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Like many other former colonies, Aotearoa/New Zealand has witnessed the assertion of the rights of the indigenous people, Maori, to be self-determining in an environment of Pakeha domination. (The term Pakeha is often used to describe white New Zealanders, most of whom are of British descent.) This has important implications for the development of social services where new models are being developed to better reflect Maori aspirations. One such model is parallel development.

### **Colonisation**

In 1840, iwi (tribal) representatives, negotiating from a position of relative strength, signed a treaty with the British Crown, which guaranteed Maori sovereignty. However, during the subsequent 155 years, the Treaty of Waitangi has been breached repeatedly. British governors assumed executive power. War; land confiscation; legislative controls on the use of land, fisheries and cultural practices; the exercise of economic power; and the establishment of a land-holder democracy were tools used by settler society to establish dominance. Urbanisation and assimilationist policies have further damaged Maori society. Today, Maori comprise approximately 12% of the population and control less than 5% of the land. Yet, throughout this history, Maori have sought to retain important cultural practices. In particular, the past 20 years have seen a significant cultural renaissance.

Similar processes of colonisation have been evident in the history of social service delivery over the past 155 years. The early British missionaries, in introducing Christianity and a written form of the Maori language, effectively undermined important cultural practices and often played a crucial role in the alienation of Maori land. Colonial educators sought to "improve" Maori people through teaching them the English language, banning the use of Maori in schools and in some cases, removing young future leaders from whanau (extended family settings) to boarding schools. Many social service programmes specifically excluded Maori (e.g. Maori soldiers returning from the first world war were ineligible for rehabilitation schemes designed to assist other veterans) or discriminated against them (e.g. in 1932, unemployed Maori workers received a state-paid unemployment benefit only half that paid to non-Maori).

In recent years, attempts to improve the delivery of government-funded social services to Maori have taken several directions.

- A government bureaucracy, the Department of Maori Affairs, set up to deliver specialist programmes to Maori people.
- The mainly Pakeha staff of many social service agencies have been given training in biculturalism (cultural awareness, anti-racism or cultural safety training).
- Attempts have been made to recruit Maori workers into "mainstream" social services.
- Establishing specialist Maori units within mainstream services.

Although, some improvements have been achieved, each of these strategies have been limited by the fact that social services remained under the control of Pakeha-dominated structures.

In contrast, parallel development is an attempt to end Pakeha hegemony by explicitly addressing issues of power and control in organisational structures and by respecting the right of Maori to be self-determining. Inspired and legitimated by the Treaty of Waitangi, parallel development attempts to establish a genuine partnership between Maori and non-Maori and to incorporate this into organisational structures and decision making processes.

Parallel development has been pioneered in Aotearoa by the women's refuge (shelter) movement and has been adopted with varying degrees of success by some other social service, education and church organisations.

### **The Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project**

The Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project (HAIP) is one such organisation. Modelled on a similar project in Duluth, Minnesota, HAIP is an attempt to reform the justice system response to violence against women by carefully monitoring the implementation of a set of protocols which ensure police, judges, community corrections officers and social service workers prioritise the safety and autonomy of women and hold abusers accountable for their use of violence. Accountability to the victims of violence is central to HAIP's operation which includes victim advocacy and education programmes for abusers. Philosophically, it adopts an explicitly feminist analysis of battering as one of a set of culturally-supported behaviours or tactics by which men maintain power and control over their women partners.

A similar analysis can be used to identify the mechanisms by which other forms of oppression are maintained, including the oppression of Maori by the Pakeha majority. Thus, it is not surprising that feminist groups have made an important contribution to anti-racism education among Pakeha and to supporting moves which enhance Maori self-determination.

HAIP policy affirms "the right of Tangata Whenua (people of the land) to determine their own future." Structurally, this is partly achieved by the establishment of two separate caucuses: one comprising of Maori staff; one comprising of Tauwi (non-Maori) staff. While each caucus may act somewhat independently, decisions which affect the agency as a whole must be made through discussion and negotiation. Furthermore, the Maori caucus has the right to veto the appointment of any Tauwi person to the staff if it is believed that the policy of parallel development would be compromised by the appointment. In other words, while the policy of parallel development clearly calls for negotiation, the policy itself is non-negotiable and a commitment to the policy is a prerequisite for working in the agency.

