

Parents more likely to enrol children in kaupapa Māori education – 2013: E tipu e rea [kia puawai]

Purpose

Parents more likely to enrol children in kaupapa Māori education – 2013: E tipu e rea [kia puawai] examines the characteristics of Māori parents who were more likely to send their children to kaupapa Māori education.

E tipu e rea [kia puawai].

Tender youth, grow to your full potential.

This title is the start of a whakatauhākī (proverb) by Sir Apirana Ngata. “E tipu e rea ...” [kia puawai] highlights how Māori blossom when following their journey to learn te reo, gain matauranga (knowledge), and learn about who they are (what it means to be Māori).

Summary of key points

- Parents who had attended kaupapa Māori education themselves were more likely to enrol their child.
- Child enrolment in kaupapa Māori education was most strongly associated with parents speaking te reo at home and with them having a ‘fairly well or better’ proficiency in te reo.
- Parents placing a high level of importance on culture were more likely to enrol their child.
- Lower socio-economic parents were more likely to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education.

Background

Kaupapa Māori education incorporates te ao Māori (a Māori world view) in its teaching philosophy. This education is delivered predominantly at kōhanga reo (for children aged up to 6 years), kura kaupapa (ages 5–18 years), and wharekura (secondary students).

Kōhanga reo are early education centres. They were established in 1982 for preschool tamariki as a community-led response to the decline in people speaking te reo Māori. The goal was to revitalise te reo by immersing tamariki and whānau (family) in te ao Māori through the medium of te reo Māori.

In 2014, there were over 480 kōhanga reo around the country, catering to almost 9,400 tamariki (Ministry of Education, 2016).

The success of kōhanga reo led to calls for similar immersion education for children progressing from the kōhanga environment to school-level education. In 1985, the first kura kaupapa Māori (years 1–8) were established, followed by wharekura (years 9–13), to provide te reo immersion schooling for secondary school students. In 2016, there were 279 kura kaupapa and wharekura with over 18,100 students (Ministry of Education, 2016).

Benefits of kaupapa Māori education

When compared with Māori students enrolled in English-medium schools, those attending kura kaupapa or wharekura were more likely to stay in school until age 17, and also more likely to achieve NCEA level 2 or above by the time they left school (Ministry of Education, 2014).

Kura kaupapa also help tamariki have a better sense of their personal and cultural identity as they transition to being rangatahi (young adults) (Campbell and Stewart, 2009).

