

# Student Agency Research Project 2020 - Executive Summary

Vicki McIntyre, Hinds School

## Enabling Student Agency in Senior Primary through pedagogical practice

The project purpose was **to develop pedagogical practice to create an environment that encourages students to be agentic through cognitive engagement, to move from being passive to an active learner.** The purpose of this project was to develop student agency within our learners through the development of student agentic behaviour and beliefs, which was facilitated through pedagogical practice.

### Project goals

- To develop andragogical and heutagogical practice with teachers to transition pedagogy towards student led learning, with teachers empowered as facilitators of learning. Empowering teacher agency and critical inquiry of practice.
- To scaffold the capability of student agentic behaviour and beliefs within students.

The project was developed around two phases; phase one - teacher education and empowerment, the growth of pedagogical understanding and practice; and phase two - the implementation of pedagogy to scaffold and enable students in student agentic behaviour and beliefs.

The research was framed around three key questions for the senior school Years 5-8:

- Can student agentic pedagogy empower teachers to move towards andragogical and heutagogical practice, transforming teaching and learning where students are authentic partners, experience a rich curriculum, and are at the core of learning practice?
- Can student agentic pedagogy enable students to embed student agentic behaviour and beliefs and scaffold capabilities and Hinds School dispositions?
- Can student agency enable equality, and empower success for all learners?

In order to achieve the two components of the research project two significant areas of work were undertaken. The first phase consisted of gathering voice from teachers and students to attain a baseline, and focussing on teacher agency and enabling the teachers to engage with pedagogical learning. The second phase of the project consisted of the implementation of pedagogy to scaffold and enable students in student agentic behaviour and beliefs

The research project was developed with the methodology of action research and was informed by

quantitative and qualitative data. The spiral on inquiry was a core tool in mapping learning and change in practice overtime and teacher voice. Teachers collaborated with the researcher in the development of the inquiry as key stakeholders and agents of change. During the project we engaged in two inquiries as Covid-19 changed our inquiry pathway. Teachers engaged in pedagogical learning through professional development, observations and mentoring, self reflection and co-construction of tools to support practice. Student agentic pedagogy was aligned with current work the school had undertaken with culturally responsive practice in the format of a pedagogical continuum

Phase two involved applying learning from phase one into the classroom and trialling strategies and practices that enabled student agentic behaviours and belief. Teachers expliciting taught students about self-efficacy as this was a prerequisite to enabling agentic behaviour and beliefs. Teacher co-constructed with students a student agentic continuum and used student voice to enact andragogical and heutagogical practice.

Student agency places the learner at the centre, it builds upon the individual's capabilities, values and works from the basis of the student cultural toolkit which they bring with them to the classroom. Student agency is interdependent with self-efficacy, and can not be fully enabled without a core focus on developing student self-efficacy. Student agency encompasses student well being, cultural, social, academic and self development. Learning is authentic, flexible and engages all parties (teacher, whanau, peers and student) in the co-construction of learning. This research has highlighted the potential alignment of student agentic pedagogy with cultural responsive and relational pedagogy, particularly within the context of Aotearoa and honouring the Treaty of Waitangi. Student agentic pedagogy builds upon the foundations of culturally responsive and relational pedagogy and is fundamental in enabling success for Maori as Maori, success for Pasifika as Pasifika and in the engagement and success of our marginalised learners (Annan, 2016, 2017, 2018; Bishop & Berryman, 2006).

Through the research process teachers learnt the value of themselves as change agents, and then enabled their students through pedagogy and knowing their learners to become authentic partners in learning. Pedagogy enabled students to engage in agentic behaviour and beliefs, enabled equality, fostered self-efficacy and empowered students as learners. Teachers noted a shift in student learning practices reflective of their pedagogical growth.

The research project has heightened the potential for within school facilitation. Leadership and facilitation within this research project aligned with Fullan (2013), and was focussed on driving and assessing innovation in real time, through co-learning and collaboration; laterally within and across classrooms. Within school facilitation enabled teachers to become authentic agents of change and mutually influence the spiral of inquiry to engage in deep pedagogical growth and change in practice. It empowered teachers as practitioners and leaders, empowered our students as partners in learning and change agents, and informed leadership of the potential of the richness and depth this process can attain.

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# Student Agency Reserach Project Report

Vicki McIntyre, Hinds School

## What Did You Set Out To Do?

A problem identified at Hinds School was that we had a significant number of passive learners. We observed that many of our students lacked skills and strategies with management of self, ownership and active participation in learning, and in coping with change and challenge. Many of our students demonstrated passive learned behaviours that were detrimental to their learning and holistic development, and low expectations of themselves as a learner. We had a significant group of students who were not performing to their potential. Teachers expressed concern as students demonstrated a lack of complexity in their thinking, lack of initiative and perseverance, lack in ability to transfer their learning across curriculum tasks, and concern with students being unable to talk in depth about themselves as a learner or their learning. It was apparent that we had students who were dependent on the teacher as the enabler of their learning.

The project was informed by a critical review of our initial observations and concerns. We engaged in a range of data gathering tasks, observations of teaching practice, observations of teacher and student interactions, observing of parents and child interactions, voice from students and whanau and an analysis of assessment data. We proposed several possible contributions to our problem, firstly the lack of student competence as a learner (key competencies, skills, aptitudes) and ownership within learning; secondly the possible limitation of National Standards focus and the draw away from a rich curriculum and diverse pedagogical practice; thirdly teachers lack of knowledge and pedagogical practices on how to nurture and scaffold competencies, skills and strategies required; and finally a framework of strategies, practices and expectations where as a school we were all speaking the same language with shared ownership of success with our learners and whanau. From this critical analysis, student agency was identified as a core pedagogical practice in enabling the learner, competencies and Hinds dispositions.

The project purpose was **to develop pedagogical practice to create an environment that encourages students to be agentic through cognitive engagement, to move from being passive to an active learner.** The purpose of this project was to develop student agency within our learners through the development of student agentic behaviour and beliefs, which was facilitated through pedagogical practice. The project was two fold, empowering teachers with pedagogical growth as key stakeholders, and teacher practice empowering students.

## **Purpose and goals**

The research project was grounded in enabling teachers and students to transition towards heutagogical practice, placing the student at the centre of learning, embedding our work with culturally responsive practice and digital tools; and enabling students and teachers to truly reflect ako and tuakana - teina.

### **Project goals**

- To develop andragogical and heutagogical practice with teachers to transition pedagogy towards student led learning, with teachers empowered as facilitators of learning. Empowering teacher agency and critical inquiry of practice.
- To scaffold the capability of student agentic behaviour and beliefs within students.

The project was developed around two phases; phase one - teacher education and empowerment, the growth of pedagogical understanding and practice; and phase two - the implementation of pedagogy to scaffold and enable students in student agentic behaviour and beliefs.

The research was framed around three key questions for the senior school Years 5-8:

- Can student agentic pedagogy empower teachers to move towards andragogical and heutagogical practice, transforming teaching and learning where students are authentic partners, experience a rich curriculum, and are at the core of learning practice?
- Can student agentic pedagogy enable students to embed student agentic behaviour and beliefs and scaffold capabilities and Hinds School dispositions?
- Can student agency enable equality, and empower success for all learners?

The senior school was selected as an area for research as the teachers were highly capable with strong pedagogical practice, and had a sound framework of practice to build on, were critically reflective, had a strong relationship with learners and parents, however were not gaining the impact they expected in student engagement and in student achievement. Senior students were in significant need of student agentic learning competencies for their transition to secondary school.

