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Taku marae e:

Connecting to ancestral marae 2013



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1 Purpose and summary

Nau mai haere mai ki *Taku marae e: Connecting to ancestral marae 2013*.

Hokia ki ngā maunga, kia purea nei koe e ngā hau o Tāwhirimātea

Return to the mountains to be refreshed by the winds of Tāwhirimātea.

This whakatauki (proverb) urges Māori to connect to their culture to be restored and refreshed within tikanga Māori. Visiting and connecting to their ancestral marae is one way Māori can do this.

Purpose

Taku marae e: Connecting to ancestral marae 2013 uses information from the Te Kupenga 2013 survey of Māori well-being to look at the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of Māori (aged 15 years or older) that are associated with their connecting to ancestral marae.

Specifically, it looks at the characteristics of Māori who:

- visit any of their ancestral marae
- have been there in the 12 months before the survey, and the number of times they had done so in that period
- wanted to have gone or done so more often in that 12-month period.

Summary

Most Māori know their ancestral marae, connect to it through visiting, and want to go more often. Te Kupenga results showed more than half (62 percent) had been to their ancestral marae at some time in their lives and around one-third (34 percent) had done so in the 12 months before the survey was undertaken. Of Māori who knew their ancestral marae, 59 percent wanted to have gone there or done so more often.

Other aspects of Māori identity and culture are strongly linked with Māori connecting to ancestral marae. Māori with te reo Māori as their first language, with greater ability to speak te reo, who know all their pepeha (tribal identity), and with an ancestral marae they consider their tūrangawaewae, are more likely to visit their ancestral marae than others. For example, nearly all (94 percent) of the 282,000 Māori with an ancestral marae as their tūrangawaewae had been to their ancestral marae at some point in their life and 57 percent had been in the last 12 months.

Age is closely linked to ancestral marae connection. In that older Māori are more likely than younger Māori to have been to their ancestral marae, to have done so recently, and to have visited more often. Of those aged 55 years or older, 45 percent had been to their ancestral marae six or more times in the last 12 months, compared with 23 percent of 15–24-year-olds.

Visiting their ancestral marae is an important and relevant way for Māori to connect with their culture. The marae continues to be a vital aspect of Māori culture and identity.



2 Background to ancestral marae

The marae is the anchor stone of tribal identity, tying every Māori to their wider communities of origin, genealogically connecting the past to the future and journeying us back into a deep Pacific history of common ancestral origins over 3,000 years old.

Professor Paul Tapsell

Marae are a cluster of buildings and spaces, usually incorporating a wharenuī (meeting house), a marae ātea (an open space in front of the wharenuī), a kitchen and dining area, and an amenities block. It may include other spaces such as an urupā (cemetery). Marae can be tribal-based (ancestral marae), or non-kin based (urban / community marae). Visiting marae is central to involvement and participation in Māori culture and is an important element of tikanga Māori (Māori customs and practices).

Ancestral marae, of which there are over 800 in Aotearoa New Zealand, belong to particular iwi (tribe), hapū (sub tribe) or whānau (family) and are located in the historical rohe (tribal region) of the group (Tapsell, nd). Māori connect to ancestral marae through whakapapa (genealogy) – it is where their parents, grandparents, or ancestors are from and accordingly they may have more than one ancestral marae. For many Māori, their ancestral marae is their tūrangawaewae (their place to stand and belong).

Important tribal events, such as hui (meetings), celebrations, and tangihanga (funerals), are held on the ancestral marae. Through visiting their ancestral marae and taking part in these events people connect to and reaffirm their tribal and Māori identities, and their culture more generally. Connecting to one's ancestral marae is also considered an important part of Māori cultural well-being.

Traditionally Māori life was centred on the marae. Urbanisation from the mid-20th century resulted in most Māori no longer living in their traditional tribal area near their marae. Because of this there is a sense that many Māori are becoming increasingly disconnected from their iwi, hapū, and marae and thus from Māori culture and traditions in general (Meredith, 2012).

Te Kupenga and ancestral marae

The statistics in this report are based on the total population of New Zealanders who identified with Māori ethnicity and/or Māori descent and are aged 15 years and over.

We asked respondents about their ancestral marae:

- if they knew theirs
- if they had ever been to any of their ancestral marae
- if they had done so in the last 12 months (ie the 12 months before the survey)
- how often they had been in that 12 months
- whether they would have liked to have gone or gone more often.

