

## **Ethnic intermarriage and ethnic transference amongst the Maori population: implications for the measurement and definition of ethnicity.**

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### **Introduction**

The people of New Zealand have a long tradition of ethnic intermarriage and as participants in this trend Maori have a unique population that has undergone enormous demographic and social change. Maori have and continue to experience high rates of intermarriage, this along with adaptation to other social phenomenon has caused the measurement of ethnic identity to grow increasingly complex. The Maori ethnic group, rather than being homogenous, consists of many individuals from varying backgrounds who have varying cultural values, norms and identities but nevertheless at some degree choose to identify as being Maori. There has been widespread public interest and growing political debate surrounding the questions “Who is Maori?” and “How do we accurately define Maori?” (Kukutai 2001, Pool 2001, Pool 1963)

It is interesting to note that much of the current debate regarding what ‘a real’ Maori is has occurred outside Maori circles. In part, this has arisen because of the relationship between the concepts of ethnicity and ancestry, along with the demise of the discredited concept of race which carried with it an assumption that somehow “Maoriness” was either genetically or socially imprinted at birth and was immutable. Maori themselves have traditionally defined ‘Maoriness’ using a different paradigm to the majority of the western world. For Maori, in formal settings, Maori is defined in terms of whakapapa or genealogy. When children are born with whakapapa or links to other Maori they are termed ‘mokopuna of the iwi.’ They are Maori. However, there is a dislocation between how Maori as a group articulate this and how individuals of Maori ethnicity and/or Maori ancestry articulate it or see themselves and reflect this in statistical collections.

Moreover, traditionally Maori have not defined themselves by the extent or amount of Maori they are. Historical constructs and measurements such as half castes, quarter castes and similar race-based ‘blood’ measurements have been imposed as attempts to quantify and count the Maori population for various purposes by the governing institutions of the day and these constructs were reflected in contemporary official commentary. Maori have traditionally defined their population in a more holistic and non-exclusive manner, individuals with mixed Maori background regardless of their ethnic heritage are considered Maori. The parts of their heritage which could be English, Chinese or Samoan are never denied or ignored but in Maori terms they are simply considered ‘mokopuna’ because it is impossible to have only a ‘part grandchild’. In the Maori world whakapapa is not divisible because mokopuna cannot be divided up into discrete parts.

(Jackson 2003). Similarly, the parts of the heritage which are English, Chinese or Samoan, equally allow them to be considered English, Chinese, or Samoan. This view is completely consistent with the current definition of ethnic groups whereby people are counted in each ethnic group with which they identify.

### **Attempts to Quantify Maori**

For many years Statistics New Zealand has played a key role in the ongoing process of attempting to quantify the Maori population. The government has had an interest in quantifying the Maori population throughout the history of the country. Motivations have varied over time, and some commentators would suggest that this interest has not always been in the best interest of Maori. Ethnic data continues to play an important role in informing public policy development and as well as playing a vital role in the allocation of resources and Treaty of Waitangi legislative requirements.

A review of the questions used in the five-yearly Census of Population and Dwellings is instructive. Early censuses asked people for their race. The 1936 Census was the first census specifically to collect multiple affiliations (beyond the limited concept of "half-caste") by asking for fractions of blood. In 1971 the term used to collect the information changed to "descent origin" and in 1976 to "ethnic origin." The 1986 Census was the first census not to ask for fractions of affiliation, but still allowed for multiple affiliation by asking people to tick the "box or boxes" that applied to them.

In 1991 the term used changed to ethnic group, but kept the format of the 1986 question. This was a marked shift from the idea of ethnic origin to one of ethnicity, based on how people identified themselves in their current settings rather than the ethnicities from which they may have originated. In more recent years there was a global shift towards a greater degree of multiple or complex identification and the collection and interpretation of ethnicity data continue to evolve to reflect this global trend.

In the 2001 census the following question was asked:

“Which ethnic group do you belong to? (Mark the space or spaces which apply to you?)”.

In 2004 Statistics New Zealand carried a review of the measurement of ethnicity in New Zealand. This was the first major review in this area for nearly 20 years. Many groups including political commentators, researchers, data users, academics, policy developers and Maori authorities are among those who have an interest in how ethnicity is quantified in New Zealand.

The review itself sought to re-examine the concepts and measurements of ethnicity. Public input was an essential element of the review process. The main findings of the review were to maintain consistency for major data users and this need ensured the concept used by Statistics New Zealand for ethnicity remain relatively unchanged. Therefore the ethnic question used in the 2001 census will be repeated in the upcoming 2006 census. The review defined ethnicity as:

“An ethnic group is made up of people who have some or all of the following characteristics:

- a common proper name
- one or more elements of common culture which need not be specified, but may include religion, customs, or language
- unique community of interests, feelings and actions
- a shared sense of common origins or ancestry, and a common geographic origin”

Both the concept of ethnicity and the self-identifying ethnic question currently used by Statistics New Zealand allows individuals to affiliate with multiple ethnic groups. The growing trend of multiple ethnic affiliations along with increased intermarriage between ethnic groups and increased ethnic mobility are among some critical aspects that impact on the measurement of ethnicity. This paper contributes to research that investigates the measurement of ethnicity. The analysis will first look at rates of ethnic-intermarriage of Maori taken from 2001 Census data and discuss some of the current trends and how these may effect our ongoing ability to accurately measure ethnicity. Secondly this paper will look at 2000-2004 Birth Registrations data and examine some aspects of ethnic-transference between Maori parents, especially parents of mixed Maori ethnicity, and their children. The implications that these trends may have on the ongoing measurement of ethnicity will also be discussed.

### **Ethnic intermarriage amongst Maori**

“Ethnic Intermarriage in New Zealand” (Callister, Didham, Potter 2005) provides a comprehensive literature review of ethnic intermarriage from both New Zealand and international research. The review read in conjunction with this paper provides a broader context to the analysis of ethnic intermarriage amongst Maori. New Zealand has a longstanding history of high levels of ethnic intermarriage and Maori have played a key part in this trend from the earliest days of contact between Maori and European settlers (Pool 1991), which has continued and is still evident today. A recent study of Maori and non-Maori intermarriage carried out by Callister (2004) found that approximately half of partnered Maori had a partner who did not indicate that they were of Maori ethnicity.