## **Artefacts and Deliverables**

I focussed on empowering teachers with pedagogical growth as they were the key agents of change. This involved a range of artefacts and deliverables being developed for the teachers as a learning tool and then collaboratively with the teachers as a tool to support teaching and learning. To scaffold teacher learning and to connect with what teachers already understood of effective pedagogy, I related student agentic pedagogy to pedagogical work we had already undertaken with culturally responsive and relational pedagogy, with Waikato University Te Awhenui. Teachers needed to see the numerous practices they were already undertaking, that were inclusive of student agentic pedagogy. This established with the teachers that the research project work was not an 'add on' or out of context to current school practice, but

rather an extension of the work we were already undertaking and that many of the practices they were already engaging in as effective practitioners were conducive to student agentic teaching and learning. I developed an alignment continuum inclusive of student agentic pedagogy and culturally responsive and relational pedagogy. Refer deliverable [Cultural Responsive and Relational Pedagogy Continuum inclusive of Student Agency](#). This deliverable enabled teachers to connect with what they already knew and to see how in practical terms student agency could be enabled. Teachers wanted guidance on how to implement pedagogy in practical terms to support learners and in terms of management within the classroom. Teachers had limited time to engage in a review of literature so my work involved developing tools to best support teachers learning and their understanding of practice in terms of implementing the pedagogy.

To provide a framework of learning and connect with previous work undertaken by the staff and to build on what we already knew, a spiral of inquiry framework was implemented. This enabled teacher agency and teachers to mutually influence the spiral of inquiry as we engaged in deep pedagogical growth and change in practice. We captured our learning, our challenges, successes, opportunities and needs, and this influenced the development and shape of our inquiry and our use of experts. Covid-19 instigated a new inquiry within the project. Lockdown required teachers to adjust quickly to a full online and remote learning environment. This spiral of inquiry captured this transition and our key learnings and changes in practice. The lockdown has been a catalyst of change, it removed barriers teachers were grappling with, and removed control of learning from the teachers and passed it to the students. It focused the teachers on their role as a facilitator and enabler and the use of multiple strategies and flexibility to support the learners. This inquiry continued on our return to school and has informed pedagogical change and student learning. Refer artefacts [Spiral of Inquiry - Student Agency and Home Learning with Lockdown 2020](#), [Review of Student Agency Research Project - June 2020](#)

A website was used as a tool to support teachers, a resource platform and a record of our learning over time that we could refer back to and share with other staff to support their learning and practice. This became a reference for teachers and an opportunity for other staff at Hinds School to learn alongside the project and observe senior teachers engaging in a research based inquiry. Refer deliverable [Hinds School Student Agency Website - PLD tool for Teachers](#). This resource has continued to develop across the project and will continue to support teachers as we continue with our focus over 2020 and 2021.

To provide explicit professional learning on pedagogical practice I planned PLD sessions with the teachers. To be most effective in meeting the needs of teachers and to maximise time, I prepared PLD sessions for the full staff, the senior syndicate were 'experts' and shared their learning and consolidated pedagogy. The PLD sessions were valuable in developing a shared understanding of pedagogical practice, the interconnection of our learning across CR & RP, digital curriculum and student agency, and in reinforcing to the senior syndicate teachers the learning they had already undertaken, and a continued momentum on our

focus on student agency. Refer artefacts [Teacher Only Day Planning](#), [Teacher Only Day - Leadership planning](#), [Hinds Strategies to develop student agency](#) - Jess from Core Ed as Expert.

The second phase of the project involved implementing pedagogy in practice which led to developing student agentic behaviours and beliefs and student capabilities. Within this stage artefacts and deliverables were developed to support students learning, and to scaffold student behaviours, beliefs and capabilities. We focused on developing two key areas of knowledge; self efficacy and student agency. Self efficacy was a key component of student agency and became embedded within the tools we developed. The tools developed encouraged students to learn about themselves, to develop a deeper understanding of their strengths and areas of capability, and to identify areas they could strengthen. The student agency continuum was further explored with students and collectively we developed a wall display of student agentic learners behaviours and beliefs which aligned with the continuum. This display provided a scaffold for students to visually refer to, and supported them in how they could progress. Refer artefact [Student Sense of Agency Survey](#) Refer deliverable [Hinds Strategies to develop student agency](#) - Jess from Core Ed as Expert.

## What Do You Know About The Topic?

Student agency is informed by Bandura's social cognitive theory and Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. Social cognitive theory suggests learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment, and behavior. Bandura (1986) suggests individuals possess a self system that enables them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings, motivation and actions. Bandura provided a view of human behaviour in which the beliefs that people have about themselves are key elements in the exercise of control and personal agency and in which individuals are viewed both as products and as producers of their own environment and of their social system (Bandura, 1994, p.19), Klemenčič (2015) notes social cognitive theory distinguishes three modes of agency, each of which is founded in people's beliefs that they can influence the course of events by their actions.

“In **personal agency** people bring their influence to bear on their own functioning and on environmental events. In many spheres of functioning, people do not have direct control over the social conditions and institutional practices that affect their everyday lives. Under these circumstances, they seek their well-being, security and valued outcomes through the exercise of **proxy agency**. In **collective agency** people share a belief in their collective efficacy.” (Klemenčič, 2015, p.6)

Social cognition theory is the basis of which student agency is founded. Student agency is interrelated with self-efficacy which Bandura (1994), defines as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Bandura suggests that self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave (Bandura, 1994, p.1). Self-efficacy is a prerequisite in enabling student agency and student agency is the context for which self-efficacy is enacted and empowered. Self-efficacy beliefs are closely related to notions of agentic orientation and agentic possibility as they operate on action through motivational, cognitive and affective intervening processes combined with environmental variables (Klemenčič, 2015, p.6). Zimmerman (2000), notes that perceived self-efficacy influences students' methods of learning as well as their motivational processes, Bandura (1994) states that self-efficacious students participate more readily, work harder, persist longer, and have fewer adverse emotional reactions when they encounter difficulties, than do those who doubt their own capabilities. Self-efficacious students undertake difficult and challenging tasks more readily than do inefficient students (Zimmerman, 2000). Therefore to enable student agency, self efficacy must be developed as a foundation of enablement. Zimmerman (2000) notes self-efficacy beliefs, provide students with a sense of agency to motivate their learning through the use of self-regulatory processes.

Diaz (1990) suggests the origins of self-regulation can be described as the child's gradual takeover of the adult regulating role within the zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development refers to the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled partner (McLeod 2012 ). Vygotsky's zone of proximal development can be defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers." (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). McLeod (2012) notes that to move through the zone of proximal development, there are three interrelated components:

- The presence of someone with knowledge and skills beyond that of the learner (a more knowledgeable other).
- Social interactions with a skillful tutor that allow the learner to observe and practice their skills (growth of competencies).
- Scaffolding, or supportive activities provided by the educator, or more competent peer, to support the student as he or she is led through the ZPD.

The zone of proximal development encapsulates the transition towards student agentic behaviour and beliefs, where through the foundations of self-efficacy and the transition from adult supervision to guidance to independence, students transition towards self regulation and self directed learning.

Klemenčič (2015) and Annan (2016, 2017, 2018) provided a framework of student agency which informed this research project. Klemenčič (2015) defines student agency as a process of student actions and interactions during studentship, which encompasses variable notions of agentic orientation ("will"), the way

students relate to past, present and future in making choices of action and interaction, and of agentic possibility (“power”), that is their perceived power to achieve intended outcomes in a particular context of action and interaction, but also to practice self-engagement of a critical reflexive kind. Student agency is a combination of the processes in which students relate to past, present and future choices of action, and their perceived power to achieve intended outcomes in given situations (Klemenčič, 2015). Annan (2017) aligns with Klemenčič, noting agency is not a quality that can be understood through personal or social structures alone; it involves the articulation of relations between children and their world, it exists within an interactive context, it is reflective of the person, culture, environment, relationships, place, time; reflective of self as a person, self as learner, and self in relation to a range of variables; it is positioned as part of a dynamic social system rather than a fixed personal attribute. Annan (2017) suggests agency implies a degree of autonomy, an awareness of and concern for the surrounding social environment and the assumption that responsibility for learning is actively shared. Annan’s research is within a New Zealand context and aligns with the bicultural heritage of New Zealand, the Treaty of Waitangi and New Zealand Curriculum. Annan’s work strongly influenced this research project as it provided a comparison and support for teacher pedagogical transformation.

