as percentage of Māori enrolments (%)	63.7	50.5	69.8	68.1	60.6
Total enrolments (all groups) at institution	147,128	186,948	40,327	65,472	420,634

In 2008 across all levels of qualification there were 2,938 young Māori men enrolled in universities, 6,332 at polytechnics, 2,822 at PTEs, and 1,017 at wānanga.

Table 7 examines the enrolments of Māori in level 1–3 courses by main institution for 2008. The table shows that:

- overall, Māori studying at levels 1–3 formed 10% of total enrolments across the whole tertiary sector
- at wānanga, over a third (36%) of total enrolments were Māori studying at levels 1–3
- at wānanga, only 1.6% of total enrolments were young Māori men studying at levels 1–3, which is no higher than the national average
- in relation to their overall rolls, PTEs and polytechnics attract proportionately more young Māori men studying at levels 1–3.

Table 7: Māori men and women studying at levels 1–3 as a percentage of total enrolments in each institution type, 2008

Category	Universities	Institutes of technology and polytechnics	Wānanga	Private training establishments	Total
Māori men under 25 (%)	0.1	2.2	1.6	3.1	1.6
Māori men 40+ (%)	0.0	1.6	5.3	1.1	1.3
Māori women under 25 (%)	0.1	1.7	4.2	5.5	1.9
Māori women 40+ (%)	0.0	1.6	12.1	2.1	2.1
Total Māori at levels 1–3 as percentage of enrolment at institution (%)	0.2	10.5	36.0	17.3	10.4
Total Māori at levels 1–3 (N) at institution	319	19,714	14,516	11,309	43,837
Total Māori (N)	14,053	31,848	22,461	18,217	80,608
Total enrolments (all groups) at institution	147,128	186,948	40,327	65,472	420,634

Another way of presenting these data is to view them as a percentage of total *Māori* enrolments in each institution. Universities are not included due to small numbers. Table 8 shows the following.

- Across the whole sector (including universities) just over 15% of Māori enrolments in 2008 were young Māori men studying at levels 1–3.
- At polytechnics, nearly 21% of Māori enrolments were young Māori men studying at levels 1–3 study; at PTEs the figure is just under 18%. In total, in 2008, 4,066 young Māori men were enrolled for study at levels 1–3 at polytechnics and 2,026 at PTEs.
- In wānanga, just 4.4% of Māori students were males under 25 studying at levels 1–3. In total, in 2008, just 642 young Māori men were enrolled for study at levels 1–3 at wānanga.

Table 8: Māori men and women studying at levels 1–3 as a percentage of total Māori enrolments in each institution type, 2008

	Institutes of technology and polytechnics	Wānanga	Private training establishments	Total
Māori men under 25 (%)	20.6	4.4	17.9	15.1
Māori women under 25 (%)	16.2	11.6	31.8	18.6
Māori men under 25 studying at levels 1–3 (N)	4,066	642	2,026	6,603
Māori women under 25 studying at levels 1–3 (N)	3,196	1,683	3,591	8,167
Total Māori at levels 1–3 (N) at institution	19,714	14,516	11,309	43,837
Total Māori (N)	31,848	22,461	18,217	80,608
Total enrolments (all groups) at institution	186,948	40,327	65,472	420,634

Instead of examining young Māori men studying at levels 1–3 as a percentage of the rolls in each institution, Tables 9 and 10 consider this group across institutions. Studying within the rolls of institutions could be seen as particularly unfair on wānanga given their success at attracting older students. Table 9 shows that overall the number of young Māori men studying at levels 1–3 stayed relatively stable between 2001 and 2008. However, there have been overall declines in this period at wānanga and PTEs. The strongest growth has been seen in the polytechnic sector with numbers almost doubling. This shows up in percentages as well. In 2001, polytechnics attracted a third of young Māori men studying at levels 1–3, but by 2008 this was just under two-thirds. Although seeing a revival between 2006 and 2008, wānanga has reduced from a peak of nearly 22% young Māori men at this level in 2002 to just under 10% in 2008. The PTEs have seen a reduction, but they still train nearly a third of young Māori men at this level.