Information about visiting ancestral marae (ever and in the last 12 months) includes all Māori adults (those who knew their ancestral marae and those who didn't).

Information about how often people went to their ancestral marae includes those that had been to any of their ancestral marae in the last 12 months.

Information about those wanting to go to their ancestral marae more often includes only the 371,000 Māori adults who said they knew their ancestral marae.

See [appendix 1](#) for more information on Te Kupenga.



3 Going to ancestral marae

This chapter presents the high-level results on Māori connecting to ancestral marae.

Most Māori have been to their ancestral marae

Te Kupenga results showed 371,000 or 71 percent of Māori adults knew their ancestral marae, and of those, 89 percent had been there at some point in their life. This includes 48 percent who said they had done so in the previous 12 months.

Of all Māori adults (both those who knew their ancestral marae and those who did not), 62 percent had been to their ancestral marae, including 34 percent who had done so in the last 12 months.

Most Māori who had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months went 3–5 times

Of Māori who had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months, the largest proportion (28 percent) did so between 3 and 5 times. One-fifth (21 percent) had been there only once, and 10 percent had been 21 or more times.

Over half of Māori who know their ancestral marae want to go more often

Of the Māori adults who knew their ancestral marae (whether they had ever been there or not), 59 percent (or 214,500) would have liked to have gone there or gone more often in the last 12 months.

Māori who have never been to their ancestral marae more likely to want to go

Of Māori who had never been to their ancestral marae, 68 percent would have liked to have gone there in the last 12 months.

Of those who had been to their ancestral marae, but not in the last 12 months, 55 percent wanted to have gone in the last 12 months.

Of Māori who had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months, 60 percent wanted to have gone more often in that time.



4 Cultural factors and connection to ancestral marae

This chapter looks at the cultural factors associated with connecting to ancestral marae.

Results from Te Kupenga showed:

- a strong link between tūrangawaewae and visiting ancestral marae
- proximity to ancestral marae tūrangawaewae impacts on recent visits
- knowing pepeha has a relationship with ancestral marae
- te reo Māori associated with visiting ancestral marae
- Māori-medium education plays a role in ancestral marae connection.

Given that ancestral marae are seen as one of the cornerstones of Māori culture, these findings are unsurprising. However, they support the idea that culture is made up of a number of different elements and it is hard to separate individual aspects of it.

Strong link between tūrangawaewae and visiting ancestral marae

To have tūrangawaewae means to have a place to stand and belong and to feel connected to that place – for Māori this is often an ancestral marae. Having an ancestral marae as tūrangawaewae is strongly linked with a person's likelihood of visiting their ancestral marae.

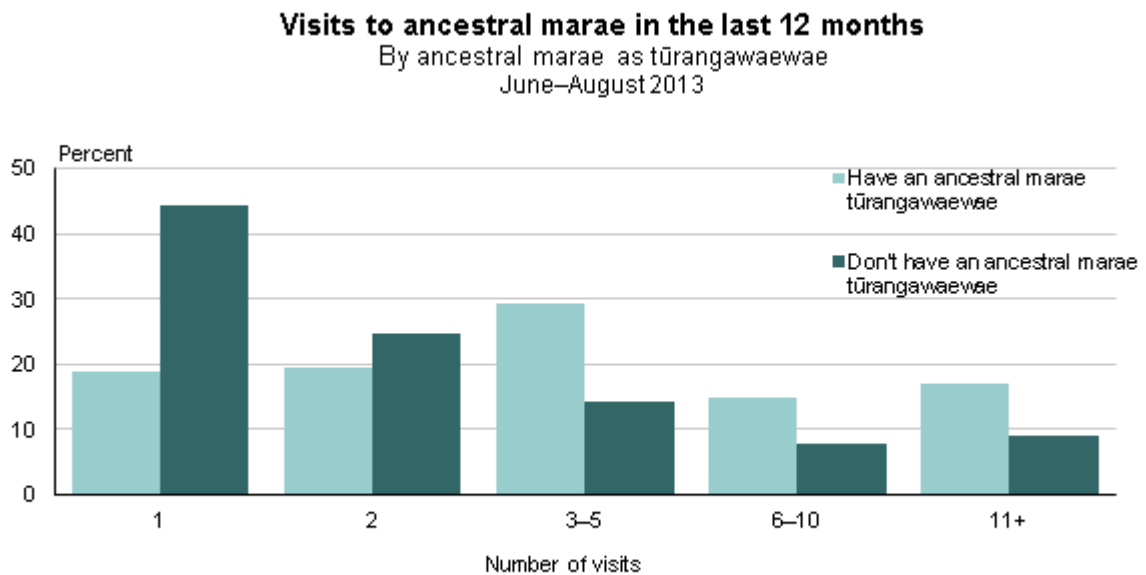
Over half (54 percent) or 282,000 Māori adults reported they had an ancestral marae that they thought of as their tūrangawaewae.

