

Sourced from the Te Puni Kokiri Realising Maori Potential Website

The Na Waiaro atu ki te Reo Maori, attitudes towards the Maori language report is an informative report which provides insight on the attitudes of both Maori and non-Maori New Zealanders toward the Maori language. The report speaks of five goals set by the New Zealand government to help achieve more awareness of Maori language by 2028. Surveys conducted by the New Zealand government on the fifth goal 'developing the attitude towards Maori language' is the basis for the statistical evidence towards the Maori language of New Zealanders

The purpose of the attitudes towards Maori language report is to inform all New Zealanders especially Maori about the attitude toward Maori language and the goals set to improve it. Another group interested in the conclusions made in this report is the New Zealand government who provided specific funding policies and programmes in order to revitalise the Maori language by setting up the Maori language strategy.

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For the surveys included in the report three surveys were conducted, one in 2000, one in 2003 and one in 2006. These samples aimed at getting sample data from the population of New Zealand. The surveys were conducted over the telephone. The investigative question of 'what is the knowledge, attitudes and general values of the Maori language amongst Maori and non-Maori'. This is an appropriate way to gather sample data as many people have telephones however it is not stated how people were selected to be surveyed for all the surveys and if this was done so that there was no bias. No time was stated for when the surveys were conducted so if it was during the middle of the day many people may not have been at home making people survey not representative of the population.

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Each survey had a sample size of 1500 people however in 2006 only 24.3% of Maori and 22.5% of Non-Maori who were contacted agreed to take part in the survey. This means that in reality only a small number of people took part in the survey as more than 25% of people contacted did not participate. This means that the percentages given may not be very accurate for the whole of the country as New Zealand has a population of about four million yet only about 350 people make up the data given for the 2006 survey. The information about the response rate of the survey is given in a footnote so when reading this report many people will not see this information. No information on the 200 and 2003 response rate is given.

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The data gathered in the surveys is presented in tables showing data gathered over 2000, 2003 and 2006. There is one table section for Maori respondents, as having Maori respondents and Non-Maori respondents means there are two variables for the data. These tables suggest data gathered was categorical data as only agree/disagree and yes/no answers could be given towards each statement asked. Percentages are then given to represent the amount of people who agreed with each statement. These tables are presented clearly and accurately and are easy for readers to understand and refer back to. It is effective to have tables showing survey results from 2000, 2003 and 2006 as you can see the change in peoples opinions over time.

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The conclusions made in the Maori language report seem mostly accurate although there are a few biased comments made. For example a comment made states 'positive attitudes towards Maori language steadily increased between 2000 and 2006 for Maori participants of the survey'. The word 'steadily' implies attitudes towards the Maori language kept increasing over the six year period. The attitudes mostly did increase in percentage between 2000 and

2003 however between 2003 and 2006 most attitudes decreased by small percentages. These small decreases seem somewhat ironic considering the Maori language strategy was introduced in 2003 and percentages would be expected to increase not decrease.

The comment made in the section 'Attitudes amongst Maori' about the 'lag' about positive attitudes of the language and participation in the language is very true. Many Maori supported government involvement in making Maori language stronger in society but there were only low percentages of Maori actually participating in Maori cultural activities. This shows us why the Maori language strategy needed to be introduced as people belonging to Maori ethnicity struggle to put their support of their language into actions.

The attitudes amongst non-Maori are positive but not to the 'extent' as the Maori, which is to be expected. The statement saying 'support for the Maori language being spoken in public rose from 40% to 80%' is an accurate statement which shows the impact of the Maori language scheme has had on the non-Maori. In general correct statements have been made in the "attitudes amongst non-Māori" section that there is not as much support in non-Maori as Maori however there has been a general increase in attitudes since the Maori language scheme was introduced.

Overall the attitudes towards the Maori language report seem to be an accurate report in terms of the conclusions made in the report. The surveys however are not an accurate representation of the population of New Zealand for various stated reasons. The report is fairly effective and contains some interesting and true information relevant to the attitudes held towards the Maori language. If the surveys had been conducted properly however, with a justified sampling technique used to gather more reliable data the conclusions would have more meaning as they would be representative of the population which would make the attitudes towards the Maori Language much more effective.