Student agency has strong connections and enables student well being, cultural, social, academic and self development (Annan 2016, and Wenworth 2014) New Zealand research states student agency components are fundamental in enabling success for Maori as Maori, success for Pasifika as Pasifika and in the engagement and success of our marginalised learners (Ministry of Education, 2014, 2016; Freeth 2011; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Savage et al.,2011). Culturally responsive practices such as collaboration, kotahitanga, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, rangatiratanga, pumanawatanga (Savage et al, 2012) reflect the way people interact, the way people think, and the competences possessed and valued. Student agency aligns with and enables culturally responsive practice, a key element in enabling success for our learners within New Zealand.

Research suggests that teaching practice with foundations of care for and enabling the learner, valuing the learner and the kete they bring; teaching practice that is flexible and empowers the learner and whanau, best enable the individual<sup>1</sup> and encapsulate culturally reflective practice. Research suggests that ‘relationship’ is key in culturally responsive practice and in enabling equality, (Duncan-Andrade, 2009, Kohl,1994 as cited by Khalifa et al, 2016; Savage, et al, 2011; Savage et al, 2012; Ministry of Ed 2014,2016; Pepper Rollins, 2014; Kia Peke Panu<sup>2</sup>, Dumont, et al, 2010). When a teacher knows their learner, they can embrace teaching and learning practices that best enable equitable outcomes for that

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<https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/content/download/35180/309282/file/Tool%2013%20Designing%20Pathways%20for%20Accelerating%20Learning%20%20A3%20.docx>

<sup>2</sup> <https://kep.org.nz/dimensions/culturally-responsive-and-relational-pedagogy>

learner, they can implement teaching practice that is flexible and empowers the learner and whanau to take the pathway of learning that best enables the individual<sup>3</sup>.

Student agency places the learner at the centre, learning is authentic, learning engages parties (teacher, whanau, peers and student) in the co-construction of learning and in the learning process. Student agency encompasses flexible learning, values and works from the basis of the student cultural toolkit which they bring with them to the classroom and to their learning. When we empower students as valued and authentic partners or determiners of their learning journey, as practitioners we are differentiating learning; valuing what each learner brings in their kete to the learning process; enabling the learner to learn at their own pace and through mediums and technology that fit the learning tasks and the learner; enabling the individual to use their strengths and develop areas of weakness but not be limited by weaknesses, and giving authentic value to higher order competencies or skills and creativity.

The project definition is reflective of aspects of Klemenčič and Annan's definitions of student agency and inclusive of culturally responsive and relational pedagogy. Klemenčič (2015) provides a student focused definition where student agency is understood through analysis of personal or social structures together, including the relationships between students and their worlds, past, present and notions of future, and choices they have made, or will make; and their perceived power in these situations. Annan (2016, 2017, 2018) provided a New Zealand context and the connection between student agency as a dynamic quality that is created and shaped as teachers and students negotiate their learning environments, and it is influenced by the multiple environments in which children develop. The project focus and definition of student agency reflects our early stage of our school development. The definition has a strong focus on the role of pedagogical practice in the first instance to develop a culture of practice, this culture of practice then sets a platform to scaffold student's learning and agency.

*Student agency encompasses teaching and learning practices of the teacher and students. Teachers develop pedagogical practice which creates an environment and cognitive engagement that encourage and enable students to take on increasing role in their learning and other's learning. Students undertake actions that have an influence on their learning through active negotiation, and increased student voice. Students develop the 'power to act' as a learner and as a citizen. They develop self efficacy, and competence in oneself as a learner and change agent.*

This definition specifically encompasses the competency of self efficacy, and the Key Competencies of Thinking, Participating and Contribution, Relating to Others and Managing Self within the New Zealand Curriculum to enable student agency. Student agency is intertwined within the New Zealand Curriculum;

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<https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/content/download/35180/309282/file/Tool%2013%20Designing%20Pathways%20for%20Accelerating%20Learning%20%20A3%20.docx>

student agency is enabled through the NZC, and student agency enables specific elements of the NZC, specifically the Key Competencies, Vision and Principles.

The purpose of this project was to develop student agency within our learners through the development of student agentic behaviour and beliefs, which was facilitated through pedagogical practice. The definition of student agency which has been used to guide this research project has been influenced by the context of our school. It captures the stage our teachers and students are in their learning journey. The definition encompasses the dual platform of student agency, teacher pedagogy and student voice and actions. Student voice and actions are however dependent on being enabled through teacher pedagogy; teacher pedagogy is the critical component in enabling student agency. The definition identifies for teachers the outcome pedagogical practice will have, and is specifically included in our school definition to guide the teachers and provide them with a framework of practice and expectations. The definition identifies the actions students will be able to take, and again this is included in our school definition to guide teachers, students and whanau as to the expectations we have and the vision we are working towards. Our school has a specific focus on the rich holistic development of the child within our school vision, strategic aims, and curriculum, therefore the student agency definition extends student agency further than just learning, to encompass the wider development of the child.

A focus area within this research project is enabling teachers transformation of practice. This transition will encompass movement towards Andragogical and heutagogical pedagogy. Andragogy and Heutagogy are two theories of teaching practice which align with Bolstad et al, (2012) proposed shift where the system is built around the learner, rather than the learner conforming to the system. Andragogy is defined as a self-directed and self regulated learning approach. Knowles et al (2005) recognized three layers of interaction, principles of learning, individual and situational differences and goals, and purpose of learning. The role of the teacher in an andragogical approach is that of tutor and mentor with the teacher supporting the student in developing the capacity to become more self directed in his or her learning. Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006) suggest a place of building, rather than simply transmitting knowledge. Teachers establish objectives and curriculum and guide students with a focus on problem solving within real world situations (Khanushia 2019). Savage et al, (2012) findings suggest that reciprocity practice encapsulates a problem-solving approach; sharing power with ākonga and showing respect for ākonga. Heutagogy is defined as self-determined learning, where the learner themselves play a key role as creators of knowledge and where social networking and social benefits play a key role in learning (Keats & Schmidt, 2007). Heutagogy is concerned with learner-centred learning that sees the learner as the major agent in their own learning, which occurs as a result of personal experiences (Stewart & Kenyon, 2007) . Khanushia, (2019) suggests heutagogy maintains the andragogical student centred emphasis but takes it a step further by highlighting the importance of developing the skills necessary to learn on one's own, It is not just about learning content but also learning how to learn. Heutagogy recognises the need to be flexible in the learning and places the learner at the centre. Savage et al, (2012) notes that the teachers need to coach

learners in the nuances of the dominant discourse without denigrating their own culture or challenging their identity. These pedagogical practices enrich the opportunity to learn together collaboratively and cooperatively, to learn through peer mentoring and coaching, to learn from one another with students becoming specialists and experts, to transcend the traditional role of teacher and learner to an interchangeability of teacher and learner, tutor and tutee. I would expect that within this research project teaching and learning practice move fluidly between andragogy and heutagogy to represent the needs within the given context. Annan, (2017) states, students are best supported to negotiate agency in those settings that hold perceived relevance for them and in which they can readily identify with practices and procedures.