Debates around issues like ethnic-based service delivery alongside the ancestry-based commitments under the Treaty of Waitangi and the resulting partnership between Maori and the Crown require the careful definition of ethnic groups (Kukutai 2004) but perhaps not a single definition (Kukutai 2005). Ethnic intermarriage introduces a number of complexities into these definitions because a substantial part of people's identity is bound up with their interactions within families and across social networks associated with their partners. Understanding these complexities contributes to an understanding of the dynamics of ethnic intermarriage and of ethnicity, providing contemporary social context to some aspects of the definition of an ethnic group.

This paper uses 2001 Census data to investigate rates of intermarriage within the Maori population. While the focus of many studies regarding intermarriage has been

exogamous, this paper looks at endogamous or intra-group intermarriage of the Maori population. The following analysis focuses on partners who self-identified as Maori Only or as Maori who also affiliated with at least one other ethnic group ie, Maori of mixed ethnicity, although in the latter case there are both endogamous and exogamous components involved in the partnership which adds to the complexity of social realities. This analysis offers comparison in their rates of intermarriage. The following table details the rates at which various groups of Maori women have inter ethnic partnerships with selected ethnic groups.

**Table 1: Maori Only and Mixed Maori female partners, by selected ethnicities of male partner, 2001.**

	Maori Only male	European Only male	Pacific People Only male	Asian Only male	Maori and European male	European and Pacific People male	Maori and Pacific People male	Total Male Partners specified ethnicity
<b>Maori Only female</b>	22,335	11,178	1,872	138	2,112	321	372	38,316
<b>Maori and European female</b>	3,909	15,693	1,035	99	4,983	666	360	26,616
<b>Maori and Pacific People female</b>	408	438	306	9	276	108	78	1,566
<b>Maori and Asian female</b>	126	327	42	24	114	27	21	684
<b>Maori and Other female</b>	12	36	3	0	18	3	6	81
<b>Total Maori Female partners</b>	26,589	27,162	3,144	264	7,242	1,029	783	66,057
<b>Total Female partners (with specified ethnicity)</b>	41,712	590,331	26,865	39,654	22,275	3,516	1,584	730,329

Note: people may be counted in more than one category, for example a person of Maori, Pacific and European ethnicities will be counted in Maori and European as well as in Maori and Pacific.

Table 1 shows that among those females partnered with a Maori Only male, 26,589 or 64 percent identified they had Maori ethnicity, so that two out of three of these partnerships were endogamous<sup>1</sup>. Included among Maori females partnered with Maori Only males were 3,909 or 15 percent who indicated they had Maori and European ethnicity. Many fewer indicated they were of Maori and Pacific, Maori and Asian or Maori and Other ethnicities, whereas 15,123 or 36 percent of female partners of Maori Only males specified their ethnicity but did not identify themselves as being of Maori ethnicity. Significantly, Maori Only women partnered to Maori Only men represent 58 percent of partnered women of Maori ethnicity and 54 percent of partnered men of Maori Only ethnicity.

There were slightly more women of Maori ethnicity partnered with European Only men than there were partnered to Maori Only men. However, among these women, multiple ethnicity was more apparent with 58 percent (15,693 of the 27,162 women) indicating that they were of both European and Maori ethnicities. This illustrates a key conundrum in the interpretation of any intermarriage data. It is not clear from the data whether the identification with both ethnicities in this case is a consequence of the partnering or a

<sup>1</sup> Note: commentary on data in table 1 and 2 is based on couples where both partners stated their ethnicities. Official Statistics Research Series, Vol 1, 2007  
[www.statisphere.govt.nz/osresearch](http://www.statisphere.govt.nz/osresearch)

situation that existed before partnership formation. Care is needed to avoid attributing causal linkages in these situations without further information. It is also unclear whether the women are identifying themselves as having two separate ethnicities or attempting to indicate that they see their ethnicity as somewhere between the two categories (Bedford and Didham, 2001).

The complexity of this can be seen among Maori females partnered with a Pacific Only male. In this group, 3,144 (12 percent of all female partners with a Pacific Only male partner) identified they were of Maori ethnicity. Interestingly, 1,035 or approximately one-third of these women indicated they had Maori and European ethnicities but not Pacific, contrasting with only 306 who indicated they shared Pacific ethnicity with their partners<sup>2</sup>.

It was less likely for Asian ethnicities to be shared among Maori women, but this type of ethnic intermarriage is currently relatively uncommon. Among those females partnered with Asian Only males, only 264 identified they had Maori ethnicity, and there were only 24 females partnered with Asian Only males who indicated they had Maori and Asian ethnicity.

When looking at females who are partnered with males of mixed Maori ethnicity some interesting patterns emerge. Among those females partnered with Maori and European males 7,242 or 33 percent indicated they had Maori ethnicity. However, 4,983 or 69 percent of this group indicated they were of both Maori and European ethnicity. Among those females partnered with the (small but growing) group of Maori and Pacific males, 783 or 49 percent indicated they had Maori ethnicity. Females partnered with Maori and Pacific males had a significant number (360 or 23 percent) who were of Maori and European ethnicity while a lesser number, 78 or 5 percent, indicated they had the same ethnic combination of Maori and Pacific.

Overall amongst partnered females of Maori ethnicity there were significant proportions partnered with Maori Only, European Only, Pacific Only, Maori and European, and Maori and Pacific males, while there were considerably fewer partnered with Asian only males and males with other ethnic combinations. In fact 81 percent of all Maori female partners were partnered to either a Maori Only (40 percent) or a European Only male (41 percent). The same pattern applies for men as well: among Maori male partners, 43 percent were partnered to a European Only female and 38 percent were partnered to a Maori Only female partner. A number of factors contribute to this pattern and it should not be concluded that there is an apparently greater social distance between the Maori population and the Asian populations for partnered females. These can be explained by relative population sizes, age structure, proximity and opportunities for contact and historical connections. Maori women partnered with Asian men, for example, tend to be restricted to people in the larger cities with opportunities to meet each other, and they

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<sup>2</sup> In this context, no distinction is made between Pacific ethnicities. It is possible that while they both share a Pacific ethnicity this may not be the same Pacific ethnicity. For example, one partner may be of Tongan ethnicity while the other may be of Cook Island Maori ethnicity.

also tend to be much younger and less likely to have partnered. It is expected that changes in these patterns will be seen over time.

