Original Paper

The Visibility of an Indigenized Curriculum during Covid 19 New Zealand. An Exploration of the Experience from Indigenous Academics

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Abstract

The 2020 Covid19 global pandemic disrupted teaching practices of 8 universities and 16 Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) in New Zealand. This disruption led to the curriculum being transferred from internal classes to online delivery. It unleashed a surge of research activity and publications in the education sector. However, little research was conducted to investigate the effect to the academic experience and even less research explored the impact to Indigenized curriculums. This paper explored websites for the visibility of Indigenous programmes and Indigenous academic experiences. It does this by: 1) describing the 8 universities and 16 Polytechnics for context; 2) identifying the type of Indigenous Schools/Faculties in universities and ITPs and whether Indigenous programmes of study were visible; 3) two authors providing personal accounts as Indigenous academics moving from internal teaching to online delivery. Specific mention is made of an Indigenous avatar named "Digi Hami from NZ." The exploration utilized a Māori-Centered and social research approach. The analysis drew main themes and suggested that some universities and ITPs were better prepared in the transition and the virtual mode of teaching was unable to retain the same quality and depth of learning required for an Indigenized curriculum.

1. Introduction

In March 2020 universities and Institutes of Technology and Polytechnic (ITPs) received unprecedented news from the prime minister Jacinda Ardern in New Zealand that the country would go into Lockdown Level 4. The instructions from the Ministry of Education (2020) were that "all tertiary educational facilities must be closed, with the exception of necessary student accommodation, and those deemed as "Essential Services" (p. 1) Subsequently, the universities and ITPs closed their doors and internal on-campus classes ceased.

Research teams emerged in universities as Covid19 unfolded because the desire to learn about the impact on student learning in a pandemic was centre stage. Blommerde (2020) discussed the work of five university researchers who conducted a quantitative research of tertiary students. Students were invited to participate in an online survey that would investigate "what worked and what was most challenging about learning online under corona virus stay-at-home orders" (p. 2). This survey concentrated on students' perspectives and experiences and received over 400 responses. The researchers highlighted that the "study in lockdown wasn't "business as usual". Nobody planned study with their entire family at home, during a time of great stress and anxiety. (p. 3)" For some academics teaching online was normal because they were undertaking this type of delivery before the Lockdown Level 4.

Covid19 may have sparked a new way of learning, but not all universities have continued the approach. The University of Auckland, AUT, the University of Otago and Lincoln University are only offering online learning to the few students prevented from attending on-campus by exceptional circumstances or international students who remain overseas. The University of Waikato, Victoria University of Wellington, Massey University, and the University of Canterbury provide a "blended" approach, where a mix of face-to-face and online learning is available (Blommerde, 2020, pp. 4-5).

Professor Chris Sibley New Zealand Attitudes and Value Study (NZAVS, 2021) surveyed about 1,000 New Zealanders in Lockdown Level 4. "The survey incorporated three broad themes: trust in science, police, health officials and politicians; physical and mental health and wellbeing including relationships and social connectedness; standard of living and economic concerns" (NZAVS, 2020, p. 1). The experience for the ITPs was not as widely published like the universities.

The Ministry of Education (2020) on behalf of the government, established resources and support for Schools to continue educating children and teenagers during Lockdown Level 4. This prompted the Ministry of Education to prioritise the education and wellbeing of children and teenagers. However, the wellbeing of students in tertiary study were left to the universities and ITPs. Little support was considered to assist those teaching in the tertiary sector where the majority were non-Māori or non-Indigenous. Even less provision was given to the Indigenous academics who are a minority in this

sector. This article briefly addresses this lack of consideration by answering these questions:

1) What Indigenised programmes were visible online in the 8 universities and 16 ITPs?

2) How did Covid19 impact on Indigenous academics' ability to teach Indigenous knowledge during the 2020 Covid19 Lockdown Level 4?