Nearly all (94 percent) Māori with an ancestral marae as their tūrangawaewae had been to any of their ancestral marae at some point in their lives. This compared with 25 percent of those who didn't have an ancestral marae as their tūrangawaewae.

More than half (57 percent) of Māori with an ancestral marae as their tūrangawaewae had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months. Of those, 61 percent had been more than three times, including 10 percent who did so 21 or more times.

In contrast, only 6 percent of those without an ancestral marae as tūrangawaewae had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months, and most of them (69 percent) had been only once or twice in that 12 months.

Figure 1



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Of Māori with an ancestral marae as their tūrangawaewae, 63 percent wanted to go to their ancestral marae more often. Less than half (44 percent) of Māori without an ancestral marae as their tūrangawaewae wanted to do so.

Proximity to ancestral marae tūrangawaewae impacts on recent visits

Māori who lived close to the ancestral marae they thought of as their tūrangawaewae (within a 30-minute drive) were more likely to have been there in the last 12 months and to have gone more often than those who did not live close.

Three-quarters of the 71,500 Māori living close to their ancestral marae tūrangawaewae had been there in the last 12 months. Nearly 80 percent of these had been there more than three times in that time, including 22 percent who did so over 21 times.

Of those not living close to the ancestral marae they thought of as their tūrangawaewae, 27 percent had been there in the last 12 months. Around half (52 percent) had been there more than three times, including only 4 percent who had done so 21 times or more.

Māori not living close to their ancestral marae tūrangawaewae are more likely to want to go to their ancestral marae more often than those who are living close. Of those who didn't live close, 60 percent wanted to go more often compared with 55 percent of those who lived close.

Knowing pepeha has a relationship with ancestral marae

Māori who know all aspects of their pepeha (tribe, sub-tribe, mountain, river, ancestral marae, ancestor, waka) are more likely than those who know fewer aspects to have ever been to their ancestral marae. They are also more likely to have been there recently, to have been there more often, and to want to go more often.

Over one-third (39 percent) or 205,500 of Māori adults knew all aspects of their pepeha.

Māori who knew all their pepeha were more than twice as likely as those who knew less about it to have ever been to their ancestral marae (95 percent compared with 41 percent). The proportion of those who had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months was 63 percent, compared with just 15 percent of those who knew fewer aspects.

Of Māori who knew all their pepeha, 37 percent had been to their ancestral marae six or more times in the last 12 months, compared with 15 percent of those who knew fewer aspects of it.

The majority (65 percent) of Māori who knew all their pepeha wanted to go to their ancestral marae more often. While there was little difference for Māori who knew fewer aspects of their pepeha – 52 percent wanted to go more and 48 percent did not.

Te reo Māori associated with visiting ancestral marae

Māori with te reo Māori as their first language (the first language learnt as a child and still understood) are more likely than those with English as their first language to be connected to their ancestral marae.

Of the 8,000 Māori with te reo as their first language, 92 percent had been to their ancestral marae at some point in their life, and 69 percent had been in the last 12 months. This compared with 60 percent and 31 percent of those whose first language was English.

