Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Aotearoa New Zealand: How Does Current Research and Organisational Reporting Align With the Living Standards Framework?

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Abstract

Literacy and numeracy are foundational skills that are important in everyday life. Dominant western perspectives of literacy and numeracy focus on skills attainment for economic benefit and international comparison; this is a neoliberal approach that influences policy development in developed countries worldwide. However, there is growing recognition that high rates of economic productivity do not provide an accurate indicator of success for either individuals or nations. In support of this position, this thesis favours a sociomaterial approach to literacy and numeracy, prioritising people's abilities to communicate and navigate their world effectively, while engaging in meaningful social practices that allow them to participate in family and community. This master's research sought to understand the connections between adult literacy and numeracy learners, wellbeing outcomes, and the Living Standards Framework. The New Zealand Treasury's Living Standards Framework (LSF) was developed to provide a view of intergenerational wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand; it underpins the government's wellbeing focus for budgetary and policy decisions. A community psychology and Kaupapa Māori lens was applied to critically evaluate whether the LSF aligns with community psychology values and principles in Aotearoa New Zealand, and, most importantly, whether it reflects Māori cultural views and values. The value of the LSF in the adult literacy and numeracy education context was also examined, with particular emphasis on similarities between the LSF, literacy and numeracy learning opportunities, and learner outcomes; and whether the use of the LSF in adult education programmes and policies would complement the existing approach. The study involved a document analysis of six key LSF documents and six literacy and numeracy research reports. Each document was analysed using deductive and inductive means, which enabled the identification of themes and subthemes that reflected underlying values, approaches, and outcomes. To augment the document analysis, six interviews were held with report authors and key personnel from relevant organisations; these added value to the research by exploring the values that underpin literacy and numeracy research and reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand. The findings conclude that the 2018 LSF was based on sound international principles, but lacked a genuine perspective of wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand. A recently-launched 2021 LSF has undergone an 'evolution' and is presented in a much more holistic style, acknowledging its previous shortcomings in addressing concepts of wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand. Two accompanying Māori-led documents: An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework, and He Ara Waiora, both offer a holistic, te ao Māori perspective of wellbeing.

The document analysis highlighted a sociomaterial, values based approach to adult literacy and numeracy education that prioritised holistic wellbeing outcomes for learners and their whānau. These findings were supported by the interview data. The final discussion and conclusion posited that the 2021 Living Standards Framework provides a welcome update and potential for genuine, Aotearoa-specific wellbeing considerations in policy-making and governance; however, it remains to be seen whether this will translate into changes in policy-making and programme delivery for the literacy and numeracy sector.

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E kore e ea i te kupu taku aroha mōu – Words can't express how much I love you.

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Glossary of Māori Words & Terms

All entries are referenced from Te Aka Online Māori Dictionary (2022), unless otherwise stated. Please note that the translations provided here apply to the context in which they were used, variations in differing contexts may occur.

āhuatanga	Attributes, traits and characteristics.
ako	Principle of culturally preferred pedagogy; to both teach and to learn in a reciprocal relationship between teacher and student. (Ministry of Education, n.d.; Rangahau, n.d.)
Aotearoa	North Island – now used as the Māori name for New Zealand.
hapū	Kinship group, clan, subtribe – the political unit of pre-settlement Māori society.
hui	Gathering, meeting, assembly.
ihi	Ray of the sun, beam of light. May also mean essential force, excitement – psychic force as opposed to spiritual power (mana).
iwi	Tribe, aggregation of hapū sharing a traditional link, extended kinship group.
kāinga	Home, residence, settlement.
kaitiaki	Trustee, custodian, caregiver.
kaitiakitanga	Ancestral connections to the natural environment; guardianship.
karakia	Incantation, ritual chant, chant, intoned incantation, charm, prayer – a set form of words to state or make effective a ritual activity.
kaupapa	Topic, policy, matter for discussion; principle of collective philosophy. (Rangahau, n.d.)
Kaupapa Māori	Māori-focused, a Māori approach, Māori ideology with Māori principles and values.
kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga	Principle of socio-economic mediation; asserting a need to mediate and assist in alleviating the pressures and disadvantages experienced by Māori. (Rangahau, n.d.)

kōrero	Speech, discussion, conversation, discourse.
kotahitanga	Unity, togetherness, collective action. Features as a ‘mean’ in He Ara Waiora.
kōwhaiwhai	Painted scroll ornamentation – commonly used on meeting house rafters.
mahi-a-toi	Māori expressive art forms. Features as a ‘core cultural activity for wellbeing’ in Whiti Te Rā. (McLachlan et al., 2021)
mana	Authority, integrity, standing, prestige.
manaakitanga	Hospitality, kindness, generosity, support – the process of showing respect and care for others.
mana motuhake	Separate identity, autonomy, independence – mana through self-determination and control over one’s own destiny.
mana whakahaere	Governance, authority, power. Autonomy aspect of Te Pae Māhutonga. (Community & Public Health, 2020)
mana whenua	Territorial rights, authority/jurisdiction over land or territory – power associated with possession and occupation of tribal land.
Māori	Indigenous people of Aotearoa, original inhabitant.
Māoritanga	Māori culture, practices, and beliefs.
marae	Courtyard, the open space in front of the wharenui/meeting house. Often used to also describe the surrounding buildings.
mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge – the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including a Māori world view, creativity, and cultural practices.
mauri moe	A weakened state; to be unconscious. Features in Whiti Te Rā.
mauri oho	Awake, alert; to jump into action. Features in Whiti Te Rā.
mauriora	Cultural identity as denoted in Te Pae Māhutonga. (Community & Public Health, 2020)
mauri ora	An active state of wellbeing. Features in Whiti Te Rā.

mihimihi	Speech of greeting, tribute. Introductory speeches at the beginning of a gathering after the more formal pōhiri.
mokopuna	Grandchild/grandchildren.
ngā manukura	Community leadership as denoted in Te Pae Māhutonga. (Community & Public Health, 2020)
Pākehā	The settlers, foreigner. Usually New Zealanders of European descent, but can be used more generally to refer to all non-Māori.
pepeha	Saying known for economy of words and metaphor – encapsulates many Māori values and human characteristics.
rangatahi	Younger generation, youth.
rangatiratanga	Chieftainship, right to exercise authority, ownership, self-determination.
ritenga	Customary practice, behaviours and enactment. Features in He Korunga o Ngā Tikanga.
taha hinengaro	The mind, representing one wall of Te Whare Tapa Whā. (Durie, 2008)
taha tinana	Physical health, representing one wall of Te Whare Tapa Whā. (Durie, 2008)
taha wairua	Spirituality, representing one wall of Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 2008)
taha whānau	Family/social relationships, representing one wall of Te Whare Tapa Whā. (Durie, 2008)
taiao	The natural world; environmental connection. Features in Whiti Te Rā and He Ara Waiora.
take pū whānau	Relational values. Features as a ‘core cultural activity for Māori wellbeing’ in Whiti Te Rā. (McLachlan et al., 2021)
tamariki	Children; young, youthful.
tangata whenua	Local people, hosts, indigenous people – people born of the whenua (the land where ancestors have lived).
taonga tuku iho	Cultural property and heritage.
te ao Māori	The Māori world, Māori worldview.

te ira tangata	The human doman, encapsulates human activities and relationships (including between generations). Features as an ‘end’ in He Ara Waiora. (McMeeking et al., 2019b)
te mana whakahaere	Autonomy as denoted in Te Pae Māhutonga. (Community & Public Health, 2020)
te oranga	Participation in society as denoted in Te Pae Māhutonga. (Community & Public Health, 2020)
te reo Māori	The Māori language. (McLachlan et al., 2021)
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi, can be abridged to Te Tiriti.
tiakitanga	Guardianship, protection, upkeep. Features as a ‘mean’ in He Ara Waiora. (McMeeking et al., 2019b)
tikanga	Correct procedures, rules, processes, practices – the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context.
tino rangatiratanga	Principle of self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy.
toiora	Wellbeing. Features as the ‘healthy lifestyles’ category in Te Pae Māhutonga. (Community & Public Health, 2020)
tukutuku	Ornamental lattice-work, often used between carvings around the walls of a meeting house.
waiata	Song, psalm; to sing.
waiora	Health, soundness. Features as the ‘physical environment’ category in Te Pae Māhutonga. (Community & Public Health, 2020)
wairua	Spirit, soul - spirit of a person which exists beyond death. Features in Whiti Te Rā and He Ara Waiora.
wairuatanga	Spirituality.
wānanga	Tribal knowledge, lore, learning. In this case it refers to a tertiary institution that caters for Māori learning needs; established under the Education Act 1990.
whaikōrero	To make a formal speech.
whakairo	A carving; to carve.

whakapapa	Genealogy, knowledge of ancestry.
whakataukī	Proverb or significant saying.
whakautu	To answer, reply, respond.
whakawhanaungatanga	To instigate or reinforce relationships, relationship building.
whānau	Family, extended family; principle of extended family structure. In a modern context it sometimes includes friends who may not have kinship ties to other members.
whanaungatanga	Relationship, kinship, sense of family connection. It can apply to whānau (kin groups) and extend to others who share a close familial friendship.