When looking at those females partnered with Maori and European males there were significant proportions of female partners indicating they had the same ethnicity or ethnic combination of Maori and European, however this was not the case for females partnered with Maori and Pacific males. The principal reason for this is that around half of the Maori population identifies themselves as both Maori and European and it is to be expected that a similar distribution should occur in partnering. However, while Maori and European ethnicities may currently seem to be more readily adopted by the other partner as reported ethnicities, this is likely to become increasingly apparent for Maori and Pacific ethnicities as the younger generation, where the majority of this combination group is to be found, reach partnering ages. However, there is little direct evidence suggesting that multiple ethnicity results from partnering or is a precursor. This is a topic of ongoing research.

**Table 2: Maori Only and Mixed Maori male partnerships, by selected ethnicities of female partners, 2001.**

	Maori Only Female	European Only Female	Pacific People Only Female	Asian Only Female	Maori and European Female	European and Pacific People Female	Maori and Pacific People Female	Total Female Partners specified eth
<b>Maori Only Male</b>	22,335	13,752	786	153	3,909	456	408	41,712
<b>Maori and European Male</b>	2,112	13,932	354	210	4,983	570	276	22,275
<b>Maori and Pacific People Male</b>	372	585	132	21	360	90	78	1,584
<b>Maori and Asian Male</b>	102	342	18	24	138	21	15	663
<b>Maori and Other Male</b>	18	39	0	3	18	3	3	81
<b>Total Maori Male partners</b>	24,804	28,062	1,245	384	9,126	1,074	726	65,166
<b>Total Male partners (with specified ethnicity)</b>	38,316	584,943	25,122	45,771	26,616	3,954	1,566	730,329

Note: people may be counted in more than one category, for example a person of Maori, Pacific and European ethnicities will be counted in Maori and European as well as in Maori and Pacific.

Table 2 provides similar data for partnered males in the same format as table 1 for ease of comparison. A number of comparisons may be made between Table 1 and Table 2. For example, there were approximately the same number of male and female Maori partners (65,166 males and 66,051 females), so it is valid to compare the distributions directly. Among those males partnered with a Maori only female, 24,804 or 65 percent indicated they had Maori ethnicity compared with 26,589 or 64 percent for females.

However, it is in the various combinations that we begin to see trends emerging. There were only 2,112 or 8.5 percent of males partnered with Maori only females who indicated they had Maori and European ethnicity. Conversely women of both Maori and European ethnicities were more likely to have a Maori Only partner, with 3,909 or 15 percent of 26,589 Maori females partnered with Maori only males (Table 1).

In comparison, among those males partnered with a European Only female, only 28,062 or 5 percent indicated they had Maori ethnicity. There were 13,932 or 50 percent of Maori male partners or 2 percent of all males partnered with European Only females who indicated they had both Maori and European ethnicity. Slightly fewer (13,752 or 49 percent) were partnered to Maori Only males.

Among those males partnered with Pacific Only females, 1,245 or 5 percent identified they had Maori ethnicity. Mirroring the patterns for females, there were 354 males who indicated they had Maori and European ethnicity partnered with Pacific Only females compared with 132 males who indicated they had Maori and Pacific ethnicity.

Similarly, among those males partnered with Asian Only females, only 384 or less than 1 percent indicated they had Maori ethnicity and, of these, there were only 21 who indicated they had Maori and Asian ethnicity. Maori male partners are more likely to have an Asian partner than are Maori female partners, though the actual numbers are small.

Interesting trends are highlighted when looking at males partnered with females of mixed Maori ethnicity. Among those males partnered with Maori and European females 9,126 or 34 percent indicated they had Maori ethnicity. However, of these, more than half (4,983 or 19 percent) indicated they were of both Maori and European ethnicity.

Among those males partnered with Maori and Pacific females 726 or 46 percent indicated they had Maori ethnicity. Of those males partnered with Maori and Pacific females, 276 or 18 percent indicated they were of Maori and European ethnicity, however, only 78 or 5 percent indicated they were of the same ethnic combination of Maori and Pacific.

Overall Table 2 illustrates that amongst those males of Maori ethnicity there were significant proportions partnered with Maori females, Maori and European females and Maori and Pacific females, while there were considerably lower proportions partnered with Pacific Only females and Asian Only females. This may indicate that there could be greater social distance between the Maori population and European Only, Pacific Only and Asian Only populations for partnered males. It is important to note that this trend differs from the trend experienced by partnered females. Partnered Maori females had a more significant proportion partnered with Pacific Only males.

Similar to Table 1 when looking at those males partnered with Maori and European females there were significant proportions of male partners indicating they had the same ethnicity or ethnic combination of Maori and European, however this was not the case for males partnered with Maori and Pacific females.

### **Factors associated with Maori intermarriage**

A number of studies suggest that there are factors that can influence rates of intermarriage. Factors such as population size, ethnic segregation, time in a country, ethnic history and education are among those closely studied both here in New Zealand

and internationally. This paper reports on research into two possible influences of Maori intermarriage, use of Te Reo and Education.

In government reports such as the Ministry of Social Developments 'The Social Report' the use of Te Reo is used as a measure or as a proxy indicator of cultural participation and cultural identity. There are strong similarities in the way in which language and ethnicity function. Here we look only at the use of Te Reo (Maori), though similar study could be done for other linguistic connectivities. Table 3 looks at the proportion of partnered females who indicated that they could speak Te Reo. From this table, we can see that while 1 in 3 Maori Only females reported that they could speak Te Reo, only 1 in 8 of those who were of both Maori and European ethnicities were able to do so.