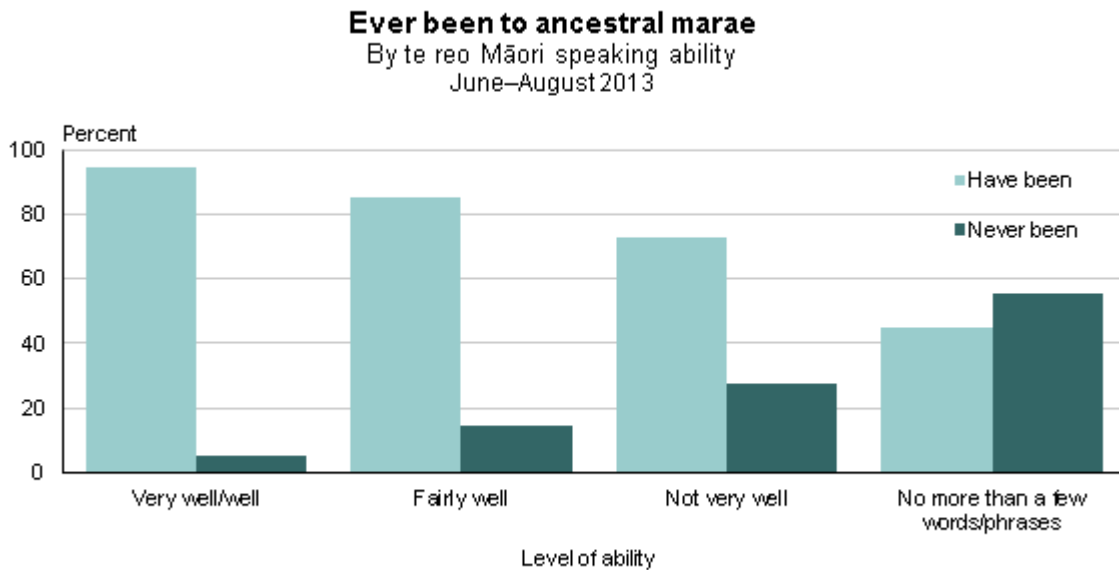
Almost half (45 percent) of Māori with te reo Māori as their first language had been to their ancestral marae six or more times in the last 12 months, including 20 percent who had been 21 times or more. Of those with English as their first language, 29 percent had been six or more times.

Greater involvement with ancestral marae linked with proficiency in te reo Māori

Nearly all (95 percent) of the 50,500 Māori who spoke te reo Māori very well or well had been to their ancestral marae at some time in their life. Of this group, nearly three-quarters (73 percent) had done so in the last 12 months. In contrast, 45 percent of the 257,000 Māori who understood only a few words or phrases in the language had ever been to any of their ancestral marae, with 18 percent visiting in the last 12 months.

Those with greater te reo ability also tend to go more often than those least able to speak the language. Nearly half (49 percent) of those who spoke the language very well or well had visited six or more times in the last year. This compared with 17 percent of those able to speak no more than a few words and phrases.

Figure 2



Source: Statistics New Zealand

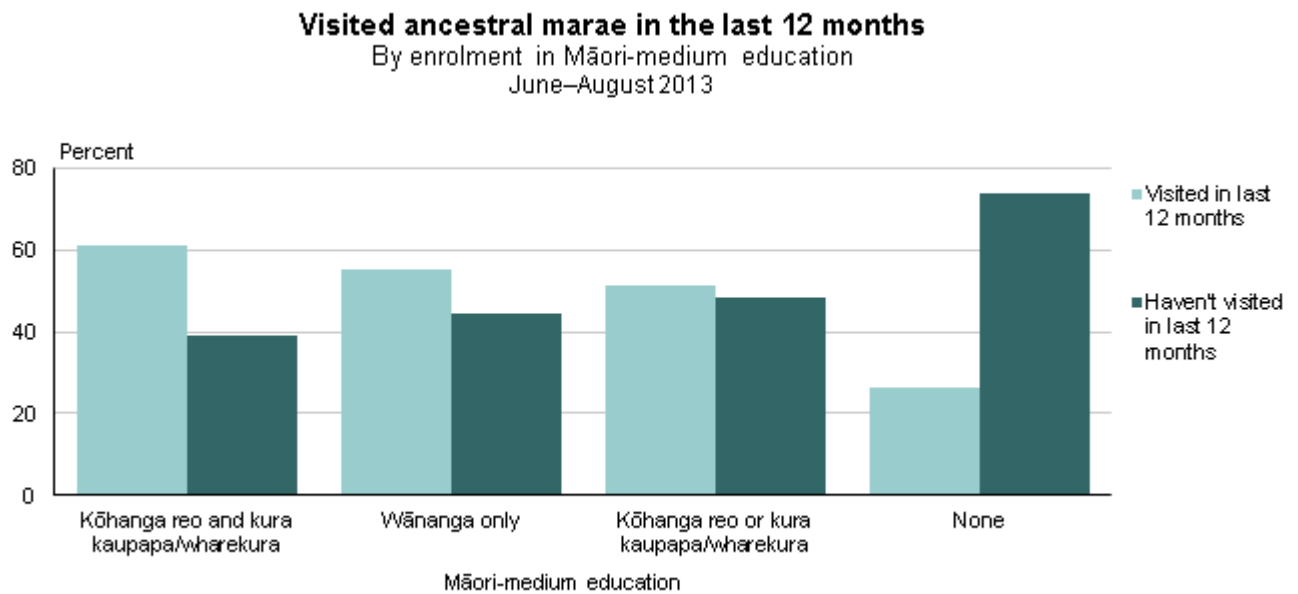
Around half (51 percent) of Māori who spoke only a few words or phrases in te reo wanted to go to their marae more often. This compared with 64 percent of those who spoke more than a few words and phrases.