Chapter One: Introduction

To begin this thesis, I propose that literacy and numeracy (L + N) should not be considered static entities, instead, they should be seen to be continually evolving to reflect the needs of each generation (Mission, 2005). At a foundational level, literacy can be defined as the ability to read and write the language of the culture and society to which one belongs, while numeracy can be considered numerical literacy – the ability to understand and work with numbers (Mission, 2005; Valentine, n.d.).

Current dominant western perspectives of L + N focus on skills attainment, perceiving adult literacy and numeracy as human capital enabling "individuals, enterprises and nations to become more productive and competitive in the globalised economy" (Yasukawa & Black, 2016, p.ix). This is a neoliberal approach, reinforced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The OECD is an international, intergovernmental economic organisation that establishes evidence-based international standards on a range of social, economic, and environmental issues. These standards influence policy development for many developed countries, including New Zealand (OECD, n.d.-d). However, there is growing international recognition that high levels of economic productivity do not provide an accurate indicator of success for either individuals or nations (Goldsmith, 2019; Kapoor & Debroy, 2019; Philipsen, 2015; The Treasury, 2018). Supporting this position, this study favours a definition of L + N as "listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and critical thinking, interwoven with the knowledge of social and cultural practices" (Literacy Aotearoa, n.d.-b, para. 2); and further asserts that literacy and numeracy skills are sociomaterial in nature, with social and material aspects that contribute to "a much broader lens with which to explore emergent meaning-making practices in communities" (Pahl, 2014, p. 6).

Instead of acquiescing to the dominant view of literacy and numeracy, this study utilises a sociomaterial approach that prioritises people's abilities to communicate, make sense of their world, navigate their world effectively, and engage in purposeful and meaningful social practices that allow for participation in family and community (Furness et al., 2013). It is important to note that incorporating a social and material view of L + N does not exclude the importance of skills acquisition and education; instead, it clarifies that L + N is not *only* skills acquisition (Cochrane et al., 2020). Sociomaterialism was chosen to shape this research because it represents an academic approach that can be broadly characterised as the study of both social and material elements – in other words, sociomaterial approaches

explore the interactions between the social and the material, and how these "come together to bring about the complexity of society" (Burm & MacLeod, 2020, p. 3). While sociomaterialism has gained momentum as a valid academic approach, it is still a reasonably new and contentious mode of study; debate occurs within the field, with two distinct 'camps' – those that align with the traditional view that the world is composed of both social and material actors that have separate and stable characteristics, and those that believe that the social and material actors exist, but are intertwined and inseparable (Burm & MacLeod, 2020). In this research, a sociomaterial perspective means that both social and material elements are working together to create outcomes for adult learners, far beyond what one element could offer on its own. In Aotearoa New Zealand, this must include the diverse milieu of a multi-cultural nation, with particular recognition of te ao Māori social and material elements such as whānau, iwi and hāpu social structures; and storytelling, weaving, sculpture, and song as communication materials.

Regardless of the ontological approach, it cannot be denied that literacy and numeracy are key proficiencies required for navigating everyday life. During an individual's early years of schooling, literacy and numeracy are foundational aspects of formal education. However, there is recognition that "a growing proportion of children leave school unable to read an instruction manual or do basic maths" (Partridge, 2021, para 3.). For those people, participating in daily life can be a struggle. The ability to read, write, and understand numerical information are key to flourishing in many aspects of adult life and can impact employability; management of finances and bills; the ability to follow written instructions or signs; navigation of an increasingly technological world; and self-confidence and involvement in family and social life (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015). In a family environment, the ability of parents to provide learning-based activities for their children has been linked with later academic attainment and employment (Napoli & Purpura, 2017; Pungello et al., 2010).

On a global scale, the OECD's *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)* undertakes assessment of adult skills. The major survey conducted as part of this programme is the *Survey of Adult Skills* (OECD, n.d.-c). This is the most comprehensive international survey of adult skills ever to be undertaken, measuring the skills and competencies needed for individuals to participate in society and for economies to thrive (Education Counts, 2021). The PIAAC has been administered in three rounds, dated 2011-2012, 2014-2015, and 2017; New Zealand participated in round 2 (OECD, n.d.-c).

Internationally, results of this large-scale survey showed that individuals with higher literacy skills and higher educational attainment have higher levels of self-reported health, stronger social connections, and are involved in their communities; they also have positive interpersonal relationships and feel that they have more influence in politics or civil engagement (Scott, 2018).

Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Aotearoa New Zealand

Adult L + N became a focus of attention in Aotearoa New Zealand when the 1996 International Adult Literacy Survey "revealed large numbers of people in New Zealand whose poor literacy severely restricts their choices in life and work" (Hobbs, 2001, para. 4). More recently, the PIAAC was conducted in New Zealand from April 2014 – March 2015 (OECD, n.d.-b). While this survey recognised that adult New Zealanders had above average scores in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving in comparison with other surveyed nations, there were marked differences for Māori and Pacific Island adults, who were overrepresented in the low proficiency group. According to the PIAAC survey results, one in eight adult New Zealanders has low literacy proficiency, and almost one in five has low numeracy proficiency (Erwin et al., 2020).

The Living Standards Framework

Recently, a holistic view of wellbeing was highlighted in the New Zealand Government's 2019 *Wellbeing Budget* (The Treasury, 2019b). This was an important milestone for the first term of the Labour Party's leadership; as explained by Finance Minister Grant Robertson, they wanted to expand the definition of success as a country:

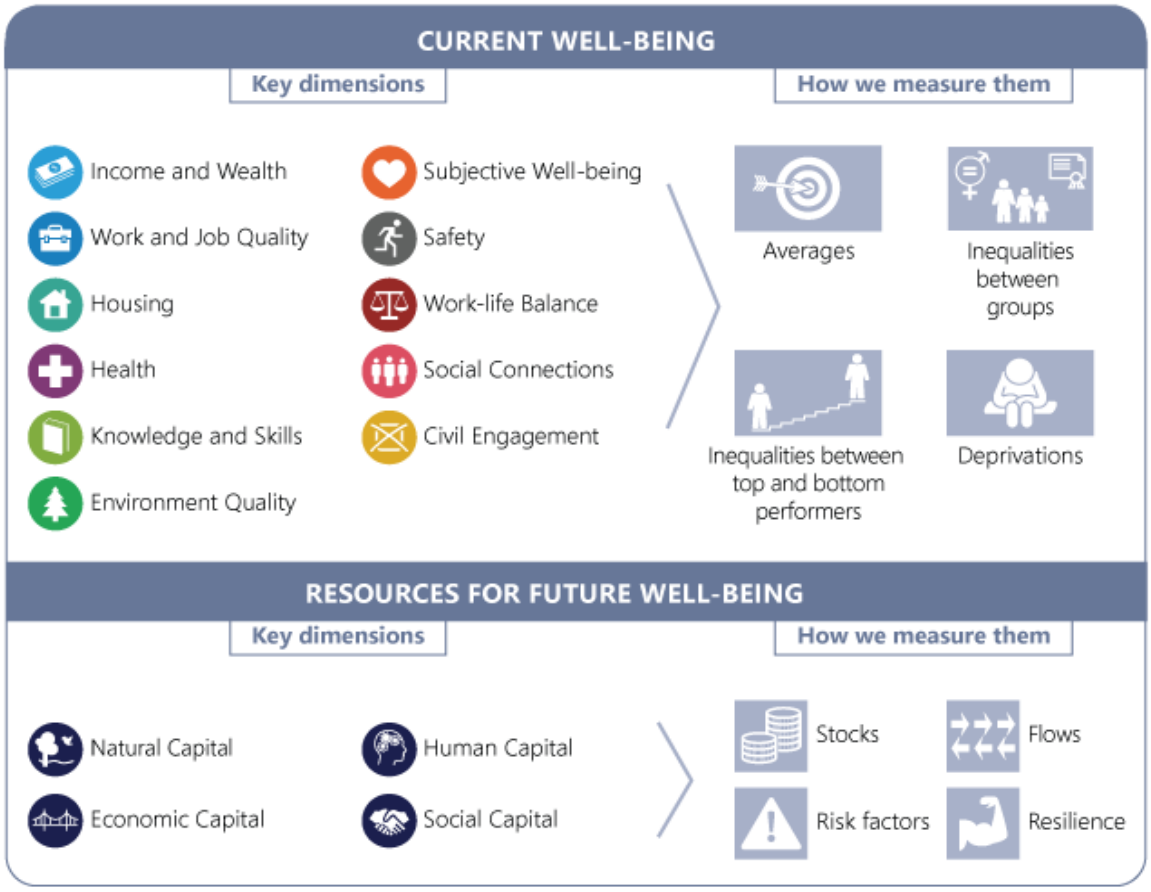
> Strong economic fundamentals and sustainable economic growth remain integral to New Zealand's success but they are a means to an end, not an end in themselves. We are widening our Budget focus to look at the wellbeing of our people, the health of our environment and the strength of our communities. (Beehive.govt.nz, 2018, para. 9)

The New Zealand Treasury used a 'Living Standards Framework' (LSF) to identify wellbeing priorities for the Budget and provide a holistic view of the factors required for healthy and thriving individuals, whānau, and communities in Aotearoa New Zealand

(Beehive.govt.nz, 2018; The Treasury, 2019a, 2019b). Originally, the LSF was based on the OECD's *Framework for Measuring Well-Being and Progress*, which was developed to address concerns that macro-economic statistics such as gross domestic product (GDP) do not provide an accurate overall depiction of the living conditions and issues faced by most of the population of any given country (OECD, n.d.-a; Stiglitz, Sen & Fitoussi, 2009). The OECD framework, as seen in Figure 1, contains two components of wellbeing: current wellbeing and how it is measured; and resources required for future wellbeing.