**Table 3: Maori female partners for selected ethnic combinations, by use of Te Reo and partner's ethnicity, 2001.**

		Maori Only male	European Only male	Pacific People Only male	Asian Only male	Maori and European male	European and Pacific People male	Maori and Pacific People male	Total Male Partners specified eth
Maori Only female	Te reo speaker	8,490	2,877	528	39	714	111	129	12,870
	Not te reo speaker	13,641	8,217	1,338	99	1,377	210	243	25,119
Maori and European female	Te reo speaker	813	1,191	159	15	759	90	69	3,060
	Not te reo speaker	3,072	14,454	870	84	4,191	573	288	23,442
Maori and Pacific People female	Te reo speaker	114	72	48	3	51	21	18	315
	Not te reo speaker	291	363	252	9	219	87	57	1,233
Total Maori Female partners	Te reo speaker	9,399	4,113	723	54	1,503	210	213	16,155
	Not te reo speaker	16,962	22,914	2,406	207	5,688	816	561	49,452
Total Female partners (with specified ethnicity)	Te reo speaker	10,029	6,426	1,584	81	1,740	246	249	20,304
	Not te reo speaker	31,356	580,860	24,771	38,781	20,415	3,249	1,323	705,135

Table 3 shows that 38 percent of those Maori Only females who had a Maori Only partner (and specified which languages they could speak) were able to converse in Maori, this was the highest proportion of partnered Maori Only females who could do so. Similarly, 35 percent of Maori Only females with partners of multiple ethnicity also were Te Reo speakers. For Maori female partners with other ethnicities, there is a clear trend for ability to speak to be much more common for those with Maori Only male partners. In contrast 74 percent of Maori Only females who had a European Only partner were not able to converse in Maori. This was the highest proportion of Maori Only females who could not converse in Maori. Overall, 75 percent of all Maori female partners could not speak Te Reo, ranging from 64 percent for those with Maori Only partners to 85 percent among those with European Only partners. Unfortunately there is no historical data to be able to identify whether this represents an increase over time, implying a positive outcome for Maori language development, or not.

Table 4 illustrates a somewhat similar trend in use of Te Reo, 42 percent of those Maori Only men stating the languages they could speak and who had a Maori Only partner were able to converse in Te Reo. The general pattern for male partners is very similar to that seen for females (Table 3). However, a slightly larger proportion of male partners stated that they could speak Te Reo, with some interesting differences in partner choice. For example, 63 percent of Maori Only male speakers were partnered with Maori Only females, compared with 66 percent of female Maori Only speakers partnering Maori Only males. Among partners of both Maori and European ethnicities, a more complex pattern emerges, partly related to the distribution of multiple ethnicity and differences between the sexes in partnering between people of Maori and Pacific ethnicities. However, among all partners of both Maori and European ethnicities, just over half were partnered to a partner who was either Maori Only or Maori and European.

**Table 4: Maori male partners for selected ethnic combinations, by use of Te Reo and partner's ethnicity, 2001.**

		Maori Only female	European Only female	Pacific People Only female	Asian Only female	Maori and European female	European and Pacific People female	Maori and Pacific People female	Total female Partners specified eth
Maori Only male	Te reo speaker	9,192	3,561	234	42	1,326	138	156	14,619
	Not te reo speaker	12,855	10,083	543	108	2,529	315	243	26,631
Maori and European male	Te reo speaker	525	1,128	51	12	819	78	51	2,631
	Not te reo speaker	1,581	12,726	303	195	4,125	489	225	19,518
Maori and Pacific People male	Te reo speaker	120	99	24	3	69	12	18	336
	Not te reo speaker	252	477	108	21	288	78	60	1,236
Total Maori male partners	Te reo speaker	9,825	4,761	297	57	2,196	222	219	17,511
	Not te reo speaker	14,679	23,112	939	324	6,840	843	498	47,055
Total male partners (with specified ethnicity)	Te reo speaker	10,395	7,500	1,260	156	2,544	291	276	22,344
	Not te reo speaker	27,480	574,125	23,331	44,850	23,868	3,633	1,269	702,639

There is a strong trend for both partners to speak Te Reo among partnerships where both are of Maori ethnicity only. For all Maori partners, 40 percent (7,050 of the 17,511 Te Reo speakers) had partners who also spoke Te Reo. As expected from the patterns for males and females, facility in Te Reo was strongest for those with Maori Only ethnicity. While 43 percent of Maori Only male partners have a partner who also speaks Te Reo, among those partnerships where both partners are Maori Only, 58 percent both speak Te Reo.

More in-depth analysis is required to substantiate causal effects, but this initial investigation could suggest that Maori who speak Te Reo may be less likely to participate

in ethnic intermarriage. Several factors would need to be considered here. It may be that the link between the ability to speak Te Reo and the choice to identify as having Maori ethnicity are intrinsically linked. However, it is also noteworthy that, among Te Reo speakers, 20 percent of female partners and 22 percent of male partners were not of Maori ethnicity. It is more likely to relate to the social environment in which the speakers mix and which provides the opportunities for partnering.

Another fundamentally important component of what Callister (1998) has referred to as the "meet market" may well be closely associated with partnering. Callister suggests that, in New Zealand, education is also an important variable in marriage choices. He noted that people with similar levels of formal education tended to form partnerships with each other. The research indicated that ethnic intermarriage was higher amongst well-educated Maori.

**Table 5: Maori female partners with university qualifications for selected ethnic combinations, by partner's ethnicity, 2001.**

	Maori Only male	European Only male	Pacific People Only male	Asian Only male	Maori and European male	European and Pacific People male	Maori and Pacific People male	Total Male Partners specified eth
Maori Only female	738	495	60	12	105	24	18	1,449
Maori and European female	204	1,419	57	21	249	54	18	2,013
Maori and Pacific People female	33	33	15	3	12	9	3	108
Total Maori Female partners	963	1,932	123	36	360	81	36	3,528
Total Female partners (with specified ethnicity)	1,947	64,833	903	8,922	1,965	387	138	80,421

Although only 495 (or 34 percent) of the 1,449 Maori Only partnered female university graduates were partnered with European Only males (Table 5), 1,419 of the 2,013 women of both Maori and European ethnicities had European Only partners. This represents 70 percent of partnered women of both Maori and European ethnicities and 68 percent of all partnered Maori women with European Only partners. This bears out previous research suggesting that ethnic intermarriage could be higher amongst well educated Maori. That the same pattern applies to males (Table 6) as well suggests that the multiple ethnicity is in this case a consequence of partnering. Among the 1,716 partnered males of both Maori and European ethnicities, 1,320 (77 percent) had European Only female partners.