Māori-medium education plays a role in ancestral marae connection

Enrolment in any Māori-medium education (that is kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori, wharekura, or wānanga) is associated with greater connection to ancestral marae.

Over 90 percent of Māori adults who had been enrolled in both kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa / wharekura had been to their ancestral marae at some time in their life. This compared with 55 percent of those who had never been enrolled in any Māori-medium education. They were also more than twice as likely to have been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months as those who had never been enrolled.


Figure 3



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Māori who had been enrolled in wānanga only had the highest rates of visiting ancestral marae in the last 12 months – 71 percent had visited three or more times, including 17 percent who did so 21 or more times. In comparison, just over half (53 percent) of Māori who had never been enrolled in any form of Māori-medium education had been three or more times, including 5 percent who had been more than 21 times.

Māori who had ever been enrolled in any Māori-medium education are also more likely than those who have never been enrolled to want to go more often to their ancestral marae. Of Māori who had been enrolled in both kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa / wharekura, 67 percent wanted to go to their ancestral marae more, compared with 56 percent of those who had not been enrolled in any Māori medium education.



5 Other factors related to connection with ancestral marae

This chapter looks at which social, economic, and demographic measures are associated with Māori connecting to ancestral marae.

Results from Te Kupenga showed:

- social and economic factors have a small relationship with marae connection
- age is related to visiting ancestral marae
- Māori with children more likely to visit ancestral marae
- Māori with larger whānau go to ancestral marae more often.

Social and economic factors have a small relationship with marae connection

Analysis showed that many social and economic measures don't make a large impact on Māori connecting to their ancestral marae.

Those that made some difference were age, income, family type, and whānau size.

Measures that showed little difference were sex, labour force status, and urban or rural living.

Age is related to visiting ancestral marae

Of all the demographic measures, age showed the greatest differences in ancestral marae connection. The likelihood of having visited one's ancestral marae, having done so in the last 12 months, and having visited frequently in that time generally increased with age.

This may be because older Māori are more culturally connected than younger Māori. Older Māori are more likely to have te reo as their first language, to speak te reo very well or well, to know their tribal identity, and to be connected to their ancestral marae as their tūrangawaewae – all factors associated with increased likelihood of visiting ancestral marae.

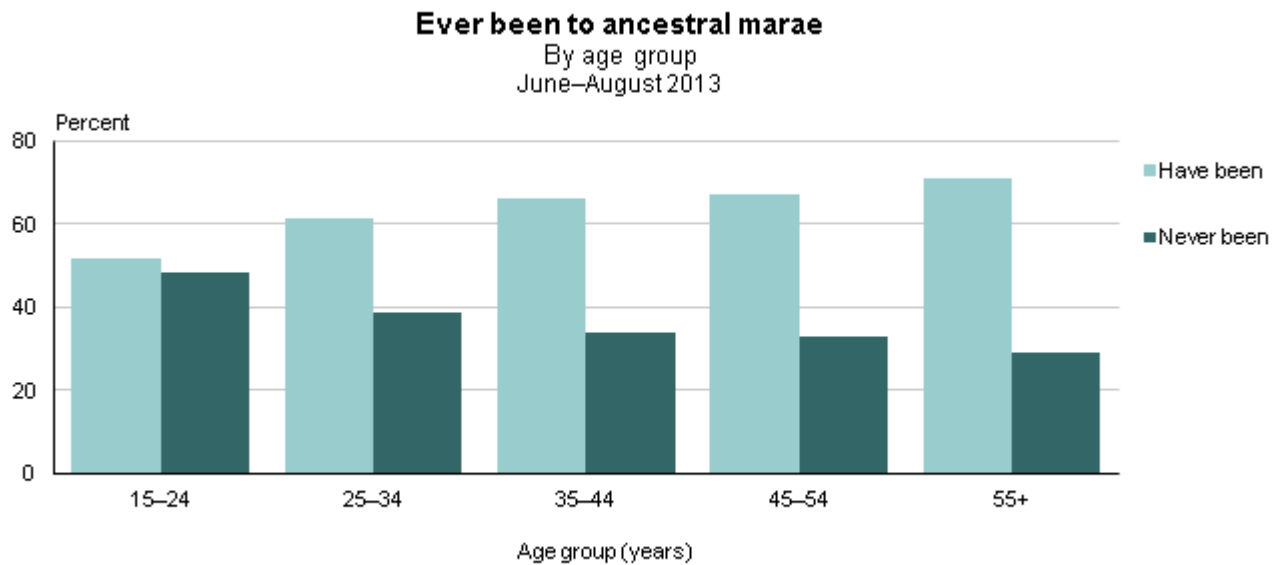
See [Te Kupenga 2013](#) for more details.