Figure 1

OECD Framework for Measuring Well-Being and Progress



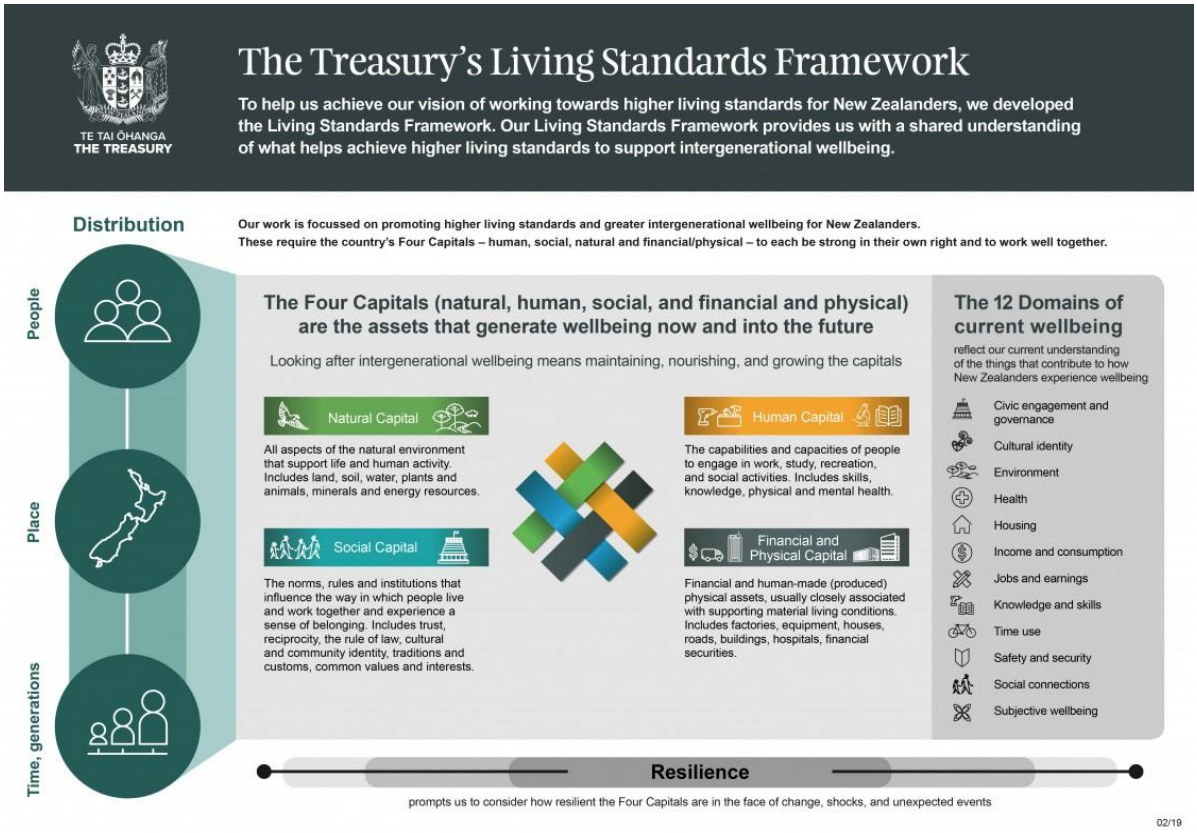
Note. Reprinted from OECD, (n.d.-a, para. 1). Copyright by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the OECD framework was adapted to represent the Treasury's perspective of wellbeing; however, the resulting 2018 LSF retained many similarities (see Figure 2). The overarching purpose of the LSF is to guide the New Zealand

Treasury in delivering policy advice to the State sector and Government, while considering the wider impact of policies on intergenerational wellbeing (Burton, 2018; The Treasury, 2019b).

Figure 2

The Treasury's 2018 Living Standards Framework



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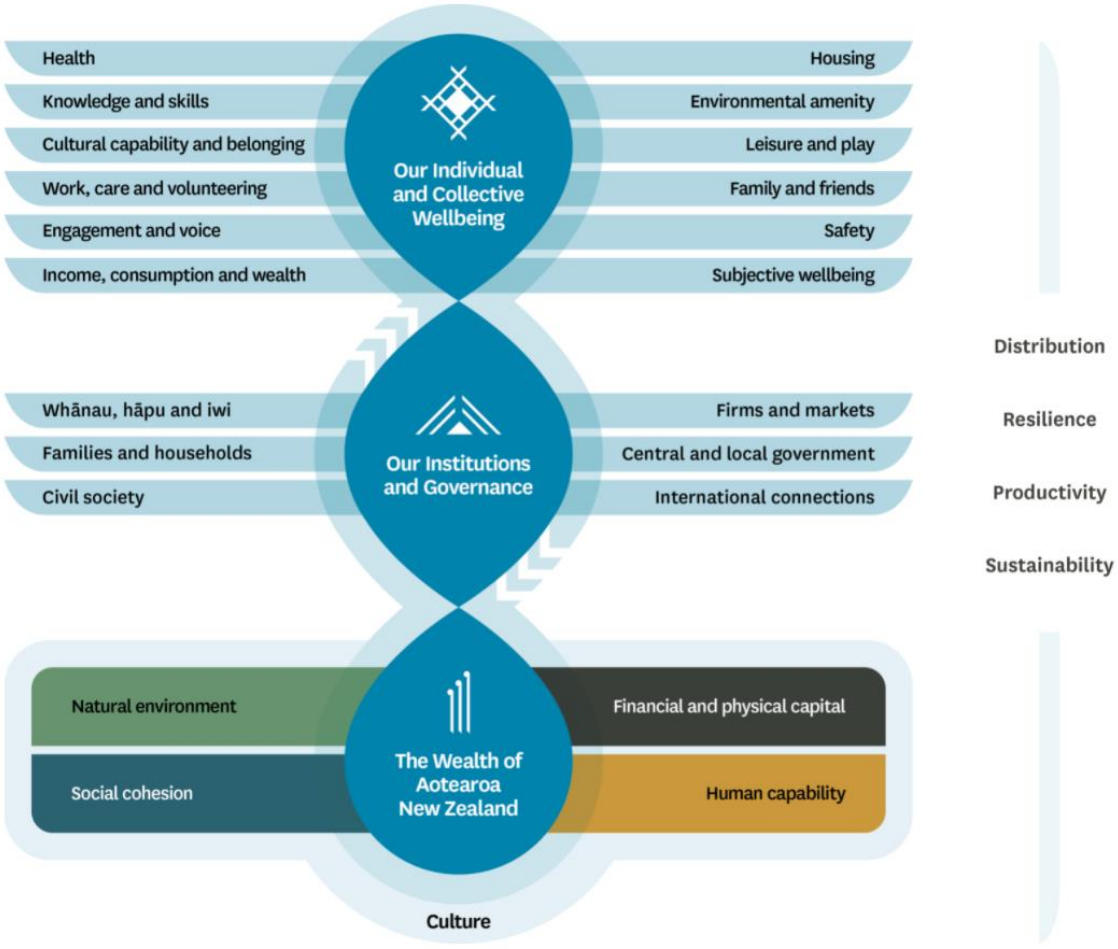
As seen in Figure 2, the 2018 LSF includes *12 Domains* of current and future wellbeing. Most are drawn from the OECD framework for measuring well-being and progress, with the addition of a 'cultural identity' domain. *The Four Capitals* are identical to those used in the OECD framework but have been extended to describe each capital and its importance for continued wellbeing at individual, whānau, community and national levels. Other dimensions found in the LSF are *Risk and Resilience*, which refers to the risks to wellbeing and the resilience of our capital stocks to allow a response when risks arise, and *Distribution*, which refers to the difference in wellbeing needs across the population (The Treasury, 2019b).