Table 5 and 6 show that comparatively higher proportions of Maori who do have ethnic intermarriage had a degree or higher and in contrast higher proportions of Maori who do not have an ethnic intermarriage had no qualifications, this was the highest proportion of the Maori Only male population who had no qualifications. This overall trend is

however, less significant for the Maori European and Maori Pacific groups as well as for the currently much smaller Maori Asian and Maori Other populations.

From this initial analysis it would seem that use of Te Reo and Education are factors that may influence ethnic intermarriage and the reporting of ethnicities. The above findings warrant the inclusion of these factors in further more in-depth research that investigates the causal relationships between these factors and ethnic intermarriage of the Maori ethnic group.

Generally Maori who are well educated have higher rates of ethnic intermarriage and Maori who use Te Reo are less likely to have ethnic intermarriage. These trends, however, are general and are more pronounced for the Maori Only population. The influence of these variables on the ethnic intermarriage rates of Maori European, Maori Pacific, Maori Asian and Maori Other populations are far more complex.

**Table 6: Maori male partners with university qualifications for selected ethnic combinations, by partner's ethnicity, 2001.**

	Maori Only female	European Only female	Pacific People Only female	Asian Only female	Maori and European female	European and Pacific People female	Maori and Pacific People female	Total female Partners specified eth
Maori Only male	519	585	30	12	108	27	15	1,296
Maori and European male	96	1,320	9	36	195	36	6	1,716
Maori and Pacific People male	12	51	3	3	12	3	0	81
Total Maori male partners	624	1,935	42	51	306	63	24	3,060
Total male partners (with specified ethnicity)	1,170	77,166	882	12,945	1,890	354	72	96,123

Among the topics of interest for further investigation is the extent to which educational institutions provide an opportunity to mix outside one's community (the "meet market") at a time in life when relationships are being formed and re-formed. Similarly, language use is a key element in cultural transmission and may function as a mechanism for transmission of ethnicities between partners. It is probable that the process of partnering rather than education per se is the driver here, but an analysis of non-partnered women would be necessary to show this. Such an analysis is beyond the scope of the present paper.

### ***Ethnic Transference***

In much of the discourse concerning intermarriage there is an underlying assumption that ethnic intermarriage will blur ethnic boundaries, and that children of mixed unions or parentage will affiliate with both sides of their ethnic heritage. However, it is essential to

ask the question “Is the ethnicity of a child necessarily a direct reflection of their parents ethnicities or is it more complex than this?”

Existing research carried out in New Zealand suggests that the dynamics of inter-generational ethnicity are somewhat complex and that the ethnicity allocated to a child does not necessarily directly reflect the ethnicity of the parents. Kukutai (2003) found that in unions where both parents identified as ‘sole Maori’, ‘mixed Maori’ or ‘non-Maori’, children were nearly always reported in the same way as their parents. Outside these unions there was considerable variation in how children were assigned ethnicity. She (2003) found that 30 percent of children reported as being Maori Only had a non-Maori Mother or Father.

The following section of this paper uses Birth Registrations data from 2000-2004. This data gives information about the ethnicity of each partner and the ethnicity allocated to their child born between 2000 and 2004. Using this data allows exploration into some of the patterns involved in determining how children are ethnically identified.

The following table uses the birth registration data from 2000-2004 and provides the total births of selected ethnic groups.

**Table 7: Total Births for selected ethnic groups, 2000-2004.**

<i>Selected Ethnic groups</i>	<i>Total Births for calendar years 2000-2004</i>
European Only Child	147,055
Maori Only Child	32,337
Pacific Only Child	22,799
Asian Only Child	19,454
European and Maori Child	33,404
European and Pacific Child	6,629
European and Asian Child	4,399
Maori and Pacific Child	5,714
Maori and Asian Child	497
Other combinations including Maori	6,768
Ethnicity not stated	500
Total Births (including ethnic combinations not selected)	284,529

Table 7 shows that the majority, 147,055 (52 percent) of births were children allocated European Only ethnicity. There were slightly more births of children registered as of both European and Maori ethnicities (33,404) than there were Maori Only children (32,337).

**Table 8: Ethnic allocation of children where both children and parents are of single ethnicity, for Births, 2000-2004.**

	European Only Mother and European Only Father	Maori Only Mother and Maori Only Father	Pacific Only Mother and Pacific Only Father	Asian Only Mother and Asian Only Father

<b>European Only Child</b>	100%			
<b>Maori Only Child</b>		99%		
<b>Pacific Only Child</b>			99%	
<b>Asian Only Child</b>				100%

Table 8 illustrates a fairly logical relationship between the ethnicity of parents and the ethnicity of their children. When the ethnicity of both parents is the same; ie, a European mother and European father, the decision of what ethnicity the child will be allocated is relatively straightforward. As can be seen in Table 8, almost all of those parents who both had European Only ethnicity had children who had European Only ethnicity. However the decision of what ethnicity a child will be allocated when the parents have different or mixed ethnicity can become more complex.

**Table 9: Ethnic allocation of children from Mothers of selected ethnicity and Maori Only Fathers, for births, 2000-2004.**

	<b>European Only Mother and Maori Only Father</b>	<b>Pacific Only Mother and Maori Only Father</b>	<b>Asian Only Mother and Maori Only Father</b>
<b>European Only Child</b>	6%		3%
<b>Maori Only Child</b>	24%	6%	8%
<b>Pacific Only Child</b>		19%	
<b>Asian Only Child</b>			6%
<b>European and Maori Child</b>	70%		
<b>European and Asian Child</b>			1%
<b>Maori and Pacific Child</b>		73%	
<b>Maori and Asian Child</b>			78%

Table 9 details the ethnicity allocated to children by parents who have reported differing ethnic backgrounds. When a child has parents with differing ethnicities, if equal weighting or importance was given to each ethnicity, the ethnicity allocated to their child would be a logical combination of both their parents ethnicities. Table 9 illustrates that equal weighting or importance is not always given to each ethnicity by the parent or parents who are filling out the birth registration forms, instead other factors are influencing the decision of what ethnicity they allocate their child.