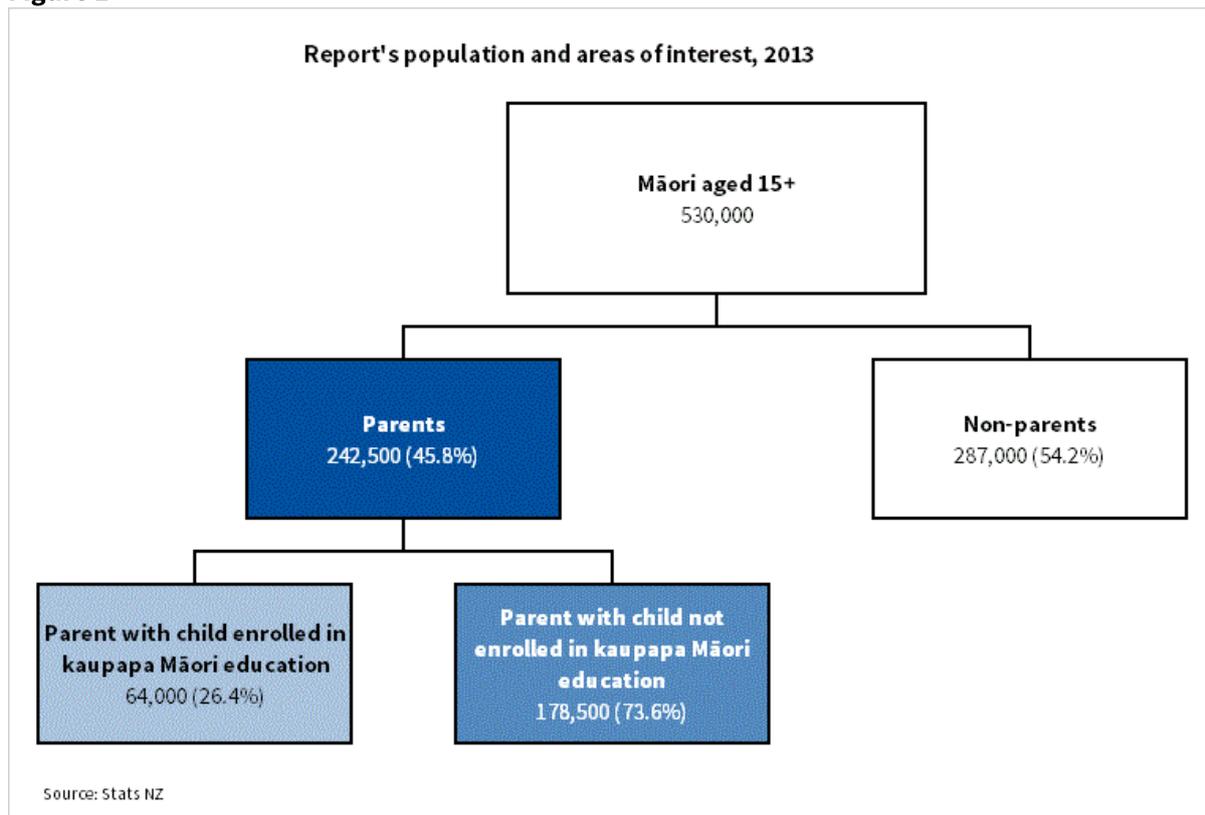
Data and population

[Te Kupenga](#) 2013, Stats NZ’s first survey of Māori well-being, is the data source for this report’s results. Parents are identified as Māori aged 15+ who had their child living with them at the time of the survey. Their child could have been enrolled in kaupapa Māori education at any time, not just at the time of the survey.

The survey did not specify the form of kaupapa Māori education.

In 2013, 45.8 percent of Māori aged 15+ were parents who had their child living with them. Of these parents, 26.4 percent had enrolled their child in kaupapa Māori education.

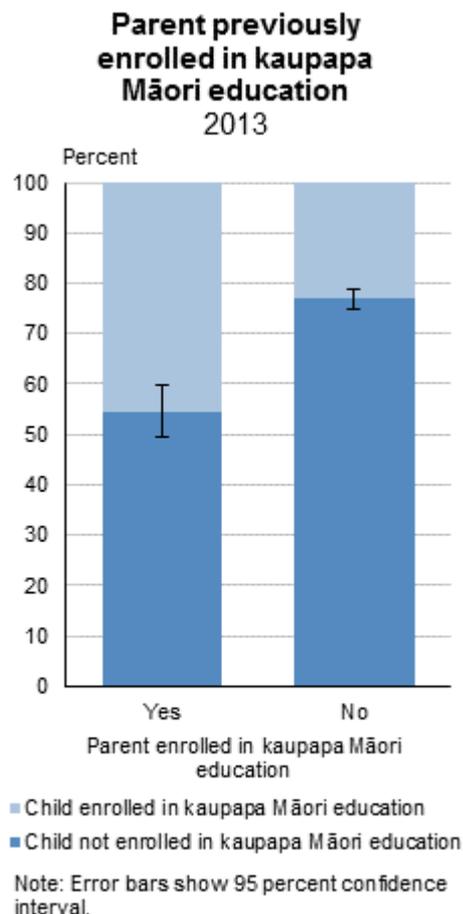
Figure 1



Parents with kaupapa Māori education more likely to enrol their children

In 2013, 45.4 percent of parents who had themselves attended kaupapa Māori education enrolled their child in this education medium (see figure 2). This compares with 23.1 percent of parents who had not attended themselves.

Figure 2



Source: Stats NZ

Te reo Māori and home support underpin kaupapa Māori education

Ko taku reo taku ohooho, ko taku reo taku mapihi maurea

My language is my awakening, my language is the window to my soul

Campbell and Stewart (2009) discuss how language is tied to ethnicity as a central plank of human culture:

Language carries the unique features of communication through which an ethnic group maintains and transmits its characteristic ethical narratives and modes of thought, and conducts its social practices.

