

Analysis of “Attitudes towards Maori Language “ report

The report “Attitudes towards the Maori Language” gives information about how supportive Maoris and non-Maoris are towards the Maori language. The report is aimed at the government, Maoris, educators, policy makers, community leaders and the general public. The purpose of the report “Attitudes towards Māori language’ is to show how support for Maori language has increased between 2000 and 2006, to have New Zealanders value Maori language and to have a common awareness of the need to protect the language. ①

The survey data is measured as percentages of those who answered but this does not tell us how many people, Maori and non-Maori agreed or disagreed. The variables are the three category questions (attitudinal statements about Maori language, Attitudes towards Government involvement in the Maori language and culture related activities), cultural (Maori and non-Maori) as well as the years (2000, 2003 and 2006). ②

The survey method was a Government commissioned telephone survey in 2000, 2003 and 2006. Each of these years 1500 people were asked the questions in the survey but it is not stated how many answered in 2000 or 2003. In 2006 only 702 people answered, only 24.3% Maori and 22.5% non-Maori from the original 1500. ③
④

The report has many errors. Most of these errors are from statements which are not backed up by the survey, ie the statement “only 49% had ever learnt the language formally” on the survey had no evidence as that question was not asked. In the third section “participation in selected language and culture related activities” there are no 2003 results for either Maori or non-Maori. This section also doesn’t state whether this participation is regular or not. The report shows the percentage of people who agree with statements, it showed no other opinions (ie disagree, having no opinion). The rates of response are low in comparison to most telephone surveys and the data is not representative of the whole population. Data is not correctly copied from the table to the report eg in the report it states “95% of Māori respondents in the 2006 survey had a lot of respect for people who can speak Māori fluently” when it states in the report that there was only 93% of Maoris. There are some questions in the report which have no results and other results have been exaggerated in the report.

The report is not valid as the results of the survey are not recent and the people who answered the questions are probably the people who had an interest in the subject. It is also unclear where the report originally came from, but Te Puni Kokiri are using the information at www.tpk.govt.nz. And they have disclaimed any liability for the report.

Overall the main points made in the report are supported by invalid survey results. Also much of the report has not been backed up with evidence from the survey, making the report ineffective.