Only 70 percent of children from a European mother and Maori father were allocated European Maori ethnicity. A large proportion of the offspring from European mothers and Maori fathers were allocated an ethnicity that was not a combination of their parents differing ethnicities, 24 percent were Maori Only and 6 percent were European Only. Similarly 73 percent of children from a Pacific mother and Maori father were allocated Maori and Pacific ethnicity. While approximately 19 percent were Pacific Only and 6 percent were Maori Only. Children from an Asian mother and Maori father had a relatively high proportion allocated Maori Asian ethnicity and a relatively low proportion allocated Asian Only (6 percent) ethnicity.

**Table 10: Ethnic allocation of children from Fathers of selected ethnicity and Maori Only Mothers, for births, 2000-2004.**

	Maori Only Mother and European Only Father	Maori Only Mother and Pacific Only Father	Maori Only Mother and Asian Only Father
European Only Child	9%		
Maori Only Child	25%	4%	10%
Pacific Only Child		13%	
Asian Only Child			3%
European and Maori Child	65%		
European and Asian Child			
Maori and Pacific Child		81%	
Maori and Asian Child			85%

Table 10 details the same ethnic combinations focused on in Table 9, however the ethnicities are reversed for mothers and fathers. Only 65 percent of children from a Maori mother and European father were allocated European and Maori ethnicity. More than 34 percent of the offspring from a Maori mother and European father were allocated an ethnicity that was not a combination of their parents differing ethnicities, 25 percent were Maori Only and 9 percent were European Only.

In comparison, 81 percent of children from a Maori mother and Pacific father were allocated Maori and Pacific ethnicity, approximately 13 percent were Pacific Only and 4 percent Maori Only. Children from a Maori mother and Asian father had a high proportion allocated Maori and Asian (85 percent) ethnicity and a relatively low proportion allocated Asian only (3 percent) ethnicity. This trend of ethnic mobility from Asian Only to Asian plus other ethnic groups could be partially linked to anti-Asian sentiment in New Zealand society and could be reflective of an underlying prejudice or at least perceived prejudice experienced by the Asian population.

Interestingly, a parallel phenomenon has been observed in the United States with assignment of race to children by parents by Tafoya et al (2005):

The likelihood of reporting a child as multiracial depended very much on the specific racial combination of the parents. Children of Asian/white and black/white interracial couples were far more likely to report their child as multiracial than American Indian/white, non-Latino SOR [sc: some other race]/white, and Latino SOR/white parents. However, even among Asian/white and black/white couples, only about half reported their children as multiracial. Among black/white couples, most who did not report their children as multiracial reported them as black. Among Asian/white and Latino SOR/white couples, most who did not report their children as multiracial reported them as white. American Indian/white couples were about evenly divided between reporting their children as only American Indian or only white. The authors note that just as the levels of multiracial reporting vary between the racial combinations of the parents, they believe that the reasons for multiracial reporting are particular to each combination of multiracial parents. (Callister, Didham, Potter (2005))

When comparing these trends with the previous analysis of Table 9 there are differences evident between the ethnicities and gender. Maori mothers and European fathers have a lower proportion of their children allocated to European Maori ethnicity compared to European mothers and Maori fathers. In contrast higher proportions of children from

Maori mothers and Pacific fathers were allocated Maori Pacific compared to Pacific mothers and Maori fathers. Similarly Maori mothers and Asian fathers had higher proportions of children allocated Maori Asian ethnicity compared to Asian mothers and Maori fathers.

Maori mothers partnered with European fathers are far less likely to allocate their children their ethnicity with equal weighting or importance compared to European mothers and Maori fathers and the remaining selected ethnic combinations.

Table 11 details the ethnicity allocated to children by parents where one parent has mixed or dual ethnicity themselves, focusing on a European Maori ethnic background. Again it would be assumed that if each ethnicity were given equal weighting or importance the ethnicity allocated to their children would include all the parents' ethnicities.

**Table 11: Ethnic allocation of children from fathers of selected ethnicity and European and Maori Mothers, for births 2000-2004.**

	European and Maori Mother and European Only Father	European and Maori Mother and Maori Only Father	European and Maori Mother and Pacific Only Father	European and Maori Mother and Asian Only Father
European Only Child	11%			2%
Maori Only Child		24%		
Pacific Only Child			2%	
Asian Only Child				2%
European and Maori Child	88%	75%	1%	3%
European and Pacific Child			3%	
European and Asian Child				3%
Maori and Pacific Child			10%	
Maori and Asian Child				11%
Other Combinations Including Maori			85%	80%

Although 88 percent of children from European Maori mothers and a European Only father were allocated European and Maori ethnicity, at least 11 percent were allocated European Only ethnicity. In comparison, European Maori mothers with Maori fathers allocated only 75 percent of their children to European Maori ethnicity, allocating 24 percent Maori Only ethnicity.

European Maori mothers and Pacific fathers have three differing ethnicities, logically more than 85 percent of their children were allocated 'Other Combinations including Maori' as an ethnicity however more than 15 percent were not, 10 percent were Maori Pacific, while 3 percent were European Pacific and 1 percent were European Maori. Similarly, European Maori mothers and Asian fathers allocated 80 percent of their children 'Other combinations including Maori' as an ethnicity, while 11 percent were Maori Asian. Table 12 details the same ethnic combinations focused on in Table 11, however the ethnicities are reversed for the mothers and fathers. Approximately 86 percent of children from European Maori fathers and European mothers were allocated

European Maori ethnicity while at least 13 percent of children from this particular ethnic parentage were allocated European Only ethnicity despite their fathers having some Maori ethnicity.

In stark contrast only 58 percent of children from a Maori mother and European Maori father were allocated European and Maori ethnicity while at least 42 percent of children were allocated Maori Only ethnicity. It would seem that when one partner is of Maori Only ethnicity and the other partner is of European Maori ethnicity significantly more weight or importance is given to Maori ethnicity when allocating their child's ethnicity and is perhaps given further weighting when the mother is Maori Only.