An updated version of the LSF was released by the Treasury in October 2021, after a process of extensive feedback with the aim of 'evolving' the LSF to more accurately reflect Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural context. As shown in Figure 3, the 2021 LSF is quite different in appearance and content, with three distinct levels: *Our Individual and Collective Wellbeing*, *Our Institutions and Governance*, and *The Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand*. Analytical prompts are set to the side of the visual framework; these represent the lenses that are used to analyse wellbeing across the three levels: *Distribution*, *resilience*, *productivity*, and *sustainability* (The Treasury, 2021b).

Figure 3

The 2021 Living Standards Framework



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Current Governance and Māori Literacy and Numeracy in Aotearoa New Zealand

Now in their second term, it is widely recognised that the Labour Government favours a governance style that focusses strongly on quality of life for *all* New Zealanders. This goal of wellbeing has led to some important discussion, policy development, and framework implementation to aid in the Government's intention to strengthen partnerships between Māori and the Crown in alignment with New Zealand's founding document, Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2021). An example of this is the new Te Tiriti o Waitangi Framework, designed to provide an expression of the Crown's Te Tiriti obligations in the health and disability system, and provide high-level direction on how these 'obligations' should be delivered (Ministry of Health, 2020). Te Puni Kōkiri is the government agency charged with working towards policy and legislative change in partnership with Māori, ensuring that decision-makers hear Māori voices and perspectives, with the overarching goal of thriving whānau (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2021). In this capacity Te Puni Kōkiri worked with The Treasury to develop *An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework* (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019) in response to a recognised lack of Māori perspective in the 2018 LSF.

However, it must be acknowledged that, for Māori adults in Aotearoa New Zealand, there are ongoing disparities in healthcare, education, and employment. These are often interlinked: In the education field, a colonial education system has led to poor outcomes for Māori children along with a feeling of being misunderstood in a system that is underpinned by colonial societal values of individualism, neoliberalism and competition (Potter et al., 2011). In response, Māori children often leave school early, with lower levels of L + N than their Pākehā peers; research has shown that (regardless of ethnicity) this often leads to fewer tertiary or professional employment opportunities, and poorer long-term physical and mental health outcomes (Chiswick et al., 2003; de Baldini Rocha & Ponczek, 2011; Kakarmath et al., 2018; Parsons & Bynner, 2005; all cited in Erwin et al., 2020). In order to address these discrepancies and bring about lasting change and equity for Māori and other minority groups in Aotearoa New Zealand, ongoing research and transformational change must be deemed a priority. This starts with challenging the "deficit orientation" (Johnson et al., 2012, p. 3) that dominates western thinking; to favour instead a strengths-based approach that builds on the resourcefulness, creativity and adaptability of Māori.

The Present Study

This study aimed to contribute to a larger L + N research project: 'The expression, experience and transcendence of low skills in Aotearoa New Zealand' (New Zealand Work Research Institute, 2020). This large-scale project spans 5 years (October 2019-2024) and is a collaboration between researchers from Auckland University of Technology, The University of Waikato, Portland State University, and the OECD. The research uses a mixed-method approach and aims to:

- Build a detailed population-wide picture of those with low L + N skills,
- Analyse these individual's life-course pathways and the effectiveness of interventions, specifically in respect to economic and social outcomes,
- Forecast future changes in population skill level,
- Develop an understanding of the barriers and enablers that build resilience to risk, along with a pathway to transcend low skills (New Zealand Work Research Institute, 2020).

In the larger research project, quantitative methods will be used to analyse different life-course pathways and interventions, while qualitative methods will be used to develop understanding of the barriers and enablers that build resilience and pathways to transcend low skills (New Zealand Work Research Institute, 2020). This exploration is expected to facilitate improved public service delivery of supports for L + N enhancement and in turn, to improve economic and social outcomes for people with low levels of L + N. It is therefore concerned with people's wellbeing, as is the LSF, which in due course will be brought to bear on adult L + N policy development. My research will contribute to the larger study by asking:

How, and to what extent, does adult literacy and numeracy research and organisational reporting undertaken in Aotearoa New Zealand align with the key components of the Living Standards Framework and related Māori-led documents?

The specific objectives were to:

- Identify the key components and the similarities between the LSF, L + N learning opportunities, and previously reported learner outcomes.
- Consider the strengths and weaknesses of actively engaging the LSF in adult L + N programmes and policies.

- Identify ways in which the LSF is being updated to reflect Māori cultural views and values, and whether these are also reflected in L + N research and organisational reporting.

Meeting these objectives will be valuable because no previous research has explicitly compared the LSF wellbeing framework and its components with the experiences and outcomes adult learners reportedly value from their participation in L + N programmes. Improved public service delivery to improve outcomes for people with low levels of L + N (as stated as an aim of the larger research project) must stem from the development of improved policy. If adult L + N policy is to be shaped by the LSF, it is essential to understand the extent to which there is alignment between notions of wellbeing reflected in the LSF and what is important to adult L + N learners, especially Māori and other marginalised groups.

Thesis Overview

This thesis is organised into six chapters. Chapter One has introduced the key concepts of adult L + N and the LSF in the political and social context of Aotearoa New Zealand, along with some background to, and the aims of, of the present study. Chapter Two presents a literature review that provides insight into the concepts that underpin this research, with particular focus on both community psychology and Māori perspectives of wellbeing, the development and evolution of the LSF, and the influence of sociomaterial and neoliberal approaches to L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand. Chapter Three examines the methodological approaches used in this study, while Chapters Four and Five present the findings of the document analyses and interviews and discusses them. Chapter Six summarises the research, and contains further discussion of key findings, implications, limitations, and recommendations for future study.

Chapter Two: A Review of the Literature

Introduction

I begin this chapter with an exploration of the two epistemological approaches that underpin this research, community psychology and te ao Māori. I then review academic literature about current adult L + N programmes and research in Aotearoa New Zealand, and how these relate to wellbeing. The origins and elements of the various iterations of the LSF are presented, followed by other policies that are relevant to this research, namely the Tertiary Education Strategy (2020) and the Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Strategy (2015-2019).

Wellbeing in Aotearoa – Community Psychology and Māori Perspectives

This research is underpinned by a community psychology perspective on wellbeing, encapsulated by the following quote: "Community psychology has long stood as a social justice agitator that encouraged reformation... while keeping a firm goal of building greater wellbeing for people in communities" (McNamara & Naepi, 2018, p. 340). Community psychology is a distinct sub-discipline in the large field of psychology; it can be recognised by its strong foundational base of values and principles that guide action on a larger scale than traditional psychology, which tends to focus on psychopathology and the individual. On a global scale, the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA), a division of the American Psychological Association, has a vision of forming "a strong, global impact on enhancing well-being and promoting social justice for all by fostering collaboration where there is division and empowerment where there is oppression" (SCRA, n.d., as cited in Riemer et al., 2020). Locally, the Institute of Community Psychology Aotearoa (IComPA) aims to enhance "social and cultural justice within Aotearoa" through social collaboration and partnership that enhances the status of Māori as tangata whenua and enables ethnic and cultural communities within Aotearoa New Zealand to become self-determining in a manner consistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi (New Zealand Psychological Society, n.d.). In line with this aim, community psychology seeks to 'localise' the practice of psychology, a process that re-interprets psychological and social concepts that have long been assumed to be 'universal' (Thomas, 1994). The 'localisation' process in Aotearoa New Zealand involves identifying differences between the euro-centric, dominant cultural pattern that often unconsciously underlies psychological theories and practices, and cultural patterns that accurately reflect the

interests of New Zealanders. This is extended further by recognising differences between dominant Pākehā cultural patterns and the cultural patterns of Māori as Indigenous New Zealanders (Thomas, 1994).

In practice, community psychology researchers and practitioners work alongside communities and marginalised groups, with an active foundation of key values and principles: social justice, self-determination, empowerment, and respect for diversity (Nelson et al., 2014). Issues are examined in relation to social context, cultural environment, and distribution of power; while interventions are strengths-based and collaborative, empowering the community to elicit change. Transformative change at social and policy level are also key factors in community psychology interventions (Riemer et al., 2020). Rather than an individualistic clinician-client approach to treatment, community psychology utilises a range of strategies such as "advocacy, citizen participation, collaboration, community organising, economic development, prevention, education, self-help/mutual help, sociopolitical development, social movements, and policy change" (Nelson et al., 2014, p. ix). An important tool that is used widely in community psychology (and in this research) is Brofenbrenner's ecological model. An ecological approach to wellbeing provides a multi-level, contextual framework that encourages practitioners to understand the perspective of any given group, looking for strengths and ways to build connections rather than focussing on deficits (Nelson et al., 2014; Riemer et al., 2020).