Table 9: Number of Māori men under 25 years of age studying at levels 1–3 in each institutional type, 2001–2008

Year	Universities	Institutes of technology and polytechnics	Wānanga	Private training establishments	Total	Young Māori men as a percentage of young Māori enrolments at levels 1–3 (%)
2001	177	2,242	927	3,608	6,802	40.9
2002	192	2,430	1,411	2,736	6,488	38.0
2003	162	2,884	1,341	2,533	6,633	39.1
2004	158	3,273	1,099	2,587	6,797	39.2
2005	137	4,073	856	2,437	7,207	41.3
2006	149	3,717	522	2,515	6,668	42.4
2007	120	4,202	557	2,057	6,730	44.4
2008	81	4,066	642	2,026	6,603	44.7

Table 10: Percentage of young Māori men studying at levels 1–3 in each institutional type, 2001–2008

Year	Universities	Institutes of technology and polytechnics	Wānanga	Private training establishments	Total*
2001	2.6	33.0	13.6	53.0	102.2
2002	3.0	37.5	21.7	42.2	104.4
2003	2.4	43.5	20.2	38.2	104.3
2004	2.3	48.2	16.2	38.1	104.8
2005	1.9	56.5	11.9	33.8	104.1
2006	2.2	55.7	7.8	37.7	103.4
2007	1.8	62.4	8.3	30.6	103.1
2008	1.2	61.6	9.7	30.7	103.2

* Students can be enrolled in more than one institution

Finally, the relatively low levels of enrolments of young Māori men studying at levels 1–3 in wānanga can be compared with the level of enrolments of young Māori women studying at this level. In 2008, men in this group comprised 28% of enrolments, up from a low of 22% in 2002.

Discussion and conclusion

Wānanga have achieved some real successes in attracting Māori students, both numerically and as a percentage of their overall rolls. For many of these students this represented a first entry point into tertiary education. In addition, wānanga have played an important role in helping revitalise te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori.⁹ However, in terms of addressing particular aspects of the underachievement of Māori, even though wānanga are offering around 70% of their courses at levels 1–3, they are attracting very few young Māori men to study at this level. The enrolment data suggest there are two drivers for the very low number of young Māori men enrolled in these lower level courses. The first is that although wānanga have had considerable success at attracting older students, especially older female students, they have had less success attracting young students. When wānanga have attracted young Māori to study at levels 1–3, they have been far more successful at attracting women than men. What the enrolment data do not show is the range of courses offered. It seems that some of the level 1–3 courses offered, such as the Mahi Ora and Mauri Ora life skills and cultural courses, which do not charge fees, are more attractive to older women than to younger men.

Both polytechnics and PTEs have been enrolling a smaller proportion of their students at levels 1–3, but they have been more successful at attracting younger people. In addition, probably because of the types of course they offer and perhaps their close links with industry, polytechnics are the only group of tertiary institution more successful in

⁹ Te Reo is the Maori language and, according to the National Library, Mātauranga Māori takes many forms, including language (te reo), traditional environmental knowledge (tāonga tuku iho, mātauranga o te taiao), traditional knowledge of cultural practice, such as healing and medicines (rongoā), fishing (kai moana) and cultivation (mahinga kai) <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/collections/online-exhibitions/matauranga-maori>

attracting male students than female students. One result has been that both polytechnics and PTEs have been attracting more young Māori men, both numerically and as a percentage of their rolls, to undertake basic level education than have wānanga.

If New Zealand is serious about upskilling its population, particularly Māori, and especially young Māori males, then the first place where dramatic improvements are needed is in schooling. Improvements there would ensure more Māori boys gained level 1–3 qualifications, including university entrance, before leaving school. In 2008, the Ministry of Education released *Ka Hikitia: – Managing for Success*, a strategy aimed at improving Māori achievement at school. This document promoted strategies across the education sector and wider government agencies for realising the potential of all Māori students, but particularly boys.

However, the tertiary sector also needs to play a role in giving young Māori men a chance to gain basic level skills, particularly if they have not already gained them at school. While no type of tertiary institution stands out as being highly successful in doing this, the polytechnic sector has in recent years been attracting more young Māori men in level 1–3 courses.

In their relatively short history, wānanga have faced and overcome many challenges. Perhaps a further one is for them to find ways to reach out to one of New Zealand's most educationally disadvantaged groups, young, low-skilled Māori men. However, wānanga should not be solely relied on to solve the problems of Māori disadvantage, particularly the disadvantages young Māori men face.

Part of the change lies in the hands of young Māori men and their wider whanau, but part can be influenced by the targeting or tailoring of courses by individual tertiary providers. However, the government and other funders could also offer more support to young, low-skilled Māori men. Although there are specific scholarships for Māori attending tertiary education, a case could be made for targeting young, poorly qualified Māori men. If such support were to be offered by charitable trusts, it would not be illegal because the Human Rights Act 1993 allows such bodies to discriminate on the grounds of age and/or ethnicity. Targeting by ethnicity, age, *and* having few formal qualifications would prevent middle-class capture of such financial support. In addition, the government could provide equity funding to institutions in order for them to support young, low-skilled Māori men. If such funding were to be considered, it should be subject to:

- the justification for this particular ethnic-based special measures being well thought out and clearly communicated
- an adequate level of public acceptance existing for the justifications provided
- evidence that the support can be implemented effectively
- the effects of the special support being monitored carefully
- a means of determining when the support measures were no longer needed or time limits on the measures.

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