## What Did You Do?

The research project was grounded in enabling teachers and students to transition towards heutagogical practice, placing the student at the centre of learning, embedding Hinds School work with culturally responsive practice and digital tools; and enabling students and teachers to truly reflect ako and tuakana-teina. The project was twofold,

- To develop andragogical and heutagogical practice with teachers to transition pedagogy towards student led learning, with teachers empowered as facilitators of learning. Empowering teacher agency and critical inquiry of practice.
- To scaffold the capability of student agentic behaviour and beliefs within students

In order to achieve the two components of the research project two significant areas of work were undertaken. The first phase consisted of gathering voice from teachers and students to attain a baseline, and focussing on teacher agency and enabling the teachers to engage with pedagogical learning. The second phase of the project consisted of the implementation of pedagogy to scaffold and enable students in student agentic behaviour and beliefs

Baseline data was collected before the implementation of phase one. I drew on the work of Annan (2017), in the development of the teacher and student surveys. Teachers were surveyed to gather their initial understanding of student agentic pedagogy and practice, and students were surveyed to gather their initial perspective of their current student agentic behaviors and beliefs. The surveys were analyzed to determine areas of competence and needs. The survey was repeated at the completion of the research project to provide a measure of change over time and progress towards the project goals. Refer

artefacts: [Teacher Sense of Student Agency Survey](#), [Student Sense of Agency Survey](#)

Student and teacher voice, data analysis and community feedback informed our inquiry. We worked from a strength based approach, working from what we were currently doing well, and then looked at areas of

needs to help us achieve our aspirations. The inquiry drew on the work we were doing with culturally responsive and relational pedagogy from Waikato University. The following components guided our inquiry and collaboration;

- Relationships of care and connectedness are fundamental (**whanaungatanga**)
- Power is shared and learners have the right to equity and self determination (**mahi tahi, kotahitanga**)
- Culture counts, learners' understandings form the basis of their identity and learning (**whakapapa**)
- Sense-making is dialogic, interactive and ongoing (**ako**)
- Decision-making and practice is responsive to relevant evidence (**wānanga**)
- Our common vision and interdependent roles and responsibilities focus on the potential of learners – Māori students achieving and enjoying educational success as Māori – (**kaupapa**)<sup>4</sup>

A range of strategies and tools were used to support teachers engagement within the constraints of working full time. Teachers co-constructed with myself the framework of our Teaching as Inquiry shaping up our areas of initial focus and development, identifying their areas of strength, needs and concerns so we could explore these further. The inquiry mapped our work, and supported teachers' voices as active learners. As teachers identified questions, challenges and needs we were able to explore these within the inquiry framework and develop informed outcomes or access further support to address our needs. During Covid-19 lockdown a second inquiry was developed as we navigated a new forum of teaching and learning online and at home, and explored the application of student agentic pedagogy with students remotely. Refer artefact: [Spiral of Inquiry - Student Agency and Home Learning with Lockdown 2020](#).

Given the unforecast workload we experienced alongside the project teachers were provided with a streamlined summary of literature to support pedagogical growth and teacher agency. Teachers were provided literature and research that was most relevant to their needs and drew on Annan<sup>5</sup>, Wenworth<sup>6</sup> as New Zealand experts. Teachers were engaged in critical discussion and learning around the following aspects:

- Student agency - what do we currently understand and know? What do we want to know?
- What is student agency pedagogy? What might that look like/ involve?
- Purpose for change in practice?
- What are we currently doing that aligns or evidence these practices and strategies?
- What do we need to learn?

To provide explicit professional learning on pedagogical practice two Teacher Only Days were undertaken. This strategy was used to maximise teacher time and provide time for teachers to have the headspace to reflect and engage in learning and discussion, without the pressures of juggling meetings after school.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.wananga.ac.nz/support/te-awheonui/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.positivelypsychology.co.nz/articles-resources>

<sup>6</sup> <https://core-ed.org/research-and-innovation/ten-trends/2014/learner-agency/>

Refer artefacts: Refer artefacts [Teacher Only Day Planning](#), [Teacher Only Day - Leadership planning](#), [Hinds Strategies to develop student agency](#) - Jess from Core Ed as Expert.

Student agentic pedagogy was aligned with current work the school had undertaken with culturally responsive practice in the format of a pedagogical continuum. This alignment enabled teachers to see how culturally responsive and relational pedagogy and student agentic pedagogy aligned, it enabled teachers to identify practices and understandings they brought to this area of work, and enabled teachers to approach the project from a strength based position. Refer deliverable: [Cultural Responsive and Relational Pedagogy Continuum inclusive of Student Agency](#)

The project did not initially have developing a learning platform within phase one of the project, but the teachers identified a need within the project for sharing learning and engaging students in learning with a wider audience. We wanted to enable authentic collaboration and feedback. Collectively we selected blogger as our digital platform after discussions with our digital technology facilitator. This was an adjustment within the project that was identified as a next step to support learning in practice for teachers and students. We have struggled to get the learning platform established within the project timeframe, and this is reflective of a lack of competence with the tool of teachers and myself. This became a significant area of learning with no in-school expertise to support us and we were not able to get this aspect up and running meaningfully within the timeframe of the project. Blogger will continue to be a future area of work.

Phase two started in term 1 2020 where our focus moved to the implementation of pedagogy into the classroom. This phase involved applying learning from phase one and trialling strategies and practices that enabled student agency. Teachers sought student voice to shape elements of the learning programme and authentically applied culturally responsive practice. We worked with students developing an understanding of student agency and self-efficacy with workshops and then developed a student agency continuum for the senior school with students, (what student agency would look and feel like in the classroom for the learner and teacher). Students co-constructed learning goals with teachers using a framework as a guide. The continuum provided guidance to students so they could position themselves on the continuum and understand as a learner what they were doing to support their learning currently, and what they could take action with to progress their student agency. Refer deliverable: [Student Agency Continuum](#).

Covid-19 lockdown was implemented week 7 of term 1, in the early stages of phase two. Learning moved to online and at home and teachers made the swift transition from the classroom to a facilitator role. The depth of whanaungatanga, kaupapa and ako within our staff and shared ownership of our school was strikingly evident as we faced one of the biggest shifts within education. The teachers who had undertaken the research project collaborated with other teachers and took leadership in supporting, modelling and

sharing expertise. Teachers explored tools and strategies with students, and shared this back with teachers in weekly online conferences. The project took on a new phase with online learning and although the teachers were initially apprehensive and felt keenly their vulnerability, the lockdown has been a catalyst in enabling significant change in pedagogy. Lockdown forced teachers to let go of control and authentically enter into a partnership with students and whanau, and focus on enabling the learner. The focus of education became increasingly competency and rich curriculum based, and core learning areas were integrated. The nature of online learning meant that the student became the navigator of learning and teachers became facilitators. Students were required to voice their learning, manage their time and navigate their learning with active support and guidance from their teachers and whanau. Surveys were undertaken with whanau, students and teachers regarding the qualities of both home learning (we had some students who had limited engagement with online but engaged in learning on the farm / at home, and with whanau) and online learning. It gathered voice regarding the successes and challenges and aspects to maximise learning back within the school setting. Teachers engaged in a review session, analysed survey results, identified high impact strategies within traditional education which were important to retain, and planned collaboratively on transitioning back to school reflective of this feedback. Student agentic pedagogy became a foundation of practice and thinking. Refer artefact: [Student Voice on lockdown learning](#), [Whanau Lockdown Survey](#), [Teachers Lockdown Learning](#), [Summary of Whanau, Student and Teacher Voice in Review of Learning with Covid-19 Lockdown](#)