When considering wellbeing from a holistic, community psychology perspective, it is important to note that an ecological model looks beyond the biological necessities of human life to include social-emotional, psychological, cognitive, and spiritual wellbeing (Furness, 2012). Access to resources such as health services, education, recreation, and fresh air are all included to capture a sense of wellbeing that is unique to an individual, cultural, or community group (Furness, 2012; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). In Aotearoa New Zealand, community psychology researchers and practitioners give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by recognising Māori ways of being and challenging dominant western ideas of individualism and capitalism (Fisher et al., 2008). Issues arising from colonisation, such as inequities in education and healthcare, poverty, and the division and use of natural resources, provide opportunities for community psychologists to work on implementing change at all levels of the ecological model – within families and communities, as well as in systems, institutions and government (Gridley et al., 2007). Further discussion on an ecological approach as used in this research is presented in Chapter Three.

Māori wellbeing is intrinsically linked to culture and worldview, with a particular emphasis on the importance of quality relationships with whānau, hapū, iwi, language, the land, traditional knowledge and 'ways of being' (Cram, 2014; Durie, 1999a; Durie, 2006). Of central importance to this study is understanding why Māori feature highly in low L + N statistics. In order to truly appreciate the complexity of this issue beyond a surface level, the context of New Zealand's colonial history must be understood for the long-term disruption that has brought intergenerational trauma to Māori culturally, socially and economically (Houkamau et al., 2017; Jackson, 2019; Waitoki, 2019 . Pre-colonisation, Māori communities worked collaboratively to ensure that whānau were kept safe and healthy in nurturing and protective environments. Values, knowledge and practices were sustained by intergenerational and extended whānau relationships (Wirihana & Smith, 2014). However, colonisation began Aotearoa New Zealand's harmful history of cultural assimilation which included criminalising Māori language and cultural practices through the Native Schools Act (1867) and the Tohunga Suppression Act (1907) respectively. Loss of language, forced urbanisation, and degradation of connections between tribe and land have caused intergenerational trauma and poor wellbeing outcomes that cannot be relegated to the past (Lange, 2018; Wirihana & Smith, 2014). According to Durie (1999a) and Came et al. (2019) ongoing institutional racism and Māori marginalisation contribute to feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness that impact negatively on wellbeing. These findings are supported both locally and internationally – 300 studies involving more than 300,000 participants link racial discrimination and marginalisation with poor physical and mental health, heightened stress responses, and unhealthy behaviours (Harris et al., 2018; Paradies et al., 2015; Pascoe & Smart Richman, 2009; Webb, 2020). Tuffin et al. (2018) suggest that racism in Aotearoa New Zealand can be understood as being "deeply embedded in the structural and the social" (p. 273). Importantly, dominant discourse about Māori culture and inequity can also be viewed as contributing to a racist agenda. This can be recognised in dismissive attitudes toward Māori cultural ways as 'less than', with western values and ideas of intervention seen as benefits for which Māori should feel grateful (Pack et al., 2015; Tuffin et al., 2018). Instead of acquiescing to these narratives, community psychology actively challenges them, using action-oriented research and practice to highlight the validity and vitality of a Māori worldview, and to uphold the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document and therefore critical to the nation's advancement (Thomas & Nikora, 1992).

To address the depth and breadth of causative factors, the importance of Kaupapa Māori frameworks and models of health and wellbeing have been increasingly recognised. These frameworks use traditional knowledge to create Māori-centred approaches, and incorporate whakapapa knowledge and whānau relationships to acknowledge and address historical trauma (Wirihana & Smith, 2014). In the current study, three Māori frameworks have been used as points of reference for analysing aspects of holistic wellbeing as they pertain to Māori. These are an essential component of the community psychology approach that underpins this research, are holistic and strength-based, and all contain an ecological component.

The first model uses the imagery of Te Pae Māhutonga, a well-known constellation of stars also known as the Southern Cross. Te Pae Māhutonga was important as a navigational aid for early Māori explorers, and has been associated with the discovery of Aotearoa (Durie, 1999b). This cultural significance has led to the adaptation and use of Te Pae Māhutonga as a "symbolic chart for mapping the dimensions of mental health promotion" (Durie, 2011, p. 196). As seen in Figure 4, the four central stars represent the four critical components of Māori wellbeing: Cultural identity and access to the Māori world (mauriora); environmental protection (waiora); wellbeing and living a healthy lifestyle (toiora); and participation in society (whaiora). Two 'pointer' stars represent important factors for progress: leadership (ngā manukura), and autonomy (mana whakahaere) (Durie, 2011). Te Pae Māhutonga is a valuable framework because it challenges the dominant status quo of individually focussed wellbeing, instead offering a collective, holistic, strategic model that creates a "wider discussion that includes cultural identity, the natural environment, constitutional arrangements, socio-economic realities, and Indigenous leadership" (Durie, 2011, p. 199).

Figure 4

Te Pae Māhutonga Māori Health Model

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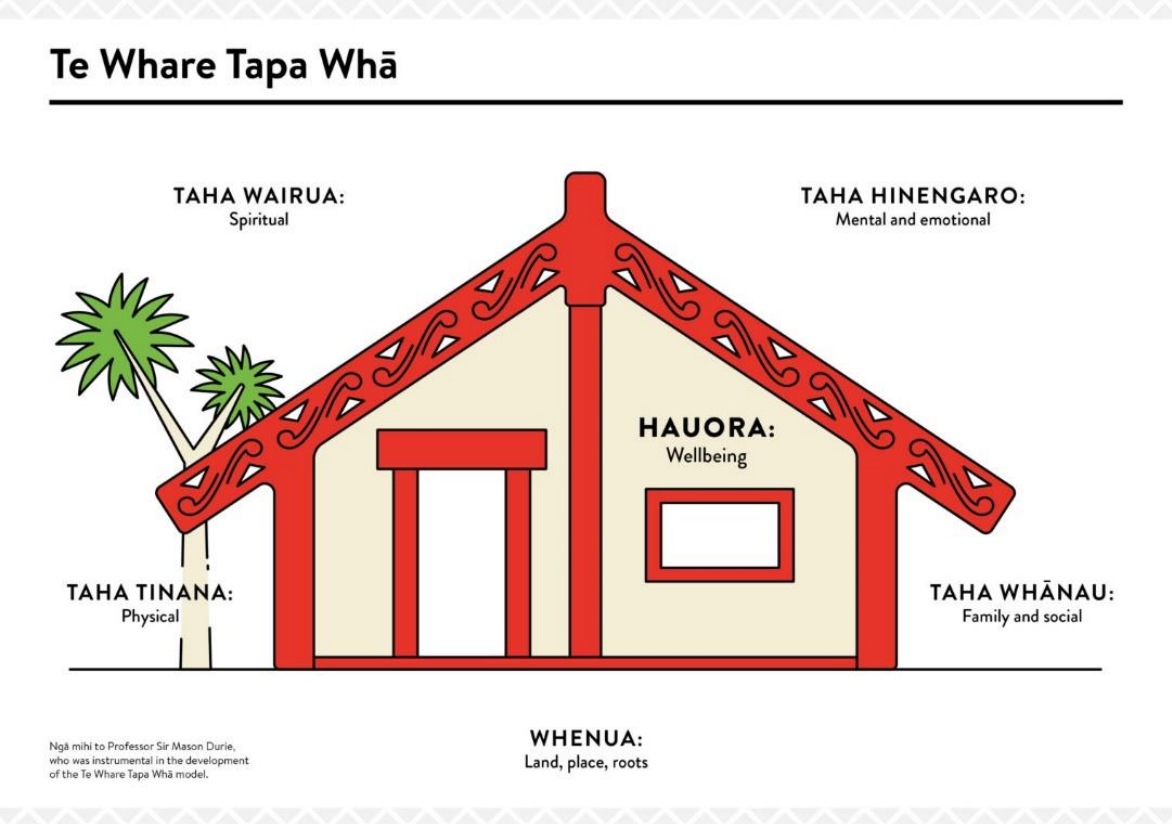
The second model, Te Whare Tapa Whā, was developed in 1984, and uses a metaphorical house to pictorially represent a concept of wellbeing that is intrinsically linked: if one side of the four-walled house is weakened, the whole structure will fail. The model is depicted in Figure 5; each of the four walls represents one aspect of health and wellbeing: spirituality (taha wairua); the mind (taha hinengaro); physical health (taha tinana); and family/social relationships (taha whānau) (Durie, 2008).