When children are enrolled in kaupapa Māori education, the parents perceive the education of their child is not solely the school’s responsibility; they understand they must continue their child’s learning at home (McKinley, 2000).

We found a strong association between parents speaking te reo at home and children being enrolled in kaupapa Māori education. Of parents who spoke te reo at home, 48.2 percent had a child enrolled in kaupapa Māori education, compared with 17.4 percent of those who do not speak te reo at home.

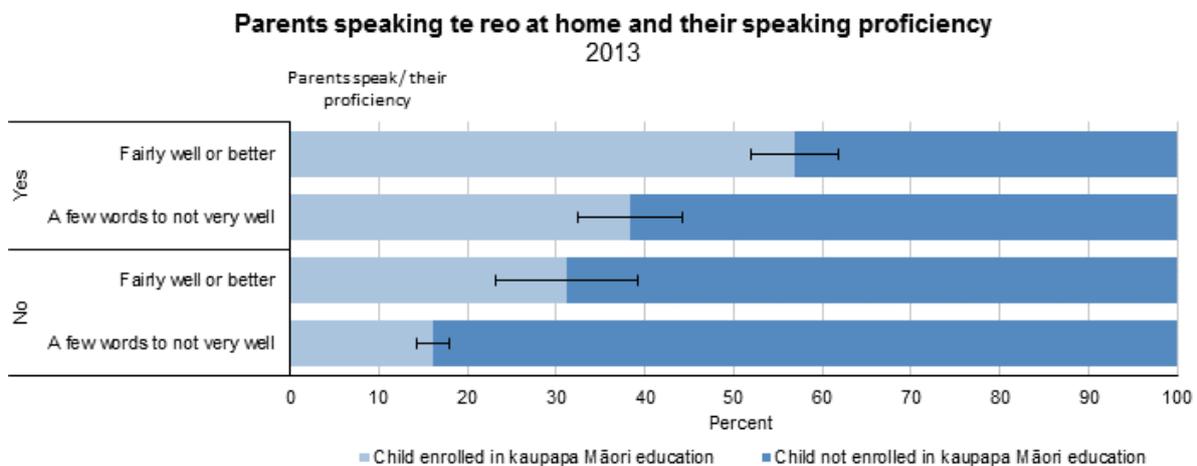
The parent’s ability in speaking te reo Māori also showed a similar pattern. For parents able to speak te reo ‘fairly well or better’, 48.5 percent had a child enrolled in kaupapa Māori education, compared with 20.0 percent of parents who could speak ‘only a few words’ or ‘not very well’.

Figure 3 shows that parents who spoke te reo at home and could speak it ‘fairly well or better’ were the most likely group to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education (56.9 percent).

We found no significant difference between parents who spoke te reo at home but had low proficiency (‘only a few words’ or ‘not very well’) and those who could speak ‘fairly well or better’ but did not use the language at home.

Parents who did not speak te reo at home and who also had low proficiency were the least likely group to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education (16.1 percent).