## How Did You Do It?

The research project was developed with the methodology of action research and was informed by quantitative and qualitative data. Action research can be defined as an approach in which the action researcher and practitioners collaborate in the diagnosis of the problem, and the development of a solution based on the diagnosis<sup>7</sup>. Action research was founded by Lewin (1944), where research aimed to promote social action, through democratic decision making and active participation of practitioners. Carr & Kemmis (1986) further developed and refined action research and summarised it as consisting of three conditions;

*“firstly, a project takes as its subject-matter a social practice, regarding it as a form of strategic action susceptible of improvement; secondly, the project proceeds through a spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, with each of these activities being systematically and self-critically implemented and interrelated; thirdly, the project involves those responsible for the practice in each of the moments of the activity, widening participation in the project gradually to include others affected by the practice, and maintaining collaborative control of the process”.* (Carr and Kemmis, 1986 p. 165-166)

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<sup>7</sup> [https://research-methodology.net/research-methods/action-research/#\\_ftn1](https://research-methodology.net/research-methods/action-research/#_ftn1)

The spiral of inquiry process was informed by Fullan (2013) Change Process<sup>8</sup> and Leonard (2017) Action Research Learning framework, which incorporates Halberg & Kaser (2013) Spiral of Inquiry.<sup>9</sup> These two processes focus on collaboration, enabling stakeholders as agents of change and pedagogical growth. Teacher agency was used as a tool in enabling teachers to become learners in action, to be empowered as learners and experts, to shape the project to cater for their needs and the pace of change that best fitted within our context at the time.

The research project drew on qualitative and quantitative data to inform the spiral of inquiry, and to analyse the impact. The aim of qualitative research is to understand the social reality of individuals, groups and cultures in their contexts. It seeks to explain 'how' and 'why' a particular phenomenon, or behaviour operates as it does in a particular context (McLeod, 2019). Within the project a range of qualitative data was used to shape the action research. The spiral on inquiry was a core tool in mapping our learning and change in practice overtime and teacher voice. Teachers collaborated with the researcher to develop and review the inquiry process and the inquiry process reflected the priorities of the group. We strategically did not set limitations or boundaries within the inquiry design, we drew on data, collective voice and context across the project. The inquiry was fluid and therefore was able to react to the needs of the participants and practitioners and access experts as needed. Due to Covid-19 and nationwide lockdown our inquiry pathway changed significantly. We undertook a specific inquiry into enabling student agentic learning within the context of home and online learning. To maximise learnings from Covid-19 lockdown and the significant change within the delivery of learning and education we undertook a specific review gathering whanau, student and teacher voice. This voice informed pedagogy and school culture on the return to school in Term 2.

Observations were undertaken during the research project across differing contexts of learning framed around Cultural Responsive and Relational Pedagogy observation tool from Waikato University. Student agentic pedagogy was aligned with the Cultural Responsive and Relational Pedagogy continuum during the research project; this enabled teachers to have a reference framework of pedagogical practice to align their practice against and identify areas of strength and development. Teachers used this tool as a reference to inform teacher agency and change in practice. Teacher and observer discussions from the observation were guided by the continuum and remained confidential. The growth of teacher agency and student agentic pedagogy were our focus, where the teacher placed themselves on the continuum following the reflection of the observation, and the change in this over time, reflected individual pedagogical growth and collective growth.

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.newpedagogies.nl/images/towards\\_a\\_new\\_end.pdf](http://www.newpedagogies.nl/images/towards_a_new_end.pdf)

<sup>9</sup>

<https://tabithaleonardportfolio.wordpress.com/2017/03/14/the-spiral-of-inquiry-and-action-research-learning-projects/>

Students co-constructed a student agentic continuum within their classrooms with teachers guided by the research. This enabled students to place actions and beliefs within the continuum to guide them in what student agency would look like, feel like and sound like. Students placed themselves on the continuum and with teachers reviewed this during activities and across various learning contexts. This consolidated student's awareness and understanding, and enabled them to develop an informed voice about themselves as a learner. Year 7 and 8 students placed themselves on this continuum at the end of the project indicating areas of strength and progression over time and identified areas of further development.

Quantitative data aims to establish general laws of behaviour and phenomenon across different settings and contexts, and draws on the analysis of data to measure the impact. A range of quantitative data was drawn on to analyse the impact of the project. Student and teacher surveys were undertaken at the commencement of the research project and the completion of the project. This provided a measure of change over time of student and teacher voice. The surveys also indicated areas of needs and areas of relative competence and understanding.

Formal observations using the Cultural Responsive and Relational Pedagogy observation tool were undertaken before the project, during the project and on the completion of the project. The observation toolkit assesses pedagogical practice in the context of learning within the classroom. This observation tool has been used in our school to measure pedagogical practice as part of our work with Waikato University and Culturally Responsive and Relational Pedagogy contract. The observational format and process is research based and standardised. Observations were undertaken by staff within our school and with external facilitators who were trained in using the observation tool. Teachers were familiar with the tool and observation process and the research behind the tool. The alignment of student agency with the cultural responsive and relational pedagogy continuum provided a standardised measure of both cultural responsive practice and student agentic pedagogy. Teachers also engaged in a self review of this continuum providing a reflective measure of change in practice over time.

## What Did You Find Out?

Teacher and student voice was gathered at the start of the project to provide a baseline of data. Their voice was again gathered in June 2020 to provide a second cohort of voice and a comparison. The project initially started with two senior teachers and in 2020 grew to three teachers as one classroom became a job share position. The full senior syndicate of students was involved in the project, this included two classrooms of 46 students (4 students were not included in initial data due to no parent consent). In 2020 Year 5 students moved into Kahu to start the 2020 school year. This consisted of 8 students, ( $\frac{1}{3}$  of the class), students data was separated and combined in Kahu to indicate class voice and voice of students who had participated in the full project. The project collated the voice of 41 students in 2020.

Initial student data was analysed, a numerical value was allocated to responses 1= never and 5 = always. Areas of higher and lower student competence were identified, lower competence was indicated by lower total score across each class, and higher areas of competence were indicated by a higher total score across each class. Class data was separated to enable teachers to be informed of student voice. With two classes it was possible to see overall trends across the data. The areas identified with less student competence and voice were consistent across the two classes. Students indicated less competence in their ability and voice within the student influence section, and relative competence in strategic agency, personal agency and connected agency. Of the nine questions in the student influence section, Piwaka and Kahu both indicated the same four areas of less competence. Both classes indicated they felt competent across the three sections of personal agency, strategic agency and connected agency.

Classes changed within the project, at the end of 2019 school year, so we were unable to measure student voice with the same students being present for the full project, and all students remaining with the same teacher. Four students moved from Kahu to Piwaka at the end of 2019, over a ⅓ of Piwaka left at the end of 2019 as the senior room, and eight new students started in Kahu at the beginning of the 2020 ( ⅓ of the class). The significant change in classes made it difficult to compare data as a straight comparison of time 1 with time 2. In acknowledging this we looked at the overall class voice and student level of competence across time 1 and time 2, and individual student time 1 and time 2 data, particularly those who had remained in the same room for the duration of the project. Students were given blank surveys, they had no comparison of their first time data when completing time 2 data. In time 2 data (June 2020) 12 Kahu students completed time 1 and time 2 data, 16 Piwaka students completed time 1 and time 2 data, 4 students moved from Kahu to Piwaka at the start of 2020. (two students in Kahu have been in the project all of the time but missed time 1 data collection with absence, 2 students in Piwaka only completed time 2 data, 1 due to absence during time 1 data collection, and 1 student started during the year). Refer artefacts [Piwaka Student Agency Survey 2019/2020](#), [Kahu Student Agency Survey 2019/2020](#)

Teachers were asked to complete a teacher sense of student agency survey based on Annan (2016) seven pedagogical components that foster student and teacher agency, at the beginning of the project to provide baseline data. Teacher voiced immediately that the survey was overwhelming for them, so we gathered voice on the section of which were most relevant to their place in time and that they could answer without feeling overwhelmed. This indicated the areas they had some understanding of, and felt comfortable self critiquing their practice. It indicated areas where they were less comfortable and therefore areas of development and knowledge building.