**Table 12: Ethnic allocation of children from Mothers of selected ethnicity and European and Maori Fathers, for births 2000-2004.**

	European Only Mother and European and Maori Father	Maori Only Mother and European and Maori Father	Pacific Only Mother and European and Maori Father	Asian Only Mother and European and Maori Father
European Only Child	13%			1%
Maori Only Child	1%	42%	1%	1%
Pacific Only Child			3%	
Asian Only Child				1%
European and Maori Child	86%	58%	1%	2%
European and Pacific Child			6%	
European and Asian Child				7%
Maori and Pacific Child			14%	
Maori and Asian Child				6%
Other Combinations Including Maori			76%	83%

Pacific mothers and European Maori fathers allocated 76 percent of children to what has been categorised here as 'Other combinations including Maori', however more than 14 percent were allocated Maori Pacific ethnicity, again ignoring or placing less importance in recognising European ethnicity. Asian mothers and European Maori fathers allocated a larger proportion of children to 'Other combinations including Maori (83 percent), while 7 percent were European Asian more than twice the proportion for that ethnicity allocated by their counterparts European Maori mothers and Asian fathers.

**Table 13: Ethnic allocation of children from Fathers of selected ethnicity and Pacific and Maori Mothers, for births 2000-2004.**

	Pacific and Maori Mother and European Only Father	Pacific and Maori Mother and Maori Only Father	Pacific and Maori Mother and Pacific Only Father	Pacific and Maori Mother and Asian Only Father
European Only Child	1%			
Maori Only Child	1%	22%	1%	
Pacific Only Child		1%	10%	

<b>Asian Only Child</b>				
<b>European and Maori Child</b>	13%			
<b>European and Pacific Child</b>	1%			
<b>European and Asian Child</b>				
<b>Maori and Pacific Child</b>	5%	75%	88%	
<b>Maori and Asian Child</b>				10%
<b>Other Combinations Including Maori</b>	79%	2%	1%	

Table 13 details the ethnicity allocated to children by parents where one parent has mixed or dual ethnicity, focusing on a Pacific Maori ethnic background. Approximately 79 percent of children from Pacific Maori mothers and European fathers were allocated ethnicities that fall into the ‘Other combinations including Maori’ category. However 13 percent were allocated European Maori ethnicity and 5 percent were allocated Maori Pacific ethnicity.

Similarly, Pacific Maori mothers and Maori fathers allocated 75 percent of their children Maori and Pacific ethnicity, while 22 percent were Maori Only despite having a mother with some Pacific ethnicity. Pacific Maori mothers and Pacific fathers allocated 88 percent of children Maori Pacific ethnicity, a relatively high proportion, while 10 percent were allocated Pacific Only ethnicity.

The majority of children from Pacific Maori mothers and Asian fathers were allocated an ethnicity that falls into a category beyond the focus of this research (Other combinations not including Maori) but 10 percent of children were Maori Asian.

**Table 14: Ethnic allocation of children from Mothers of selected ethnicity and Pacific and Maori fathers, for births 2000-2004.**

	<b>European Mother and Pacific and Maori Only Father</b>	<b>Maori Mother and Pacific and Maori Only Father</b>	<b>Pacific Mother and Pacific and Maori Only Father</b>	<b>Asian Mother and Pacific and Maori Only Father</b>
<b>European Only Child</b>	2%			
<b>Maori Only Child</b>	1%	18%		
<b>Pacific Only Child</b>		1%	18%	
<b>Asian Only Child</b>				
<b>European and Maori Child</b>	6%			
<b>European and Pacific Child</b>	3%			
<b>European and Asian Child</b>				
<b>Maori and Pacific Child</b>	1%	80%	81%	
<b>Maori and Asian Child</b>				20%
<b>Other Combinations Including Maori</b>	87%	1%	1%	

Table 14 illustrates the same selected ethnic backgrounds for partners as Table 13, however, the ethnicities have been reversed for mothers and fathers. More than 87 percent of children from European mothers and Pacific Maori fathers were allocated the

ethnicity category of ‘Other combinations including Maori’, this was a notably higher proportion than what was similarly allocated by their counterparts – Pacific Maori mothers and European fathers (79 percent).

Comparatively, Maori mothers and Pacific Maori fathers allocated 80 percent of children Maori Pacific ethnicity, while more than 18 percent were allocated Maori Only ethnicity. Similarly, Pacific mothers and Pacific Maori fathers allocated 81 percent of children Maori Pacific ethnicity, while more than 18 percent were allocated Pacific Only ethnicity.

Table 15 details the ethnicity allocated to children by parents where both parents have mixed or dual ethnicity. We can see from Table 10 that both partner groups A and D have very similar patterns. Both groups allocated more than 90% of children to what has been categorised as ‘Other combinations including Maori’ ethnicity, with no real significant proportions of their children allocated elsewhere. Similarly Partner groups B and E also allocated significantly high proportions of their children to ‘Other combinations including Maori’, of note for group B and E was the allocation of 5 percent of their children to European Maori ethnicity.

**Table 15: Ethnic allocation of children from Mothers and fathers of selected mixed ethnicity, for births 2000-2004.**

Partner group	A	B	C
	European and Maori Mother and European and Pacific Father	European and Maori Mother and European and Asian Father	European and Maori Mother and Maori and Pacific Father
European Only Child		3%	
Maori Only Child			2%
Pacific Only Child			1%
Asian Only Child			
European and Maori Child	3%	5%	5%
European and Pacific Child	2%		1%
European and Asian Child		1%	
Maori and Pacific Child	3%		11%
Maori and Asian Child		4%	
Other Combinations Including Maori	92%	86%	79%
Partner group	D	E	F
	European and Pacific Mother and European and Maori Father	European and Asian Mother and European and Maori Father	Maori and Pacific Mother and European and Maori Father
European Only Child	1%		
Maori Only Child			4%
Pacific Only Child			
Asian Only Child			
European and Maori Child	2%	5%	7%
European and Pacific Child	3%		
European and Asian Child		1%	
Maori and Pacific Child	2%		13%
Maori and Asian Child		1%	

<b>Other Combinations Including Maori</b>	91%	92%	76%
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Comparatively, partners from group C and F have relatively lower proportions of their children allocated to 'Other combinations including Maori' ethnicity with only 79 percent and 76 percent respectively. Also of note for these two groups is the significant proportion of children allocated Maori Pacific ethnicity with 11 percent and 13 percent respectively, as well as the allocation of 5 percent and 7 percent respectively, of their children to European Maori ethnicity.