Each caucus is responsible for providing culturally appropriate services. Thus, there are parallel Maori and non-Maori education groups for abusers, each facilitated by Maori and non-Maori respectively. There are parallel victim advocacy programmes. The structure and curriculum of the education programmes are very similar but the group processes differ and culturally relevant examples are used in each. An important part of the parallel development policy is that all educational programmes include consideration of racism, cultural imperialism and colonisation although of course, the approach to this material is tailored to match the participants' background.

There are parallel appointments in most of the service delivery staff positions. However, there is a high level of cooperation between Maori and non-Maori staff. For example, there are regular whole staff meetings, some volunteer training is done jointly, the programmes share a common administrative support system, and some parts of the service are provided jointly. For example, there is a single after-hours crisis advocacy service (rotated between the local Maori and non-Maori refuges) because there are insufficient volunteers to have two sets of advocates on call each night. Such arrangements reflect the general nature of relationships between Maori and non-Maori working within the project: relationships which, on the one hand, acknowledge and respect difference, and on the other hand, reflect a commitment to a common goal of ending violence.

## **Issues**

The policy of parallel development has not always been well-received. In particular, there is criticism of the fact that men directed to attend the men's education programme do not have a choice as to which programme they enter. This is seen as enhancing the accountability of participants: by placing men in same-culture groups, they are more likely to be held accountable for their use of violence within their own communities. Separate Maori and non-Maori groups also provide a safer environment for exploring issues such as racism, removing the risk of participants having to explain or justify their group's behaviour to others.

Parallel development has also been criticised as ignoring the diversity within Tauwi. Proponents of such a view often portray Maori as "just one of many cultural groups" and argue for a policy of multi-culturalism, rather than biculturalism. Certainly, among non-

Maori clients there are people of Asian and Pacific Island origin, who are not particularly well catered for compared to the dominant Pakeha group. However, a bicultural standpoint is consistent with a commitment to the rights of indigenous people. Maori are unique within Aotearoa: if Maori culture ceases to exist here, it ceases to exist.

A related point is that the legitimacy of non-Maori within Aotearoa stems from the treaty signed with Maori. The primary relationship for all groups of people who have come to Aotearoa subsequently is with Maori. Furthermore, since the signing of the treaty, immigration has been controlled not by Maori but by the Crown. Thus it is not Maori who bear the responsibility for meeting the legitimate needs of later arrivals but the other treaty partner. Thus it is appropriate that the responsibility for ensuring appropriate services for Asian and Pacific Island New Zealanders (among others) should lie within the non-Maori caucus.

On the other hand, parallel development has been criticised as failing to deliver equity for Maori. For example, it is clear that Maori staff have faced additional challenges in adapting American-sourced curriculum materials compared to the relatively minor changes needed to adapt them for Pakeha use. The Maori programmes have experienced greater difficulty in recruiting sufficient staff and volunteers. In some areas, the service has been provided by a Pakeha worker without a parallel Maori position. It is clear that equitable outcomes sometimes require unequal inputs. One of the risks of parallel development is that it may encourage Pakeha to believe that they are absolved of responsibility for ensuring the proper resourcing of Maori programmes.

HAIP has also been criticised by some as colluding with a racist criminal justice system, which arrests, convicts and imprisons Maori in disproportionately large numbers. From this perspective, Maori self-determination would be better served by establishing alternative systems of dispensing justice. Similarly, there is criticism that HAIP is not sufficiently accountable to iwi. Recent years have seen exciting developments in tribally-based health and social service delivery which may go further in achieving Maori self-determination than is possible within mainstream structures.

It is clear that parallel development is not a panacea. However, it is proving to be a reasonably robust mechanism for the delivery of culturally safe social services. Along with the development of tribally-based services, it provides a useful model for moving towards a genuinely bicultural nation.

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## Footnotes

This is a summary of a poster presentation at the fifth biennial conference of the Society for Community Research and Action (Division 27 of the American Psychological Association), Chicago, June, 1995.

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