The teacher undertook the teacher agency survey at the completion of the project. Teachers were able to articulate practices that aligned with Annan (2016) best evidence of practice. Two of the seven areas were

identified as an area developing, one supporting reflection on learning and the other being teacher agency. Teachers were able to articulate a range of practices that aligned with Annan's (2016) practices and the implementation of andragogical practices with the movement towards heutagogy. Teachers were endeavouring to negotiate learning through choice of topics, choice in learning tasks, students were asked for their voice, students tracked their flexi timetable daily and negotiated with peers, students were the choice of when they completed agreed and flexi tasks. Teachers were linking learning to real life by seeking student voice, real life contexts for learning, and encouraging students to bring their kete of who they are into the classroom. Teachers were creating and supporting learning connections through engaging students in a wide range of activities and leadership opportunities, connecting with experts and the world around them. Teachers were nurturing positive and optimistic attitudes by front loading, using character strengths, growth mindset, celebrating success and using student strengths, goal setting, by using social media to share learning and success with whanau and community, and engaging students in co-construction of class culture and practices. Teachers were supporting reflection on learning through reflective tasks, learning journals, and discussions. Teachers were creating emotionally secure climate for change through knowing their learners, building relationships, having a room that reflected a range of spaces for differing purposes and student needs, and teacher transparency and openness with students and together planning strategies for wellbeing. Teachers identified flexibility within the school system but identified this as an area of continued development.

Refer artefacts: [Teacher Sense of Student Agency Questionnaire - Teacher A & Teacher B June 2020](#)  
[Teachers Sense of Agency - combined initial survey September 2019.](#) [Teacher Sense of Student Agency Questionnaire -Teacher C June 2020](#)

At the start of the project the teachers were interviewed as a collective to develop a framework of their teaching philosophy and pedagogical practice, their needs as a learner and their queries about the project and student agency. Information from these two sources was used to inform the spiral of inquiry and pedagogical growth. At the completion of the project teachers were asked to identify what had gone well, successes, challenges, what had changed in their practice as a result of the research project, and areas of further development. Teachers articulated significant pedagogical growth.

The spiral of inquiry reviewed student and teacher voice. Teachers and students identified that there was limited student voice and choice in learning in their initial analysis of data. Teachers made a conscious effort to select learning tasks, topics and opportunities that were of interest to students but students did not engage in the initial selection of these topics and planning of learning. Through our inquiry teachers reviewed how they could develop students' awareness of their current voice in learning and how this voice could be developed further. We reviewed the positive impact pedagogical practice was having on students and how we could build on this practice to support the areas students felt less capable in. Teacher feedback indicated areas of some knowledge and areas of learning. Teachers expressed apprehension in

the aspect of putting the theory of learning into practice and how this would be implemented and managed. We identified students' voice and influence as a key focus within phase one and the exploration of pedagogical practice. We focussed on building teacher knowledge and capability alongside addressing the area of less competence in student voice.

In August 2019 teachers had completed a formal observation with Waikato University for our school 360 review of Cultural Responsive and Relational Pedagogy (CR & RP) review. All teachers were observed using the CR & RP observation tool with two observers independently completing the observation at the same time within one classroom. Observers were trained with the observation tool, each group of observers had an external expert to ensure consistency. Teachers placed themselves on the cultural responsive and relational pedagogy continuum in follow up discussion with observers, and identified areas of strength and areas of further development. These observations provided a baseline of teachers culturally responsive practice which aligned with student agentic pedagogy. Both teachers were ranked at being 4 on CR and RP continuum, with 5 being the highest rank, and were classed as integrating practice.

Teachers were observed for other purposes during the three terms of the project. The CR & RP observation tool was used by internally trained staff and teachers engaged in discussion with the observer and the CR& RP and Student Agentic Continuum to support teacher growth and pedagogical practice. During the research project the CR & RP continuum was aligned with student agentic pedagogy to provide a scaffold of teacher practice. The continuum provided a progression in teacher pedagogy. A second version was developed as a more streamlined version. The teacher and student continuum were formatted in the same way to ensure teachers could strategically scaffold students and could relate to this in the teacher pedagogy continuum and the student continuum. Stages on the continuum were reduced from five to three to make it easier for students to follow. Tinakutanga / germination was the initial stage, and this reflected the early stage of developing student agentic pedagogy. Kia Tapu / To Grow reflected developing competence and capability in student agentic pedagogy and Nga Puawai / Blooming and Regeneration reflected teachers who were competently integrating student agentic pedagogy. The same terms were used for the student continuum and represented students who were in the early stages, developing competence and capability in being agentic and those who were showing strong agentic behaviours and beliefs.

At the completion of the research project three processes were used to triangulate the teacher voice, firstly teachers reviewed the CR & RP and Student Agentic continuum as a self review, teacher agentic survey and a final end of project review was undertaken. As agents of change it was important that teachers were provided the opportunity to professionally reflect on their practice and celebrate pedagogical growth.

## How Do You Know That?

The project purpose was **to develop pedagogical practice to create an environment that encourages students to be agentic through cognitive engagement, to move from being passive to an active learner.** The research project was grounded in enabling teachers and students to transition towards heutagogical practice, placing the student at the centre of learning, embedding our work with culturally responsive practice and digital tools; and enabling students and teachers to truly reflect ako and tuakana - teina.

The project was developed around two phases; phase one - teacher education and empowerment, the growth of pedagogical understanding and practice; and phase two - the implementation of pedagogy to scaffold and enable students in student agentic behaviour and beliefs.

The research was framed around three key questions for the senior school Years 5-8:

- Can student agentic pedagogy empower teachers to move towards andragogical and heutagogical practice, transforming teaching and learning where students are authentic partners, experience a rich curriculum, and are at the core of learning practice?
- Can student agentic pedagogy enable students to embed student agentic behaviour and beliefs and scaffold capabilities and Hinds School dispositions?
- Can student agency enable equality, and empower success for all learners?

***The analysis of final data from teachers and students confirms that teachers have transitioned to andragogical and heutagogical practice, have transformed teaching and learning in their classrooms to enable student agentic pedagogy, and have enabled students to embrace student agentic behaviours and beliefs.***

Teacher observations at the conclusion of the project confirmed that all three teachers were transitioning between stage 4 and stage 5 on the CR & RP continuum with integrating practice. Teachers shifted practice from working within stage 4 at the commencement of the research project, to transitioning between stage 4 and 5, with stage 5 as the highest level of practice. Given that literature closely aligns culturally responsive practice and student agentic pedagogy (Duncan-Andrade, 2009, Kohl, 1994 as cited by Khalifa et al, 2016; Savage, et al, 2011; Savage et al, 2012; Ministry of Ed 2014, 2016; Pepper Rollins, 2014; Kia Peke Panu<sup>10</sup>, Dumont, et al, 2010), it is feasible to measure teacher growth within the CR and RP observation tool as a measure of growth in student agentic pedagogy. In the completion of self review all teachers identified themselves as transitioning between Ka Tapu stage 2 and Nag Pauwai stage 3 on the

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<sup>10</sup> <https://kep.org.nz/dimensions/culturally-responsive-and-relational-pedagogy>

Student Agentic and CR & RP continuum. Teachers noted pedagogical growth and areas where they believed they were competent across the three sections, self-efficacy / competency based, ako / learning and culturally responsive practice; this was consistent for areas of development. There were some variations across teachers reflective of their strengths and individuality. Both continuums evidenced a shift to andragogy and heutagogy.