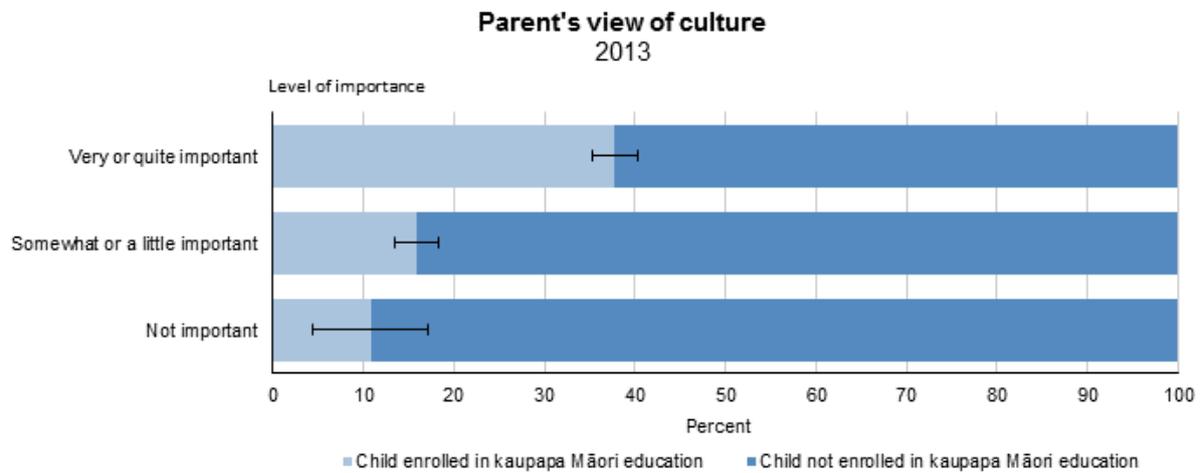
Figure 3



A strong link with Māori culture matches a strong connection with kaupapa Māori education

Figure 4 shows that parents who placed a high level of importance on Māori culture were more likely to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education. Of parents who viewed culture as ‘very or quite important’, 37.8 percent had enrolled their child. Parents who thought culture was ‘somewhat or a little important’ or ‘not important’ were less likely to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education (15.8 percent and 10.8 percent, respectively).

Figure 4

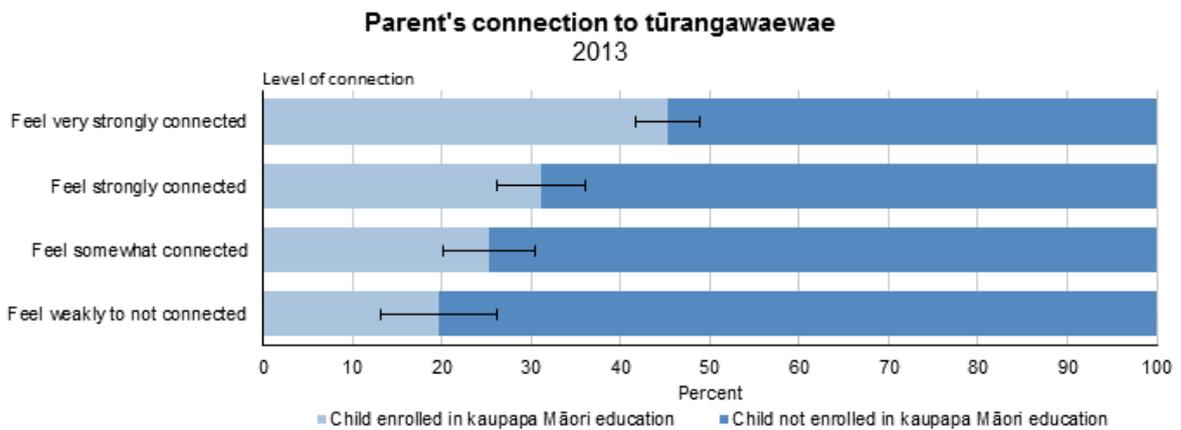


Note: Error bars show 95 percent confidence interval.

Source: Stats NZ

Similarly, parents with very strong connections to their tūrangawaewae (place to stand and belong) were more likely to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education. Of all parents who were ‘very strongly connected’ to their tūrangawaewae, 45.3 percent had enrolled their child (figure 5).

Figure 5



Note: Error bars show 95 percent confidence interval.