The next sections discuss the methods, the universities, and ITPs. It forms the foundation from which a journey can be told of Indigenous stories and how Covid19 impacted on Indigenous academics and the programmes they taught. It starts with locating the research approach in an Indigenous framework.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Māori-Centered Research

This research applied a Māori-centered research approach. In doing so Māori knowledge was the focus of the research because the researchers were researching a Māori phenomenon. This approach enabled the design, implementation, and interpretation of results to be heavily laden with Indigenous knowledge. (Cunningham & Durie, 1998; Smith, 1999; Hudson, Milne, Reynolds, Russell, & Smith, 2010).Table 1by Cunningham and Durie (1998) provides descriptions and examples of Indigenous research methods including Māori Centered Research. Also, the authors of this article are Indigenous to New Zealand and in the "Section: Personal Accounts" the significance of this position is demonstrated.

Table 1. Māori Research Methods (Note 1)

Characteristics	Research not involving Māori	Research involving Māori	Māori-Centered Research	Kaupapa Māori Research
Description	Research where Māori participation or data is neither sought nor considered relevant; Research whose results are thought to have no impact on Māori	Research where Māori are involved as participants or subjects, or possibly as junior members of a research team; Research where Māori may be trained in contemporary research methods and mainstream analysis	Research where Māori are significant participants, and are typically senior members of research teams; Research where a Māori analysis is undertaken and which produces Māori knowledge, albeit measured against mainstream standards	Research where Māori are significant participants, and where the research team is typically all Māori; Research where a Māori analysis is undertaken, and which produces Māori knowledge; Research which primarily meets expectations and

Characteristics	Research not involving Māori	Research involving Māori	Māori-Centered Research	Kaupapa Māori Research
			research	quality standards set by Māori
Examples	Quantum Chemistry; Clinical Trial; Volcanology	Analysis of ethnic differentials in disease rates; genetic study of familial cancer	Longitudinal social science study of Māori households	Traditional study of cosmology; study of cultural determinants of health
Control	Mainstream	Mainstream	Mainstream	Māori
Māori Participation	Nil	Minor	Major	Major, possibly exclusive
Method / Tools	Contemporary – Mainstream	Contemporary – Mainstream	Contemporary – Mainstream and Māori	Contemporary – Mainstream and Māori
Analysis	Mainstream	Mainstream	Māori	Māori

2.2 Social Research Methods

The research also utilised social research methods. It applied quantitative and qualitative methodologies to explore the impact to the Indigenised curriculums and the challenges Māori academics encountered during Covid19. The following data displays tables that:

i.   Shows the 8 universities and 16 ITPs to place the discussions in context. Therefore, a search of websites, education institutions, and government documents was done to gather this data.

ii.   identify the type of Indigenous Schools or Faculties in each university and ITPs and whether they deliver Indigenous specific academic programmes of study during Covid19. It also provides qualitative descriptions of the data and singled out identifications of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge). Identifying this information proved challenging because "mātauranga Māori is a modern term for a body of knowledge" (Royal, 2009, p. 31) and finding it within the 8 universities or 16 ITPs was difficult to locate as searches did not yield automatic results whereas the term Pōwhiri, which is a ritual of encounter (Moorfield, 2021), was an example of excising mātauranga Māori that was visible. Therefore, the concept of Pōwhiri was adopted to gather information on whether an Indigenise curriculum was visible.

iii.   two authors provide personal accounts as Indigenous academics moving from internal teaching to online teaching. The two Indigenous academics teach in a tertiary sector, one from a university, and one from an ITP.

2.3 Method One-Universities and ITPs

Table 2 shows the 8 universities in New Zealand. The Universities New Zealand—Te Pokai Tara (2021) stipulate that these universities are ranked in the top 3% of 500 universities in the world. Also, that they have 22 of their subjects ranked within the top 50 universities and a strong reputation that captures a large cohort of international students who chose to study in New Zealand (ibid, p. 1).

Table 2. 2020 Universities and Student Enrolments (Note 2)

Universities	Students
Auckland University of Technology	27,320
Lincoln University	3,170
Massey University	30,500
University of Auckland	42,880
University of Canterbury	18,330
University of Otago	20,865
University of Victoria	22,410
University of Waikato	13,665

The names of the 16 ITPs in New Zealand are displayed in Table 3. These ITPs provide a range of educational services such as agriculture, business administration, IT, arts, trades, sports science, health and wellbeing, and nursing to deliver vocational education and training for various sectors in society. However, current government restructuring has seen 16 ITPs amalgamated into one organisation named Te Pūkenga (Indigenous name) and English name New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST) (The Tertiary Education Commission, 2021).