Refer Appendix A

In the review of teacher agentic survey teachers also indicated significant growth in practice, and evidence practice against Annan (2016) components of learning environments that foster student and teacher agency. Annan (2016) undertook a review of contemporary publications of teaching practices which support student agency and proposed seven emerging categories. Teachers identified two of the seven components as areas of growth and this was consistent across all teacher voice. They consider themselves as developing reflection as teachers and with their students, and indicated they are still developing teacher agency in the development of themselves as learners.

In the end of project review teachers were asked to identify what had gone well, successes, challenges, what had changed in their practice as a result of the research project, and areas of further development. Refer artefact: [Review of Student Agency Research Project - June 2020](#) Teachers indicated a deeper understanding of student agency through the depth of their answers, reflections and self critiquing during phase two of the project, and through final review data. Teachers noted their shift in pedagogy, Teacher A noted: “Students have really stepped up with us putting trust in them taking control of their learning. It has made us look at how we were teaching and what changes we could make. The Covid 19 lockdown resulted in Distance Learning and it was quite timely to make the change when we came back to school.” Teacher B noted: “It has enabled us to be more facilitators of learning, and allowed the students to be more agentic.” Teacher C noted: “I am collaborating more with colleagues, students are seeing themselves as teachers as well as learners, students are collaborating and inclusive of everyone. I am allowing students more ownership of their assignments through Google Classroom, and most students are taking more responsibility for their own learning”.

Teachers identified the opportunity Covid-19 provided in reshaping learning for students and teachers. Teachers noted that they have trialled learning strategies as a result of Covid-19 during lockdown, and on our return to school, that would have been more challenging to implement without the forced rethink of teaching and learning for students and teachers. Teachers elaborated on pedagogy that supported their position on the Student Agentic and CR & RP continuum. Teachers noted that their students have more say in their learning through collaborative authentic learning contexts, selection of tasks, ways of learning, workshops, shaping own timetable, student leadership, they noted that students are starting to authentically reflect on their learning and how they learn, teachers noted they were working more in

partnership with whanau and students. One classroom noted the success of the flexible timetable, where (21 out of 23) students were managing their time and their own timetables proactively and collaboratively. Teachers stated that they are looking more critically at the big picture of education, developing self efficacy and growth mindset, knowing the learner, flexibility of learning, using curriculum integration more effectively, and passing over control of learning with an authentic partnership.

Annan (2016) notes agentic teachers know their students' learning sufficiently well to provide just-enough support. Annan (2016) notes that students vary in their readiness to take agency in different circumstances as it is influenced by personal, social, cultural and political factors. Pivotal influences on students' agency are teachers, schools', parents' and students' beliefs about how people learn, where they learn and why they learn. Evidence from teacher voice, observations and planning indicates teachers know their learners and have transformed teaching and learning practice to enable all students. Teachers noted the flexibility they have to provide equity with lower achievers and those needing more teacher scaffolding and that students are using collaboration to support each other as learners distinct from teacher instruction. Students have transformed their learning environment and classroom culture and are sharing the ownership of each other's success, this is reflective of teacher pedagogy and their approach to empower their learners.

Data analysis from teachers and students supports the achievement of students actively engaging through pedagogical change in agentic behaviour and beliefs. Pedagogy enabled students to engage in agentic behaviour and beliefs, has enabled equity, fostered self efficacy and empowered students as learners. Teachers noted a shift in student learning practices reflective of their pedagogical growth. Students embraced tuakana - teina, worked more collaboratively, worked across a range of different students and chose to work together more. Students helped each other with learning, as well as their management of self. Students monitored their learning and filled out their learning trackers and held each other accountable for their learning. Students demonstrated a positive mindset towards their learning and students stepped up to take on significant leadership roles and service. Teachers pedagogy within this research aligns strongly with student agentic pedagogy. Teachers have negotiated learning, learning is authentic, collaborative, makes connections, is reflective, students self efficacy and optimism is enabled, teachers have fostered a emotionally secure climate for change, and teachers have engaged in teacher agency. (Annan 2016, 2017, 2018, Klemenčič 2015, Scardamalia & Bereiter 1991, Reeve & Tsengb 2011, Mercer 2012, Zimmerman 2000).

Student voice aligned with teacher voice indicating growth in student agentic pedagogy and student agentic behaviours and beliefs. An analysis of student data indicated a significant shift in agentic beliefs and behaviors, a reduction in the number of areas students. Students have a greater understanding of student agentic beliefs and behaviours at the completion of the project. This was evidenced by students surveys

and random sampling with the student agentic continuum. Some students downgraded some of their initial scores in time 2 data, a random sample of students indicated that students could justify why against the student agentic continuum. Where students have indicated the same grade or an increase students were able to associate actions they have undertaken with the survey and marked themselves to reflect their perception of self agency. There was a reduction in areas of less competency over both classrooms. The Year 5 students who had only been in the project for six months had a different perception to students who had been in the full project and their data aligned with time 1 data. It would be expected that year 5 data will align with time 2 data at the end of 2020. Though the classrooms selected different elements of high competency the elements were very similar, Piwaka indicated a more broader understanding of education and collaboration.

Refer Artefact: [Student Agency - Analysis of student data June 2020](#)

Within literature there was much discussion about student agentic pedagogy however I was not able to find case studies or action research to validate student voice, teacher voice and expected outcomes within a research project. I can only validate the change in teacher practice against student agentic pedagogy and the transformation of teaching practice against andragogy and heutagogy literature. Pajares & Valiante (2002) Bandura (1997) do however validate the change in self efficacy with action research. Pajares & Valiante (2002) notes that research findings confirm that students' academic self-efficacy beliefs influence their academic attainment, that students' self-efficacy beliefs influence the self-regulated learning strategies they use in school. Pajares & Valiante (2002) findings supported our analysis that educational programmes that seek to empower students must make students' beliefs about their self-regulatory practices a focus of professional practice. Analysis of this research project supports the findings that teachers need to learn how to scaffold and enable self efficacy in the first instance before they can enable student agentic behaviours and beliefs, this concurs with Bandura (1994, 1997, 1986). Pajares & Valiante (2002) noted teachers must help students develop sound self-regulatory practices while at the same time buttressing the confidence that students will require to employ those practices frequently and effectively. Analysis of this research project supports this finding. A critical development with the project were two key elements, firstly explicitly teaching self efficacy to teachers, and to students. This enabled teachers to scaffold and draw attention to student learning, what they were doing and why, this scaffolded students transitioned into self-efficacy practices. Secondly the co-construction of the student agentic continuum to scaffold students behaviours and beliefs. This enabled teachers to explicitly teach student agentic behaviours and beliefs when needed, students ownership of the process, a visual representation and reference point to support students and teachers. Khanusia (2019) and Annan (2018) concur with findings of the teachers that students required differentiation and that not all students were able to engage independently, however student were able to access more equitable learning support, with scaffolding and peer mentoring students have moved significantly on the student agentic continuum and have developed increased self-efficacy. Khanusia (2019) notes more mature students require less teacher control and course structure and can be

more self directed in their learning while less mature students require more teacher guidance and course scaffolding; Annan (2018) noted students vary in their readiness to take agency in different circumstances as it is influenced by personal, social, cultural and political factors.