Figure 5

Te Whare Tapa Whā Māori Health Model



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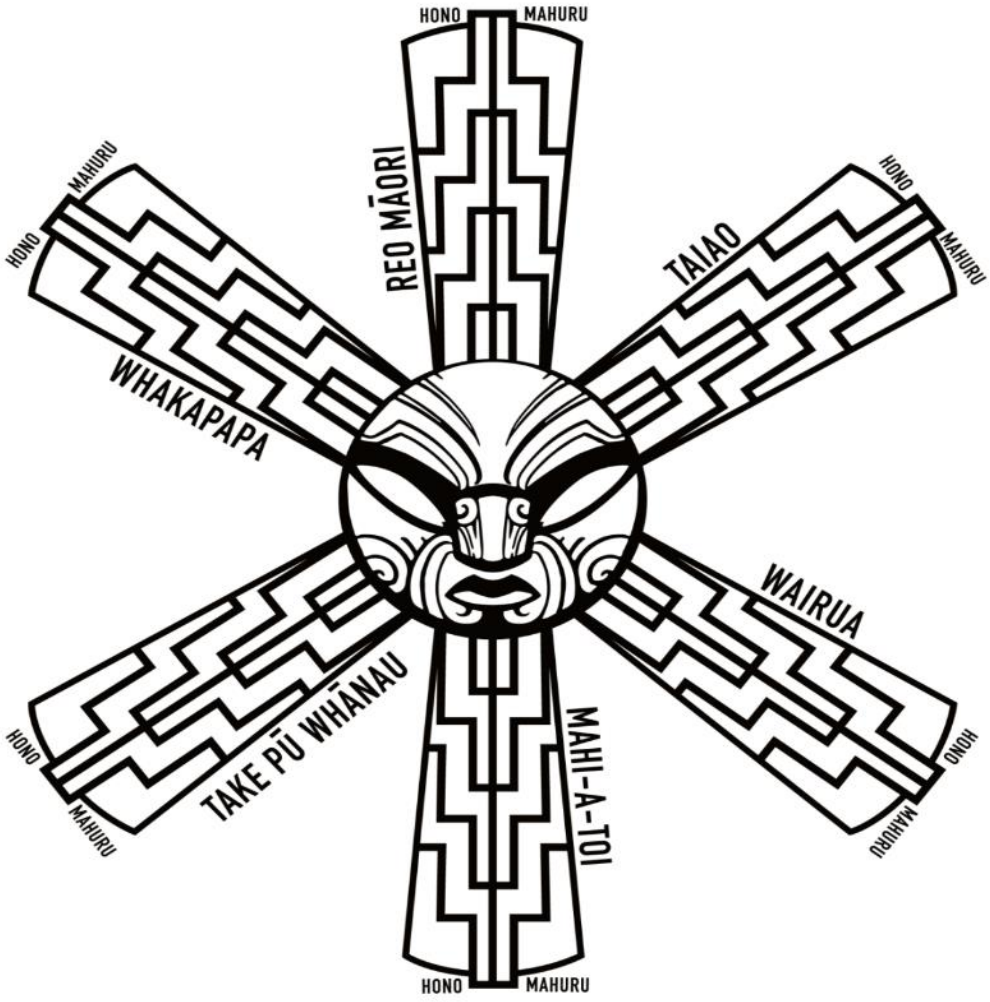
The third model, Whiti Te Rā, has been developed as an interactive guide to exploring cultural pathways to wellbeing (McLachlan et al., 2021). The purpose of this guide is to highlight the importance of Māori flourishing and wellbeing beyond the well-known Māori health models. As seen in Figure 6, Whiti Te Rā is presented in the form of the sun, with six themes casting ihi (sun rays). These six themes are considered essential in shifting wellbeing for Māori from mauri moe (a weakened state) to mauri oho (awake, alert) and ultimately mauri ora (an active state of wellbeing): te reo Māori (Māori language); taiao (environmental connection); wairua (spiritual beliefs and practices); mahi-a-toi (traditional art forms); take pū whānau (relationships); and whakapapa (intergenerational relationships) (McLachlan et al., 2021).

Figure 6

Whiti Te Rā Māori Health Model



Note. Reprinted from McLachlan et al. (2021, p. 87). In Whiti te rā: A guide to connecting Māori to traditional wellbeing pathways. *Journal of Indigenous Wellbeing, Te Mauri – Pimatisiwin, 6*(1), 78-97.

Both Te Pae Māhutonga and Te Whare Tapa Whā are useful frameworks for this research; they are highly valued in the fields of health and education, and are designed specifically to address wellbeing perspectives of Māori in a unique Aotearoa New Zealand context. Whiti Te Rā is a new model that offers the most recent iteration and perspective of the important elements for Māori flourishing.

Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Aotearoa – Wellbeing, Sociomaterialism and the Rise of Neoliberalism

This thesis posits that in Aotearoa New Zealand, L + N skills acquisition should be considered an issue of wellbeing. This is because L + N skills can be both directly and indirectly linked to the physical, social, and economic wellbeing of individuals and families, to workplace safety and productivity, to community involvement and strength, and ultimately to Aotearoa New Zealand's overall economic and social wellbeing (Perkins, 2009). However, many New Zealanders have L + N skill levels that impede their ability to live a life of their choosing. Data from the 1996 International Adult Literacy Survey ranked New Zealand below average among 20 participating countries in two out of the three literacy domains surveyed (document literacy and quantitative literacy) (Ministry of Education, 2008). In an attempt to address these results and improve L + N levels, the New Zealand Government introduced the Adult Literacy Strategy (Ministry of Education, 2001) and began a period of extensive policy development and implementation to increase levels of adult L + N. However, the Adult Literacy Strategy does have some limitations, most of which can be related to its dominant neoliberal discourse. Furness et al. (2013) described it as primarily based on "a singular, individualistic, skills-based view of literacy" (p. 2) that focuses on skill attainment for the purposes of employment and economic progress rather than considering the benefit of social or wellbeing outcomes. In addition, many Māori educators felt that the Adult Literacy Strategy lacked a Māori perspective. To address this, a working document was commissioned by the Minister of Māori Affairs; *Te kāwai ora: Reading the world, being the word* outlined critical factors for Māori literary 'success': a base that reflected Te Tiriti o Waitangi rights and obligations, and a bicultural (bi-literal) approach that incorporated Māori and English language alongside traditional storytelling, performance, and art (Māori Adult Literacy Working Party, 2001). However, despite the efforts of Māori experts and educators, a western approach to adult L + N skill development still dominates (Furness, 2012).

More recently, results from the PIAAC large-scale survey (2014-2015) showed that over 1.3 million adults in New Zealand had low levels of the L + N skills that PIAAC measured (New Zealand Work Research Institute, 2020). This was a disappointing result after over 20 years of government investment in L + N programmes, and has both economic and social implications in the form of unemployment, poverty, inequities in mental and physical health, and social isolation (Erwin et al., 2020). Māori and Pacific populations are over-

represented in the PIAAC figures, however it is important to note that a limitation of both the earlier reported International Adult Literacy Survey and the PIAAC is that it was administered solely in English, with no te reo Māori or Pacific language option (Culligan et al., 2005). Another factor that could have influenced Māori and Pacific responses within the PIAAC survey is that the assessment was based on the ability to understand, evaluate and use written text (PIAAC Literary Expert Group, 2009). In alignment with a sociomaterial perspective, Māori and Pacific Peoples view effective communication and literacy is much wider than simply 'reading' written text; the use of illustrations, symbols, art forms such as carving or weaving, and the spoken word and art of storytelling are all deemed to be essential literacy skills (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017; Kruse Va'ai, 2015; Māori Adult Literacy Working Party, 2001). Reder (2020) took a closer look at the reading components in New Zealand's PIAAC results. He found that, like other PIAAC-tested countries, most adults with low levels of literacy proficiency are still capable of performing basic tasks such as understanding short written sentences and common vocabulary items (Grotluschen et al., 2016, as cited in Reder, 2020). Therefore, labelling people with low levels of literacy proficiency as 'illiterate' or 'deficient' may lead to incorrect and harmful stereotypes and stigmatisation.

As mentioned in Chapter One, the OECD views adult L + N from an economy-driven neoliberal perspective, with skills attainment contributing to human capital, increased globalisation and economic growth. The use of international surveys such as the PIAAC contribute to this neoliberal approach by allocating participating countries a rank that can be compared in league tables. Countries are then able to compare their population's performance to other countries' productivity agendas. This process encourages a focus on economic interests rather than social or cultural benefits when developing policy (Yasukawa & Black, 2016). Yasukawa and Black further assert that the global climate of heightened competition for skilled workers has morphed into the practice of "testing as policy" (Lingard et al., 2013, p. 547, as cited in Yasukawa & Black, 2016, p. x); with policy-makers becoming increasingly influenced by industry and employer groups and their neoliberal ideals.

In contrast, when considering education policy for Māori learners, it is important that uniquely Māori needs and aspirations are prioritised by including key elements of te ao Māori, recognising the diversity of learners, ensuring easy physical accessibility, and removing costs (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2011). An example of this is when Te Puni Kōkiri and Literacy Aotearoa (the largest adult literacy education provider in Aotearoa New Zealand)

developed and delivered a series of whānau-led L + N pilot programmes that saw increased confidence levels and transformative life benefits for participants (Literacy Aotearoa, 2013). These programmes featured student-centred learning approaches, quality resources, and culturally competent Māori tutors. An emphasis on whakawhanaungatanga (relationship-building) was seen as pivotal to the creation of an environment built on trust, respect, and success (Literacy Aotearoa, 2013). Most of the programme participants had experienced a neoliberal western education system and had not responded to the focus on skills attainment, pass-fail mentality, and lack of cultural support (Mete, 2013). The wellbeing and skills improvement outcomes of Literacy Aotearoa's whānau-led L + N programmes make it clear that instead of a neoliberal approach, a bi-literate, holistic, relationship-focussed approach encourages Māori adult learners and their whānau to gain confidence and take ownership of their learning (Literacy Aotearoa, 2013).