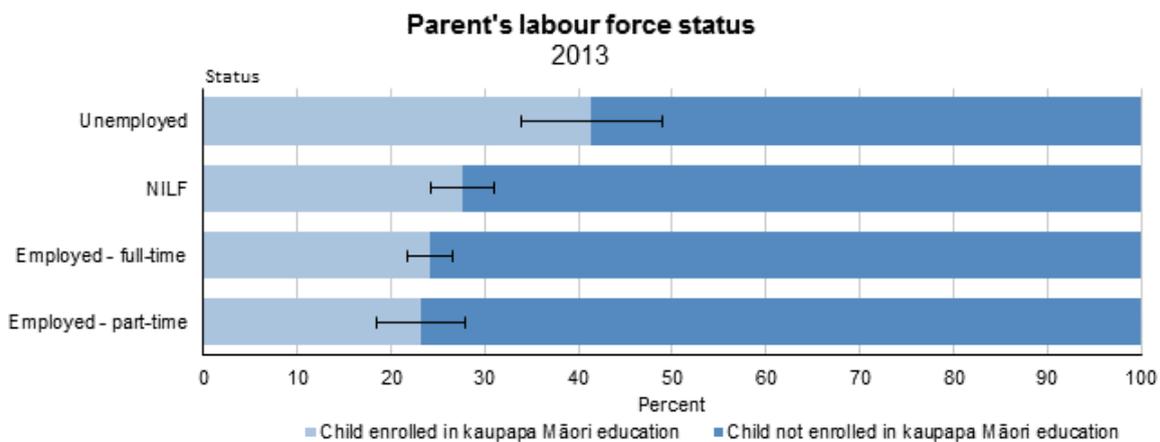
Source: Stats NZ

Low socio-economic parents more likely to send their children to kaupapa Māori education

We looked at a range of socio-economic characteristics and found that unemployed parents, and those earning \$40,000 or less, were more likely to enrol their children in kaupapa Māori education.

As figure 6 shows, parents who were unemployed were more likely to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education (41.4 percent) than those in either full- or part-time employment, or those who were not in the labour force (NILF).

Figure 6

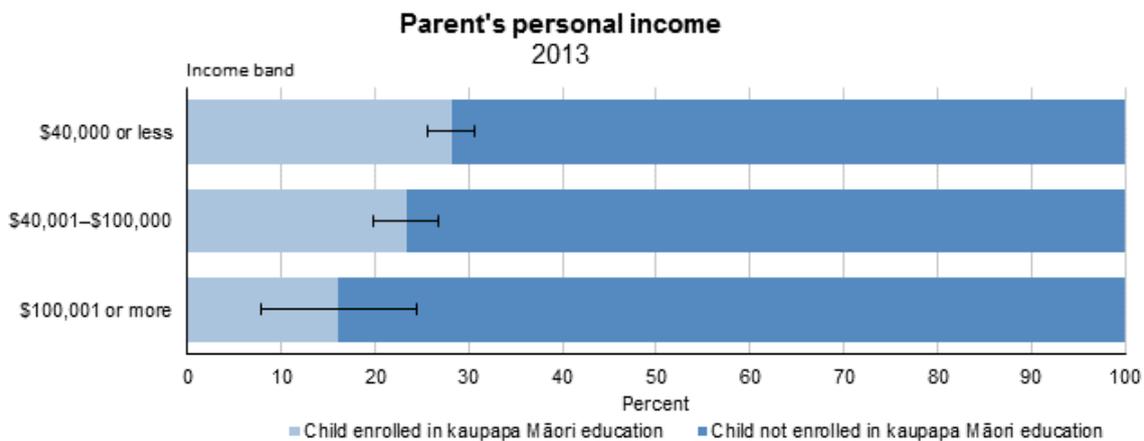


Note: Error bars show 95 percent confidence interval.

Source: Stats NZ

Parents whose personal income was \$40,000 or less were the income group most likely to enrol their child (28.1 percent). This was significantly higher than for parents earning \$100,001 or more (16.1 percent).

Figure 7



Note: Error bars show 95 percent confidence interval.

Source: Stats NZ

Conclusion

Enrolment in kaupapa Māori education was more likely where there was a good level of te reo at home. Our findings showed parents were more likely to enrol their child if they were speaking te reo at home, could speak te reo ‘fairly well or better’, and placed a high level of importance on culture.

There is intergenerational engagement in kaupapa Māori education. Parents who had attended themselves were more likely to enrol their child.

Low socio-economic parents were more likely to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education. This finding is based on the results of two socio-economic characteristics: labour force status and income. Parents who were unemployed, or had an income of \$40,000 or less, were the groups more likely to enrol their child in kaupapa Māori education.

References and further reading

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