Older Māori most likely to have been to ancestral marae

Just over half (52 percent) of 15–24-year olds had ever been to their ancestral marae and 28 percent had done so in the last 12 months. In comparison, 71 percent of Māori aged 55 years or older had ever been to their ancestral marae and 38 percent had been in the last 12 months.

Older Māori were also more likely to have been to their ancestral marae more frequently in the last 12 months than younger Māori. Of those aged 55 years or older, 45 percent had been to their ancestral marae six or more times in the past 12 months, compared with 23 percent of 15–24-year-olds.

Figure 4



However, older Māori (55 years or older) were the least likely to have wanted to go to their ancestral marae more in the previous 12 months – half wanted to go more and half didn't. This is not surprising given their greater involvement with their ancestral marae.

Māori aged 35–44 were the most likely to have wanted to go more often, with around two-thirds (65 percent) reporting they wanted to do so.

More young faces on the marae

Māori aged 15–24 were the least likely to have visited their ancestral marae. However, because they make up a greater proportion of the Māori population than older age groups, more of them visit their ancestral marae. Of the 324,000 people who had ever visited their ancestral marae 75,000 or 23 percent were aged 15–24 years. In comparison Māori aged 55 years or older made up 21 percent (69,000 people) of those who had ever visited their ancestral marae.

Māori with children more likely to visit ancestral marae

Being in a family with children is associated with increased levels of connecting to ancestral marae.

Of couples with no children, 60 percent had been to any of their ancestral at some time in their lives, compared with 65 percent of one-parent families.

Families with children were also more likely to have been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months than those without children. Of couples with no children, 28 percent had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months, compared with 34 percent of couples with children, and 37 percent of one-parent families.

One-parent families are more likely to want to go to their ancestral marae more often. Results showed 62 percent wanted to do so compared with 57 percent of couples with no children.

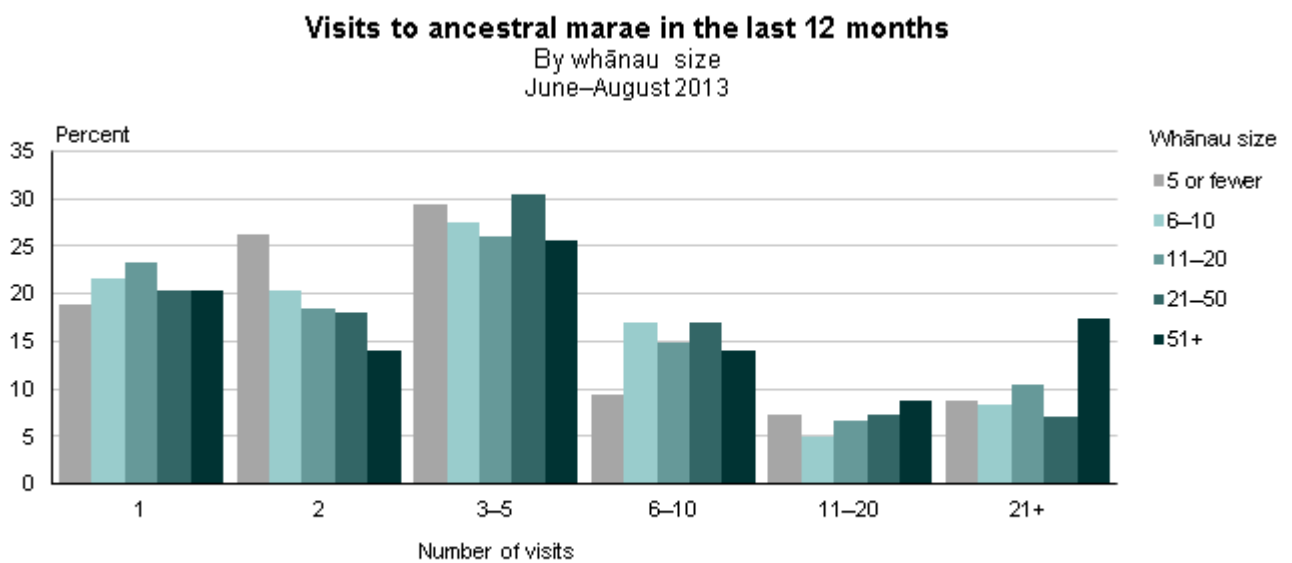
Māori with larger whānau go to ancestral marae more often