In Aotearoa New Zealand today, there are many L + N programme providers in existence. Different approaches include employer-led skills development programmes and workplace L + N programmes, as well as community-based programmes aimed at developing skills for employment or personal wellbeing. There is also increased provision of culturally appropriate L + N programmes that support Māori or Pacific worldviews or offer L + N skill development for those who speak English as a second language (Skills Highway, n.d.). Despite differences in programme aims and approaches, overall outcomes for participants have been positive. In 2010, a specifically designed assessment tool (Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool – LNAAT) was developed for the Tertiary Education Commission by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER). Across a range of L + N programmes, the LNAAT tool has identified marked improvements in participant's L + N skills (Eyre, n.d.). Qualitatively, participants have reported that improved L + N skills provide personal satisfaction, positive whānau and community interactions, and improved confidence levels when engaging in everyday life (Furness, 2012; Furness et al., 2013; Potter et al., 2011).

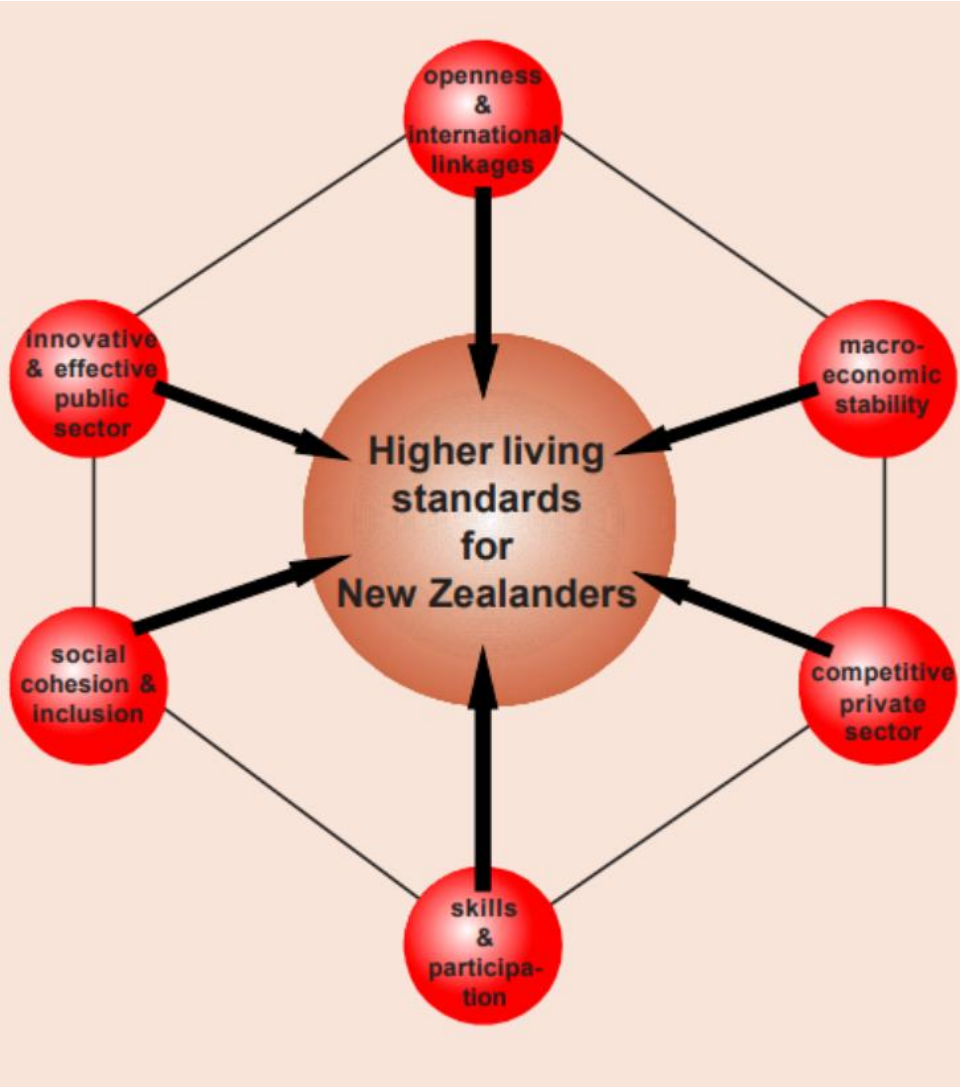
The Living Standards Framework – A Further Look into its Development and Evolution

The LSF was developed by the New Zealand Treasury in its capacity as the Government's lead economic and financial advisor. Its first iteration appeared in the 1999

Briefing to the Incoming Government, with a visual model (seen in Figure 7) that Treasury describes as a "proto-LSF" (The Treasury, 2021a, para. 7).

Figure 7

The First 'Higher Living Standards Model', 1999



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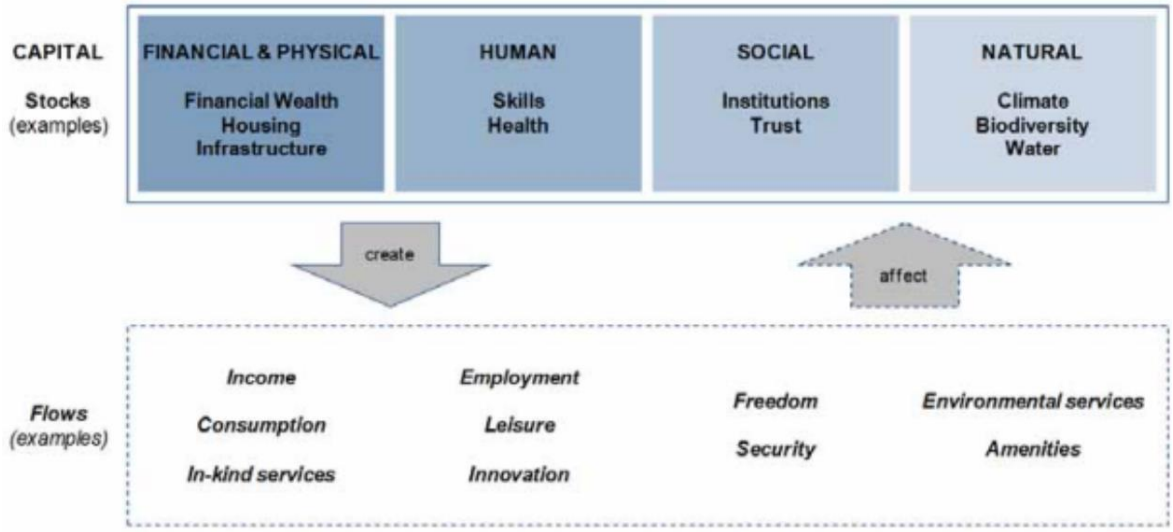
This model aimed to demonstrate the interconnected nature of elements that would lead to higher living standards for New Zealanders, and recognised that "sources of happiness can be far removed from the economic aggregates normally used to measure economic success" (The Treasury, 1999, p.10). Despite this recognition, economic elements featured

prominently in the initial design, alongside the importance of long-term growth in production and income.

The first official version of the Living Standards Framework was published by the Treasury in 2011. As seen in Figure 8, this framework introduced the 'Capitals' that formed the foundation of the LSF for the following decade.