Table 3. 2020 ITPs and Student Enrolments (Note 2)

Te Pūkenga	Students
Ara Institute of Canterbury	12,180
Eastern Institute of Technology	8,205
Manukau Institute of Technology	8,965
Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology	4,855
Northland Polytechnic	3,855
Open Polytechnic	28,780
Otago Polytechnic	8,285
Southern Institute of Technology	9,620
Tai Poutini Polytechnic	870
Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology	10,155

Te Pūkenga	Students
Unitec New Zealand	7,585
Universal College of Learning	4,865
Waikato Institute of Technology	9,300
Wellington Institute of Technology	4,230
Western Institute of Technology	3,150
Whitireia Community Polytechnic	2,775

2.4 Method Two-Indigenous Programmes

Table 4 and Table 5 show the results of data collections. It highlighted the number of faculties/colleges, the specific Māori or Indigenous faculties, schools, and units and whether a degree or certification in Indigenous knowledge was offered. It also uncovered a myriad of governance subsidiaries and ITPs referred to their units as either department, schools, center's, or faculties. For clarity and simplicity all governance structures were captured as departments. Where there was information not visible the abbreviation "NV" if subject areas represented Māori knowledge these were included. Often subject areas were good indicators of the associated department, and this data was collected over a two-week period in 2021.

Table 4. Universities and Indigenous Programmes

Name	Number of Faculties / Colleges	Number of Specific Faculty / Schools / Units	Degree in Māori Yes/No
Auckland University of Technology	Five Faculties	One Faculty-Māori and Indigenous Development	Yes
Lincoln University	Three Faculties	Nil	No
Massey University	Five Colleges	One School-Māori Knowledge	Yes
University of Auckland	Eight Faculties	One Unit-Māori Studies	Yes
University of Canterbury	Four Colleges	One School-Māori and Indigenous Studies	No
University of Otago	Four Divisions	One School-Māori, Pacific, and Indigenous Studies	Yes
University of Waikato	Five Faculties	One Faculty-Māori and Indigenous Studies	Yes
Victoria University of	Nine Faculties	One School-Māori Studies	Yes

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Name	Number of Faculties / Colleges	Number of Specific Schools / Units	Faculty / Degree in Māori Yes/No
Wellington			

Table 5. ITPs and Indigenous Programmes

Name	Number of Departments	Number of Māori Units	Certification in Māori Yes/No
Ara Institute of Canterbury	8 Departments, 6 Campuses, 20 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes
Eastern Institute of Technology	7 Departments, 5 Campuses, 40 Subject Areas	One	Yes
Manukau Institute of Technology	15 Departments, 5 Campuses, 19 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes
Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology	NV Departments, 2 Campuses, 21 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes
Northland Polytechnic	NV Departments, 6 Campuses, 43 Subject Areas	One	Yes
Open Polytechnic	NV Departments, 21 Subject Areas	Nil	No
Otago Polytechnic	8 Departments, 3 Campuses, 41 Subject Areas	Nil	No
Southern Institute of Technology	9 Departments, 4 Campuses, 33 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes
Tai Poutini Polytechnic	NV Departments, 6 Campuses, 20 Subject Areas	NV	No
Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology	3 Departments, 49 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes
Unitec Institute of Technology	10 Departments, 2 Campuses, 16 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes
Universal College of Learning	NV Departments, 4 Campuses, 17 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes
Waikato Institute of Technology	3 Campuses, 12 Departments, 39 Subject Areas	Nil	No
Wellington Institute of Technology	NV Departments, 5 Campuses, 7 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes
Western Institute of Technology	NV Departments, 2 Campuses,	NV	Yes

	19 Subject Areas		
Whitireia Community Polytechnic	NV Departments, 5 Campuses, 23 Subject Areas	Nil	Yes

Note. NV = Not Visible.