Table 16 also details the ethnicity allocated to children by parents who are both of differing and mixed or dual ethnicity. Comparing Table 15 with Table 16, partner groups A through to D have lower proportions of children allocated to 'Other combinations including Maori' ethnicity and there are significant proportions of children allocated to Maori Pacific ethnicity. Interestingly partner group D also had a significant proportion of their children with European Pacific (14 percent) ethnicity. In general the partner groups focussed on in Table 16 gave less equal weighting or importance to all their ethnicities compared to the partner groups detailed in Table 15.

**Table 16: Ethnic allocation of children from Mothers and fathers of selected mixed ethnicity, for births 2000-2004.**

<b>Partner group</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
	<b>Pacific and Maori Mother and European and Maori Father</b>	<b>Pacific and Maori Mother and European and Pacific Father</b>
European Only Child		
Maori Only Child	4%	
Pacific Only Child		4%
Asian Only Child		
European and Maori Child	7%	
European and Pacific Child		8%
European and Asian Child		
Maori and Pacific Child	13%	16%
Maori and Asian Child		
Other Combinations Including Maori	76%	73%
<b>Partner group</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
	<b>European and Maori Mother and Pacific and Maori Father</b>	<b>European and Pacific Mother and Pacific and Maori Father</b>
European Only Child		
Maori Only Child	2%	
Pacific Only Child	1%	
Asian Only Child		
European and Maori Child	5%	
European and Pacific Child	1%	14%
European and Asian Child		
Maori and Pacific Child	11%	10%
Maori and Asian Child		
Other Combinations Including Maori	79%	76%

When a child has parents with differing ethnicities equal weighting or importance is not always given to each ethnicity when allocating the ethnicity of their children. Relatively high proportions of children with mixed ethnic parents are being allocated single ethnicities. For example approximately 30 percent of children who had a European mother and Maori father were allocated a single ethnicity, 24 percent were allocated Maori Only while 6 percent were allocated European. Even when at least one of the parents had a mixed ethnic background themselves there were high proportions of children being allocated single ethnicities. For example European Maori mothers and Maori Only fathers allocated 75 percent of their children European Maori ethnicity, allocating 24 percent Maori Only ethnicity.

One of the most striking findings was that only 58 percent of children from Maori Only mothers and European Maori fathers were allocated European Maori ethnicity while at least 42 percent were allocated Maori Only ethnicity. It would seem that there is a trend to affiliate children of mixed Maori background with Maori Only ethnicity, especially when these children have a Maori Only mother. Even when both parents had mixed or dual ethnicities there were significant proportions of children allocated ethnicities that did not incorporate all the ethnicities of their parents, with some children being allocated a single ethnicity.

## **Conclusion**

Focusing on the Maori population, their patterns of ethnic intermarriage and patterns of ethnic transference to their children has highlighted the complexities inherent in any ethnic analysis. The findings reinforce the notion that Maori are not a homogenous group but rather are an aggregate of like people who share identifiable social and cultural values. Nor is this a closed population. Along with other demographic processes, the Maori ethnic group grows from people of other ethnicities being ethnically mobile and moving into the Maori ethnic group.

Since at least the 1920's, officials and social commentators have expressed doubt that the Maori 'race' could survive, considering the dwindling number of 'pure Maori' and the 'gradual infiltration of European strains'. (Statistics New Zealand, 1926). There is however a growing population of people who identify as Maori in New Zealand. This has, in itself, implications for the measurement of ethnicity and identity. What people mean when they identify in this way is bound both to contemporary socio-political environments and collection contexts. When other elements of identity such as language skills, religion and other significant components of who a person is, and how these interface with their wider family and societal connections, are considered in conjunction with ethnicity a deeper understanding of how society evolves becomes possible.

For the Maori population, this is of particular significance. Maori continue to have high rates of ethnic intermarriage and these rates are not likely to decline in the near future.

The high rates of ethnic intermarriage will have some impact on the validity of defining and the ability to measure Maori as a distinct population group, however findings from this paper also suggest that there is a strong trend of allocating children from mixed ethnic backgrounds Maori ethnicity. It would seem that the doubts raised about the 'dwindling' Maori race and the notion that unions between Maori and non-Maori through ethnic intermarriage would inevitably result in children who are 'less' Maori may need to be reconsidered. The findings suggest that ethnicity is transferred from parents to children through dynamic social processes rather than biology or degrees and fractions of blood. Intermarriage itself is currently fuelling population growth amongst Maori and there is no evidence that it is resulting in a diminished sense of Maori identity. In fact the opposite seems to be true, not only are more people identifying their children as Maori, even when their parents have multiple ethnicity, but there also seems to be a resurgence of people rediscovering or adopting Maori ethnicity as they pass through various stages of their lives.

The study of intermarriage both in the limited scope of a particular ethnic group, as we have done for the Maori ethnic group in this paper, as well as in the more general sense, has value in providing context to underlying changes in social norms surrounding self and group identity. Intermarriage is also a significant mechanism for change. Within the social and political environment in New Zealand over the recent decades, there has been a shift from the centrality of race and ancestral linkages to group identity towards individual self-identification of one's functional social context. This is by no means limited to ethnicity. As observed in this paper, other markers of identity such as language are also fundamental to an understanding of the dynamics of this process, and have also experienced a similar conceptual shift. There are close parallels between the growing awareness of the limitations of the tree-like models of language evolution used by philologists (such as recent work by linguistic archaeologists like Renfrew and Bellwood (Bellwood and Renfrew, 2003)) and the awareness that the similar dendritic structure of classification of race and ancestry lack the ability to fully explain change. In other words, in both cases, people are becoming increasingly aware that the interaction between branches as well as along them has a much more powerful effect on, respectively, linguistic change and ethnogenesis than has been generally acknowledged.

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