In Te Kupenga, whānau is a self-defined concept. It may include whakapapa whānau and/or friends and others.

The larger the size of a person's whānau, the more likely they are to have been to their ancestral marae. The proportion of those that had ever been to their ancestral marae was 54 percent for those with a whānau of five or fewer members. This compared with 85 percent for those with a whānau of 51 people or more.

Just over a quarter (27 percent) of Māori with a whānau of five people or fewer had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months, compared with over half (55 percent) of those with whānau between 21 and 50 who had done so.

Figure 5



Source: Statistics New Zealand

One-quarter of Māori whose whānau numbered five or fewer people had been to their ancestral marae six or more times in the last 12 months. This compared with 40 percent of Māori with whānau of 51 people or more.



6 Conclusion

Traditionally, Māori lived near their ancestral marae. However, urbanisation has meant most no longer do so. While some Māori may be losing a sense of connection to their ancestral marae for this reason, for others it is still a place where they can connect to and reaffirm their tribal and Māori identity and culture.

Te Kupenga showed that most Māori not only know their ancestral marae, but that they also connect to it through visiting. Most Māori had been to their ancestral marae at some time in their lives, with around one-third doing so in the 12 months before the survey was undertaken. Often, those who had been to their ancestral marae in the last 12 months did so between three and five times in that 12-month period.

Most Māori who know their ancestral marae also want to go there more often than they do, especially those that had never been there. However, Māori who go more often – in particular older Māori and those living close to the ancestral marae they think of as their tūrangawaewae – are less likely to want to increase their visits.

Similar patterns are evident in the cultural, social, economic, and demographic characteristics of those connected with their ancestral marae, with cultural factors having the greatest impact.

Cultural measures are strongly linked with connection to ancestral marae, and engagement in other aspects of Māori identity and culture is strongly associated with increased involvement. For instance, Māori with te reo Māori as their first language, with greater ability to speak te reo, who know all their pepeha, and who consider an ancestral marae as their tūrangawaewae are more likely to visit their ancestral marae than others.

Age is closely linked to ancestral marae connection. Older Māori are more likely than younger Māori to have been to their ancestral marae, to have done so recently, and to have visited more often. It is difficult to separate this as a factor distinct from the cultural factors outlined above however as older Māori are also more culturally connected than younger Māori.

Our findings show that visiting ancestral marae remains an important and relevant way for Māori to connect with their culture, and that marae continue to be a vital aspect of Māori culture and identity.



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Appendix 1: Data and definitions

Data from Te Kupenga

Me he kupenga hao ika, koinei te kupenga hao tangata.

Like the ancestors who caught fish to feed and sustain the people, Te Kupenga gathered information to grow knowledge and inform decision making.

The data for this report comes from Te Kupenga 2013. Te Kupenga is a survey of Māori well-being. It includes measures based on the Māori perspective of cultural well-being, including wairuatanga (spirituality), tikanga (Māori customs and practices), whanaungatanga (social connectedness), and te reo Māori. The survey also contains general social and economic well-being measures, such as paid and unpaid work, civil participation, and self-assessed health status. These measures give an overall picture of the social, cultural, and economic well-being of Māori in New Zealand in 2013.

[Te Kupenga 2013](#) (data quality section) has more information.