Table 6 and Table 7 highlighted whether an online course was offered during Covid19. These tables also indicate whether the tertiary institution mentioned Pōwhiri and as stated earlier this concept was applied to identify mātauranga Māori being taught during Lockdown Level 4. It also displays which universities and ITPs offered an indigenised curriculum and the value of Indigenous knowledge in the institutions were shown by the establishment of Māori units, departments, or faculties.

Table 6. 2020 Universities and Indigenous Programmes

Name	Online Course Delivery In Covid 19	Pōwhiri and Mātauranga Māori Information visible during Covid19 Lockdown
Auckland University of Technology	Yes	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Lincoln University	Yes	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori not visible
Massey University	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
University of Auckland	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
University of Canterbury	Yes	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
University of Otago	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
University of Waikato	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Victoria University of Wellington	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible

Table 7. 2020 ITPs and Indigenous Programmes

Name	Online Course Delivery In Covid 19	Pōwhiri and Mātauranga Māori Information visible during Covid19 Lockdown
Ara Institute of Canterbury	NV	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Eastern Institute of Technology	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Manukau Institute of Technology	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology	NV	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
NorthTec Tai Tokerau Wānanga	NV	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Open Polytechnic	Yes	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori not visible
Otago Polytechnic	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori not visible
Southern Institute of Technology	NV	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Tai Poutini Polytechnic	Yes	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori not visible
Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology	Yes	Pōwhiri not visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Unitec Institute of Technology	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Universal College of Learning	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Waikato Institute of Technology	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Wellington Institute of Technology (WelTec)	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Western Institute of Technology	NV	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible
Whitireia New Zealand	Yes	Pōwhiri visible, Mātauranga Māori visible

Note. NV = Not Visible.

2.5 Method Three: Personal Account

Two Indigenous academics gave a personal account of teaching in an indigenized curriculum online during Covid19 Lockdown Level 4. One academic has worked for about two decades in a university environment in New Zealand. This academic continues to teach Māori knowledge in an indigenized curriculum. One academic works in the ITP sector for over two decades in computing and information technology. This academic continues to teach computing technology and had adopted an Indigenous approach in delivery and practice. They also created "Digi Hami" the "Indigenous Avatar".

3. Content Analysis

A quantitative and qualitative data analysis approach was used to analyse the data. Content analysis was selected as a process to describe and classify data. (Powers & Knapp, 2006) It enabled the characteristics of the data to be examined by looking at the content in terms of what is written, how it is written, and whether it applies to the focus of the research. The online information and programmes for the universities were relatively easy to access. For the 16 ITPs the access was challenging and required more than three searches to find information. Many times, the outcome produced data that could not be used, for example, the number of units delivering Māori knowledge were invisible and unable to be ascertained at the time the search was undertaken. Compounding this lack of visibility, was the emergent content in the literature regarding ITPs merging because of a government sustainability initiative (TEC, 2021) and that we were conducting this research in 2021 and content from 2020 may have been removed. Consequently, assumptions were made by the researchers to indicate that this government initiative had an impact on the way Māori knowledge was visible or invisible that resulted in inconsistent websites in this sector. Also, the search yielded restrictions to the access of public documents in the universities and ITPs and in some cases required student or staff login to undertake further investigation; thus, limiting the broader analysis of content available.

4. Results & Discussions

The results were grouped together under the themes: Covid19 Visible, Mātauranga Māori Visible, Online Delivery Visible, and Pōwhiri Visible. These themes were in synchronicity with the method of approach to showcase the exploration of the New Zealand experience. Where specific information was not visible when the searches were conducted this was indicated on the table. This was also the approach for information that was visible and the main search engines used was Google. The following explanations provide an overview of the content that was analysed.

4.1 Covid19 Visible

Information to students and staff about Covid19 was given specific consideration and deemed of high importance. Subsequently, the 8 universities and 16 ITPs provided online delivery of course content

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and details of what students could expect under Covid19 conditions. They also uploaded online dedicated web pages to Covid19 information with some making specific commentary on lockdown operational procedures. Some universities provided a lot of information that was accessible to the public and others required student or staff to login. There were also links made available on the university websites to government pages and QRC code. This coincided with government's direction during the pandemic when class delivery ceased in 2020.