Teachers pedagogical growth aligns with andragogy and heutagogy literature . Teachers engaged in andragogical practice as learners and as teachers; they were problem centred, collaborative, open to learning and critiqued practice with colleagues and students, and had a predominant voice in shaping the inquiry, artifacts and deliverables. Teachers applied andragogy through the engagement of students in the learning process through collaboration, student voice, and partnerships in learning, strategically scaffolded self efficacy, competencies and Hinds dispositions with students; enabled authentic learning, used a range of strategies for flexible learning, sought student and whanau feedback as partners, and adjusted practice to reflect this voice. Teachers transitioned towards heutagogical practice where they placed the learner at the centre, extended competencies towards capabilities, students designed and developed the map of learning from curriculum to evaluation as aspects of their learning. ( Khanushai, 2019; Annan, 2016, 2017, 2018; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006; Keats & Schmidt, 2007; Bolstart 2012; Steward & Kenyon, 2007)

Data analysis from teachers and students supports the achievement of teachers ' pedagogical transition. Teachers have embraced student agentic pedagogy, have transformed practice, applying andragogical and heutagogical practice and have enabled student self-efficacy; students are authentic partners and are engaging in co-constructing a rich curriculum.

## What Do You Now Know?

From this research we have developed a much deeper understanding of student agentic pedagogy, and the impact teachers and students can have when empowered as authentic agents of change. Teacher agency enabled a specific spiral of inquiry fit for the context of our school, our students and teacher. Our school is multicultural, has multi-leveled classrooms to year 8, has a range of diverse learners, and strong rural foundations. The spiral of inquiry was designed to be responsive to teachers and students as agents of change and empowered teachers to mutually influence their learning in phase one, and students and teachers to mutually influence their learning in phase 2. As the leader I facilitated growth, enabled agentic mindset, time, support for teachers and students to explore and reflect; I sought expertise to assist where we needed it. With enabling a flexible spiral of inquiry the teachers co-owned the process, and within school facilitation enabled collaboration, support, and responsive navigation. Through the research process teachers learnt the value of themselves as change agents, and then enabled their students through pedagogy and knowing their learners to become authentic partners in learning. This research confirmed for me the critical role of leading learning, and the impact of the mutual influence process (Hallinger, 2003). Leadership and facilitation within this research project aligned with Fullan (2013), facilitation was focussed

on driving and assessing innovation in real time, through co-learning and collaboration; laterally within and across classrooms.

An area of new learning was the interdependence of self efficacy and student agency. A core component in enabling student agency is enabling student self efficacy. As teachers this was a critical area of learning for us. It gave credibility to the work teachers already engaged in and provided further credence to the importance of self wellbeing, student voice and personal agency. We had not made the connection with self efficacy as a core foundation of student agency; we had focussed on capabilities and dispositions and empowering the learner, but had not understood the relevance of students perceptions of their power and influence on their learning, and the impact of students beliefs about the way their voice was perceived in regard to decision making and about their learning. We had not connected the need for us to scaffold student self voice and self enablement strategies such as self talk. Literature enabled us to make these connections, to critically review what we were doing and pedagogically where we needed to grow and what components of student agency through self efficacy we needed to scaffold explicitly.

This research has highlighted the potential alignment of student agentic pedagogy with cultural responsive and relational pedagogy, particularly within the context of Aotearoa and honouring the Treaty of Waitangi. Student agentic pedagogy builds upon the foundations of culturally responsive and relational pedagogy. Research suggests that teaching practice with foundations of care for and enabling the learner, valuing the learner and the kete they bring; teaching practice that is flexible and empowers the learner and whanau, best enable the individual<sup>11</sup> and encapsulate culturally reflective practice. Research suggests that 'relationships' are key in culturally responsive practice and in enabling equality, (Duncan-Andrade, 2009, Kohl, 1994 as cited by Khalifa et al, 2016; Savage, et al, 2011; Savage et al, 2012; Ministry of Ed 2014, 2016; Pepper Rollins, 2014; Kia Peke Panu<sup>12</sup>, Dumont, et al, 2010), a core component of student agentic pedagogy. New Zealand research states student agency components are fundamental in enabling success for Maori as Maori, success for Pasifika as Pasifika and in the engagement and success of our marginalised learners (Ministry of Education, 2014, 2016; Freeth 2011; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Savage et al., 2011).

This research has enabled teachers to make connections with a range of learning and professional development they have undertaken over the past three years. Student agentic pedagogy has provided the vehicle to interconnect professional learning and the authentic implementation of pedagogy. Wellbeing, digital fluency, cultural responsive and relational pedagogy, depth and complexity thinking, interweave

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<sup>11</sup>

<https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/content/download/35180/309282/file/Tool%2013%20Designing%20Pathways%20for%20Accelerating%20Learning%20%20A3%20.docx>

<sup>12</sup> <https://kep.org.nz/dimensions/culturally-responsive-and-relational-pedagogy>

within student agentic pedagogy and enabling the learner. Teachers made this connection in phase one of the project however in phase two they moulded this learning within their context. Our work with student agentic pedagogy will strengthen beyond this research project, the project has been a significant tool in enabling teachers as agents of change and in enabling our tamariki. Teachers noted that they still have specific areas of learning to develop. Two of the three teachers noted goal setting, regularly gaining student voice and feedback / feedforward as areas for growth. One teacher noted that a particular challenge was their default teaching pedagogy and when times are busy and demanding it was hard not to fall back into these practices. As a leader of learning and facilitator, the focus will be to continue the spiral of inquiry, continue to use the mutual influence process(Hallinger, 2003) as a core tool of enablement, and continue to nurture and support my teachers.

For me as a leader, this research has confirmed the value of within school facilitated learning. This project worked with highly capable teachers and the within school facilitation enabled them to become authentic agents of change and mutually influence the process. It empowered them as practitioners and leaders. I believe the teachers have embraced within their philosophy that they are agents of change; are capable of deep critical learning, and capable of navigating the pit and challenge of deep pedagogical change. This project has enabled teachers the time, support and scaffold to engage deeply. It has provided a platform of within school facilitation, extended my pedagogical growth in leadership, and confirmed that collaboratively we have developed a within school framework of pedagogical growth and change.

## **How Is This Knowledge Useful / Meaningful To Others**

The research project has heightened the potential for within school facilitation of deep pedagogical change in practice and has informed future professional learning for our school. Within school facilitation enabled teachers to become authentic agents of change and mutually influence the spiral of inquiry to engage in deep pedagogical growth and change in practice. It empowered teachers as practitioners and leaders, it informed leadership of the potential of within school facilitation and the richness and depth this process can attain, and empowered our students as partners in learning and change agents.

Student agency places the learner at the centre, it builds upon the individual's capabilities, values and works from the basis of the student cultural toolkit which they bring with them to the classroom. Student agency is interdependent with self efficacy, and can not be fully enabled without a core focus on developing student self efficacy. Student agency encompasses student well being, cultural, social, academic and self development. Learning is authentic, flexible and engages all parties (teacher, whanau, peers and student) in the co-construction of learning. Student agentic pedagogy aligns with future focussed learning, culturally responsive pedagogy, enables all learners. Student agentic pedagogy has transformed teaching and

learning practice in our senior school, learning is mutually influenced by teachers, students and whanau, and gives true respect and value to our bicultural heritage and the Treaty of Waitangi.

This research project engaged teachers and students as valued key stakeholders, and has authentically enabled them as agents in their learning and agents of change; it has the potential to transform learning across our school and our community. Student agentic pedagogy is an enabler of future capabilities, dispositions and lifelong learning, founded in knowing and valuing oneself as a person, a learner and as a contributor. For our community student agentic pedagogy will provide the platform to rich and authentic and future focussed education.

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