Definitions

Here are the definitions of the main measures and terms included in this report.

Ancestral marae: a complex of buildings and spaces that belong to a particular iwi, hapū, or whānau that a person feels connected to because that is where their parents, grandparents, or ancestors are from. Respondents who knew their ancestral marae were also asked about visits to any of their ancestral marae.

Connection to tūrangawaewae: respondents who knew their ancestral marae and thought of this as their tūrangawaewae were asked how connected they felt to their tūrangawaewae. Respondents who had an ancestral marae they thought of as tūrangawaewae were also asked about living close to that marae.

Tūrangawaewae: a Māori concept of belonging to a place, where one can stand and feel they are home. It is a place of cultural significance where you feel you belong because your people are from there. Other terms Māori use are papa kāinga or wā kāinga but the notion is the same – it is a place that someone feels a sense of connection to.

Family type: is family composition within households. Measurement is based on level 1 of the [New Zealand Classification of Family Types 2008](#). This report uses the three categories in the classification and a fourth category for people not in a family.

- couple without children – couples who don't have children as well as couples whose children have left home
- couple with child(ren) – couples and their child(ren) who live with them
- one-parent with child(ren) – one adult with child(ren) who live with them
- not in a family – someone living by themselves or people who are flatting.

First language: is the language first learned in childhood and still understood.

Labour force status: a respondent's position in the labour-force in one of three groups: employed, unemployed, or not in the labour force. This measure is based on the [New Zealand Standard Classification of Labour Force Status 1999](#) and refers to the respondent's circumstances in defined time periods.

Māori: are defined, for the purposes of Te Kupenga, as individuals who identify themselves with Māori ethnicity or Māori descent.

Ethnicity: the ethnic group or groups a person identifies with or feels they belong to. Ethnicity is a measure of cultural affiliation, as opposed to race, ancestry, nationality, or citizenship. Ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group.

See [New Zealand Standard Classification of Ethnicity 2005](#) for more information.

Māori descent: a person is of Māori descent if they have any Māori ancestry; that is, they have a Māori birth parent, grandparent, great grandparent, etc.

See [Māori descent – standard classification](#) for more information.

Māori-medium education: is where students are taught all or some curriculum subjects in the Māori language for at least half of the time. In the context of Te Kupenga, Māori-medium education included kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa/wharekura, and wānanga.

Marae: an ancient institution from the eastern Pacific used for social and/or religious purposes. In most parts of tropical Polynesia marae were largely abandoned with the arrival of Christianity but still remain tapu (sacred) today. However, in Aotearoa New Zealand, the marae is still a vital part of everyday life where Māori culture can be celebrated, where te reo Māori can be spoken, where intertribal obligations can be met, and where important ceremonies, such as welcoming visitors or farewelling the dead (tangihanga), can be performed.

The marae has developed over time and can include traditional tribal-based ancestral marae, as well as marae that are non-kin based, for example marae that have been established by schools, urban groups, and churches, where people can gather and interact using tikanga Māori (Māori customs and practices). Respondents were asked if they had been to any marae.

Pepeha/tribal identity: is how someone introduces themselves in Māori. The pepeha is an oral way to connect and join people to people, places, and spaces via a statement of Māori tribal identity in which the person identifies, via a pithy or meaningful saying, their : iwi/tribe, hapū/sub-tribe, maunga/ mountain, awa/river/lake, marae tipuna/ ancestral marae, tipuna/ancestor, and waka/canoe. Respondents were asked if they knew each of these elements of their pepeha.

Personal income: is the respondent's before-tax income in the previous 12 months. It is collected as an income range rather than an actual dollar income.

The measure is based on the [New Zealand Standard Classification of Income Bands 1999](#) and combines the 16 categories of that classification into four summary groups:

- \$30,000 or less
- \$30,001–\$70,000
- \$70,001–\$100,000
- \$100,001 or more.

Te reo Māori proficiency: the respondent's self-rated ability to speak in te reo Māori. These questions were used in Te Kupenga to provide comparability with the 2001 Survey on the Health of the Māori Language. Respondents were asked to place themselves in one of five categories as follows:

1. very well (I can talk about almost anything in Māori)
2. well (I can talk about many things in Māori)
3. fairly well (I can talk about some things in Māori)

4. not very well (I can only talk about simple/basic things in Māori)
5. no more than a few words or phrases.