4.2 Mātauranga Māori Visible

The search to locate mātauranga Māori produced interesting findings. Seven universities displayed information on mātauranga Māori that was strong when it coincided with the visibility of Māori units and/or degreeprogrammes. The concept of Pōwhiri was visible in 50% of the universities; this reinforced the value of mātauranga Māori in these institutions during Covid19 lockdown. Subsequently, many universities offered an Indigenise programmes that taught Māori knowledge.

The ITP sector provided a mixture of courses related to mātauranga Māori. There were 13 out of 16 ITPs that identified mātauranga Māoribeing visible. Also, 9 out of 16 ITPs displayed Pōwhiri as visible equating to about 65% and like the universities showed a commitment to Indigenising the curriculum.

4.3 Online Delivery Visible

The 8 universities provided a range of online courses during Covid19 Lockdown Level 4. The quality of the online delivery was not sort in this research. Rather, the acknowledgement in the content on the websites was the evidence of this occurring. The information for 11 out of the 16 ITPs were easy to access regarding how they provided online courses during Covid19 Lockdown Level 4. Being able to access this information can be attributed to the ability of the institutions to retain 2020 data in 2021 and/or archive this type of information. Subsequently, the information from the remaining ITPs was not visible during the time of data collection.

4.4 Pōwhiri Visible

During Covid19 it became clear across the websites that Pōwhiri on-campus was cancelled for all universities. This seem to indicate that online Pōwhiri were replacing internal encounters. For example, Massey Univesity cancelled their Pōwhiri during Lockdown Level 4 and alerted all staff, students, and the wider community. (Massey University, 2020) and also held one of the first conferences online where a Pōwhiri welcomed the attendees (HDCA, 2020). Also, some institutions made available online types of Pōwhiri while other universities were not that specific in making visible this type of information.

The ITPs also cancelled on-campus Pōwhiri. Some delivered virtual online Pōwhirilike Waikato Institute of Technology by putting students and staff into a Zoom session and simulated Pōwhiri protocols. This type of adjustment enabled Pōwhiri to be visible and reinforced the values of mātauranga Māori and the indigenisation of the curriculum.

4.5 University Experience

When the Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern informed the nation, we would be going into Lockdown Level 4 because of Covid19 the tertiary sector complied. This created concern for the universities who were into their second or third week of teaching in the first semester because courses that were normally taught internally whereby students attended them physically and on campus were cancelled. Some universities were prepared for this type of transition, but many were not. I became concerned of the different lines of communications coming through the university systems from students, staff, public forums, and various organizations because the subtle different, or inconsistent information, or the wrong information could inconvenience people and lead to harm. Also, the citizens had limited hours to position themselves in a "bubble" (New Zealand Government, 2020) before the restrictions in travel occurred and Police barriers were set-up, so I travelled out of Auckland where I lived and worked to Waikato. In Waikato I positioned myself in a "Whānau Whare" (family home) to lockdown.

Massey University, where I work, was in a better place than many other universities to deliver online teaching. This university offered distinct modes of delivery such as Internal Teaching, Block Teaching, and Extramural Teaching and have three main campuses located in Auckland, Palmerston North, and Wellington. Internal teaching required students to attend weekly lectures, Block Teaching meant students attended, for example, seven days in a semester in four and three lecture day blocks. But Extramural teaching was popular with students and could makeup between 45% and 65% of the student population as it is delivered predominantly online and distant courses meaning students could study from home. However, when I left work at Massey University on the Auckland campus and arrived at the Whānau Whare and prepared to set-up and transfer internal teaching to online teaching, I like many others, was not prepared for the impact of this transition. Finding a quiet space to learn a new software programmeant learning how to use Zoom as a teaching tool, understanding how a poor internet connection impacted on the quality of teaching, and working amongst Whānau (family) meant distractions and interruptions were regular. More importantly, trying to reproduce an Indigenous curriculum online that required students to encounter a cultural experience of attending tribal villages, speaking to the elders that were external to the "bubble", reciting Indigenous incantations and prayers and singing Indigenous songs to mainly non-Indigenous students was challenging. Even though I learnt how to prepare online lectures with videos, and films during lockdown to, for example, recite incantations, prayers, or songs, engaging with students online, this experience show they teaching mode was insufficient. At various times poor internet connections led to lagging for students and me, and if we all tried to undertake these cultural exercises collectively, like a song, it was never in unison, sounded out-of-tune, and echoed.

When teaching mātauranga Māori the notion of wairuatanga (spirituality) is a key concept that is taught covering aspects related to spiritual and physical presence. The disruption of internal classes and teaching students in their homes showed that their spiritual and physical presence was not always focused because they shared their space with family and pets which interrupted their course of learning.

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Consequently, for those students whose qualifications required them to undertake classes in tribal villages and with elders this type of online learning was absent of these things. It became apparent that to try and offer this type of learning online would require the elders in the tribal villages to come on board, have strong internet connections, understand online technology and software, and deliver their knowledge through these mediums using specific software. Subsequently, I did not entertain placing this type of pressure on the Indigenous communities given the issues with keeping their communities safe and the personal cost for them to prepare these things. More importantly, the onus was on me, the Indigenous academic, to make this teaching work than expect that type of work from the elders in our community. As an Indigenous academic it is of utmost importance to respect our elders and the communities they represent, and resist placing pressure on them. Therefore, activities like Pōwhiri and going into tribal villages for students to learn about Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) by experiencing the culture and staying on a marae (tribal communal houses) were suspended until such time the elders, the tribal villages, the universities and the nation were allowed out of their "bubbles" and safety procedures in place.

Indigenising a curriculum using Indigenous avatars was unknown to me until lockdown. Whilst in lockdown I experienced an increase in meetings and saw for the first time 'Digi Hami' in a Zoom meeting. I was impressed at the animations appearing behind Hami (name of creator) as it also showed videos and pictures of students in classes, and "Digi Hami" walked across the screen teaching and talking. It is well documented in literature regarding the Indigenous Māori people of New Zealand that Indigenous students feel at ease spiritually and physically when they see an Indigenous lecturer on campuses or educating them. For me, it opened a wealth of ideas on how this concept of Indigenous avatars could assist in delivering an Indigenous curriculum in a world of Covid19. However, very little effort was given to test this idea because energy and time for me was spent using existing resources to deliver courses online, making sure the WIFI signal was strong, attending various meetings for the groups I affiliated to, providing academic support to the students and staff, and the academy.

4.6 ITP Experience

Hearing across the YouTube live podcast television the voice from our leader Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern telling the nation of Level 3 Lockdown impelled me to setup workstations at home. The first workstation I setup was Workstation A: the lecturer. This setup initially involved attaining basic equipment from work like a headset then purchasing using personal funds for a webcam, a 3X2 meter green filter screen cloth, an old adjustable coat hanger rack to drape the filter cloth over that enabled me to create a green screen for the Zoom virtual background. Using Zoom was new for me. Lockdown Level 3 allowed me to return to work and obtain a spare lab computer with a USB dongle WIFI to assist with the establishment of Workstation B: the student. Setting up two workstations helped me to understand the teaching environment using skillets from professional software engineers and HCI experts in which we would replicate the internal class environment online. By having Workstation A: the lecturer, and Workstation B: the student, I could begin the process of generating online teaching

resources for the online classroom. For an Indigenous academic with limited educational resources and equipment, who applies cultural values of mātauranga Māori like kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) while teaching, I found myself purchasing software programs and using freeware software to support my delivery. This facilitated my ability to create a cultural teaching environment and establishing group activities online required more than one student. To replicate the group, I formed Workstation C: using my phone and Workstation D: using my tablet and was able to stretch Zoom functionalities and capabilities. The outcomes from these workstations lead to "Digi Hami" taking center stage for synchronous and asynchronous online delivery.

"Digi Hami" was birthed in 2018 when advancing as an Indigenous academic in the ITP sector was significant for me. Moving from a senior position to a principal position facilitated growth to advance my teaching practices and status. At a presentation in front of the institutions executive board I introduced "Digi Hami" a digital representation and digital avatar of myself. It launched the capabilities of an Indigenous academic who had the ability to teach and deliver various techniques to Millennials, Generation Z and Generation Alpha students. It was a way for me to demonstrate "future thinking" and how engagement with students of different nationalities, gender, and age could interact in a classroom environment with an Indigenous teaching avatar. Both "Digi Hami" (the virtual me) and I (the real me)showed the possibilities for teaching and delivering classes to students in various mediums and led to my advancement to being a Principal Academic Staff Member.

Mātauranga Māori is essential to me as an Indigenous academic. Delivering classes as an Indigenous academic requires engagement and interaction between students and lecturer. Although traditional explanations of mātauranga Māori, and in this case refers to kanohi-ki-te-kanohi, is in the physical human presence, however scholars such as Keegan (2000 p. 1) and Ngata (2017) have extended this location and argued the physical presence can be formed on the internet and digital space. I could achieve this extension during Lockdown Level 4 through "Digi Hami" and continue implementing an Indigenised curriculum. "Digi Hami" was well received by students especially the Indigenous Māori students who found the avatar easy to understand, hilarious to watch, and related to his Māori characteristics, antics, and behaviour. For them "Digi Hami" was familiar and natural."Digi Hami"became a supporting teacher on my Zoom virtual background and was used in subliminal messaging to remind students of important dates, key lesson concepts, and to invoke interest and engagement when students became restless during Zoom class sessions. Most importantly, "Digi Hami" captured interest from colleagues and peers during Lockdown Level 4 across various spectrums and meetings I attended. Showcasing "Digi Hami" amongst colleagues and passing on his teaching abilities to audiences in the education sector who desired to Indigenise their curriculums reinforced my Indigenous teachings from the elders to help and take care of each other, a term we call "manākitanga".

7. Concluding Comments

Covid19 Lockdown Level 4 forced many institutions to transfer from internal teaching to online teaching. There were some universities and ITPs that eased into this transition while others struggled to put online systems in place. The universities and ITPs provided courses during the lockdown period, support to the students enrolled in their courses, and performed adequately in the global pandemic. Although the wellbeing of students and the ability for students to access courses online was highlighted as a priority in the research, unfortunately the same emphasis was not attributed to the academics.

The impact to Indigenised curriculums was relatively silent during Covid19 Lockdown Level 4. Utilising the concept of Pōwhiri to bring a voice to the silence in the research highlighted that most universities and ITPs valued educating students on Māori knowledge, the Indigenous knowledge in New Zealand. Also, some universities went a step further in valuing Māori knowledge by having established faculties and schools. For the ITPs this value was continued in the various certification made available for students to choose from. When reconsidering the personal accounts from an Indigenous academic in the university and an Indigenous academic in the ITP sector it can be deduced that Indigenous academics were silent during lockdown because they were busy adjusting to the teaching conditions and making their programmes work in unprecedented conditions.

The tables, data, and commentary allow the New Zealand academic experience to be told. The data also enabled the Indigenised programmes to be visible for the 8 universities and 16 ITPs, identified the range of courses that was available, and the personal commentaries spoke to the impact on Indigenous academics and their ability to teach Indigenous knowledge during lockdown. Since Lockdown Level 4 in 2020 New Zealand went into lockdown again in 2021 and restrictions to teaching was placed on the Auckland campuses for universities and ITPs. Even though it was at a lower level, the ongoing requirements to teach an Indigenised curriculum to students online still requires investigation. A possible way forward maybe to utilise the technological developments like "Digi Hami" the Indigenous Avatar to address these challenges given that Covid19 appears to be a global pandemic that will be around for a long time. This article opens the doorway for other Indigenous stories to be spoken and experiences during the Covid19 global pandemic be written about and discussed on a world stage.

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Notes

Note 1. Reprinted from *A taxonomy and framework for outcomes and strategic research goals for Māori research and development. Papers presented at the meeting of Foresight participants* by Cunningham, & Durie (1998).

Note 2. The data is retrieved from Education Counts, provider-based enrolments, 2021, https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/tertiary-participation.