Figure 8

The First Living Standards Framework, 2011



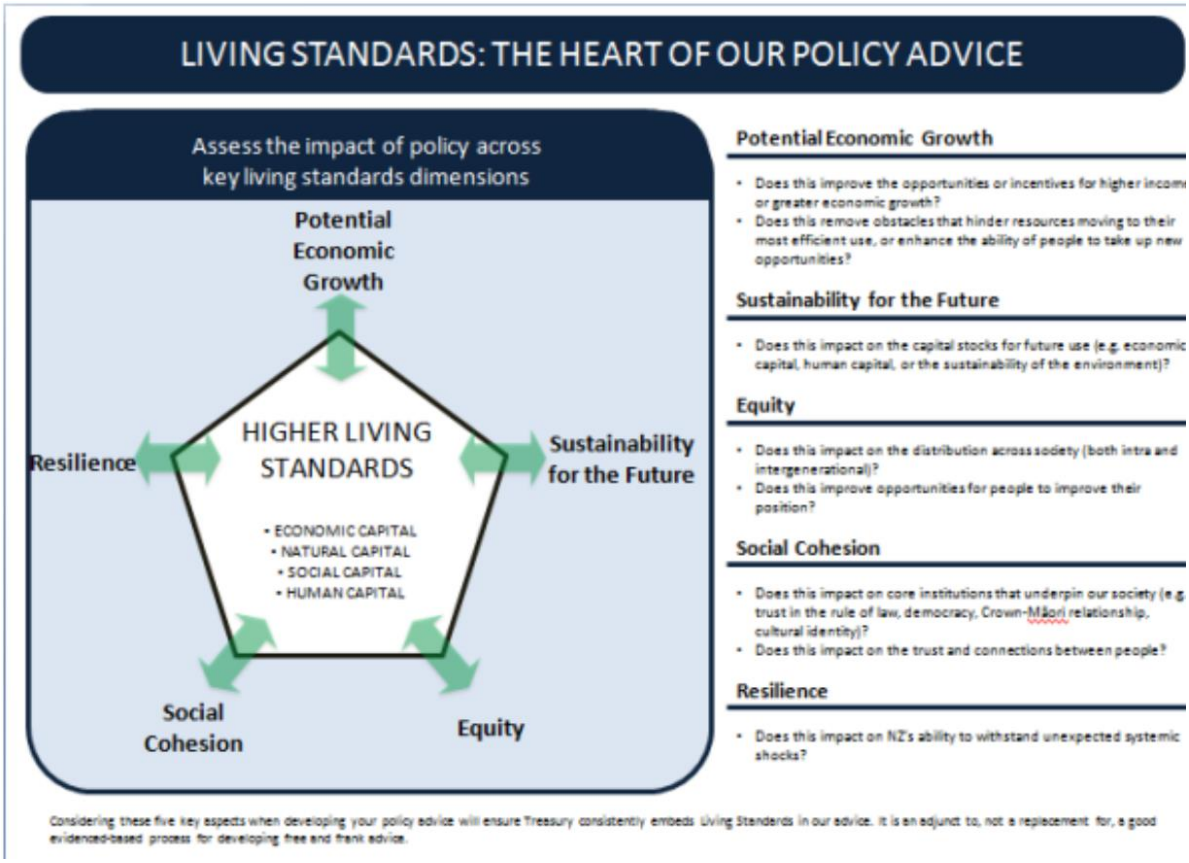
Note. Reprinted from Gleisner et al. (2011, p. 3). Copyright by The Crown.

With the release of the 2011 LSF, Treasury aspired to be "world class" (Treasury, 2010a, p.i, as cited in Gleisner et al., 2011) in its work towards higher living standards. Treasury's work was underpinned by theoretical approaches such as Amartya Sen's capabilities approach to wellbeing (Sen, 1999), and the initial purpose of the LSF was to provide an analytical response to the understanding of economic phenomena and its impact on people and communities with more "depth, breadth and quality" (OECD, 2019, p. 2) than other frequently used measures such as GDP. However, instead of prioritising New Zealand Government's Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership, the Treasury aligned itself with the OECD, the United States Treasury, the International Monetary Fund, and the Australian Treasury (Gleisner et al., 2011). This suggests that its approach was certainly economic and neoliberal rather than cognizant of the holistic views of wellbeing prioritised by Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand's unique cultural context.

The LSF was further updated in 2012 to provide a simpler framework that could be applied for analysis by the Tax Working Group (see Figure 9). The Treasury released a number of discussion papers between 2012-2017, as they and others began to examine how to apply the LSF to various facets of policy (Johnson & Carter, 2015; Karacaoglu, 2015; The Treasury, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d, 2013e, 2013f, 2014a, 2014b, 2015).

Figure 9

The Living Standards Framework, 2012



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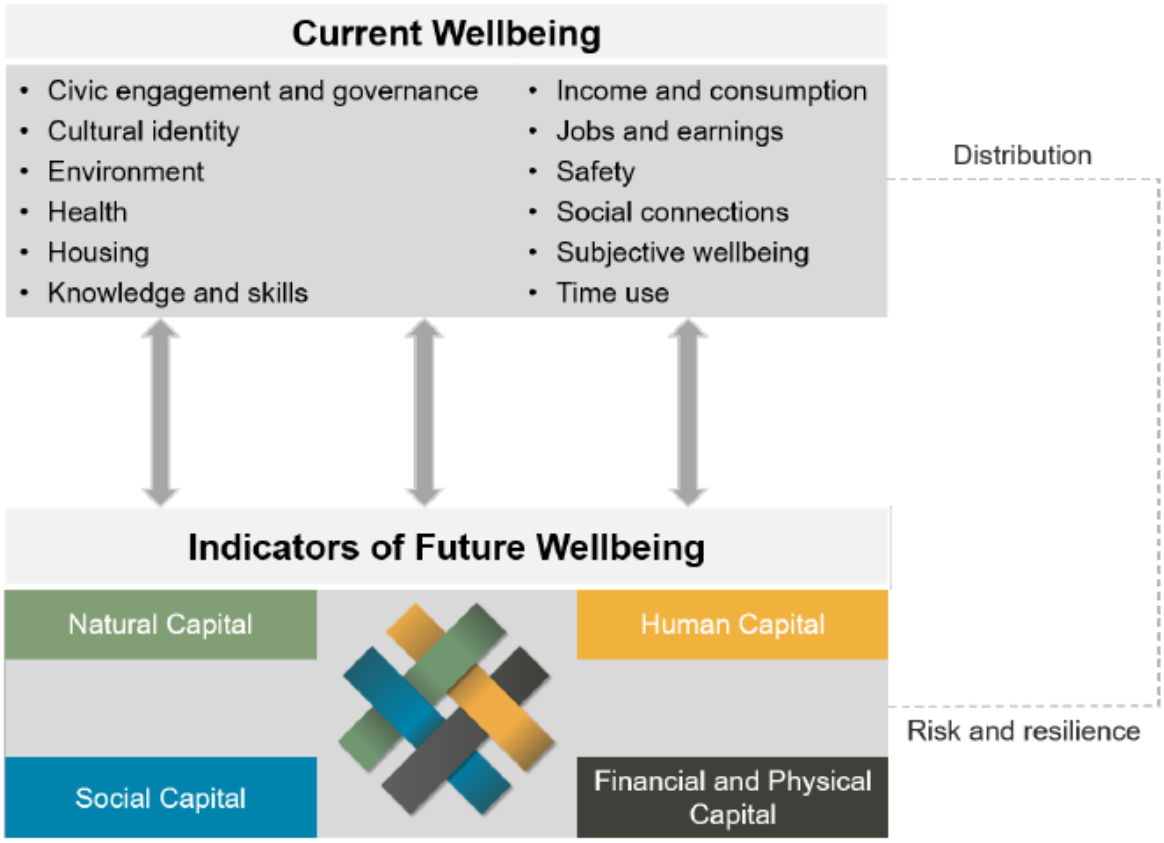
A more fulsome version of the LSF was released in 2018 (see Figure 10). The Treasury's work on the LSF was still influenced by Sen's capabilities approach which posits that, instead of policy-makers deciding what people should value in their lives, it is up to people to determine the kinds of things they value, and how they want to live (Dalziel et al., 2019; Hall, 2019). By developing a wellbeing framework based on a capabilities approach, the Treasury aimed to provide quality advice that incorporated an underlying vision of a prosperous nation with a wellbeing focus and higher living standards (Makhlouf, 2017; The Treasury, 2018). According to the Treasury, the 2018 LSF was based on over 30 years of

local and international research on wellbeing, as well as public feedback and expert advice (King et al., 2018).

Figure 10

The Living Standards Framework, 2018



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As illustrated in Figure 10, the 2018 LSF contained 12 domains titled *Current Wellbeing*. These domains are defined in Table 1, and are reflective of research on wellbeing factors that are "important for people and their wellbeing" (Smith, 2018; Stiglitz, Sen, & Fitoussi, 2009, both as cited in The Treasury, 2018, p. 3).

Table 1

The 12 Domains of Wellbeing

Domain	Definition
Civic engagement and governance	People's engagement in the governance of their country, how "good" New Zealand's governance is perceived to be and the procedural fairness of our society.
Cultural identity	Having a strong sense of identity, belonging and ability to be oneself, and the existence value of cultural taonga.
Environment	The natural and physical environment and how it impacts people today (this is different from the natural capital stock, which is measured elsewhere).
Health	Our mental and physical health.
Housing	The quality, suitability and affordability of the homes we live in.
Income and consumption	People's disposable income from all sources, how much people spend and the material possessions they have.
Jobs and earnings	The quality of people's jobs (including monetary compensation) and work environment, people's ease and inclusiveness of finding suitable employment and their job stability and freedom from unemployment.
Knowledge and skills	People's knowledge and skills.
Safety	People's safety and security (both real and perceived) and their freedom from risk of harm, and lack of fear.
Social connections	Having positive social contacts and a support network.
Subjective wellbeing	Overall life satisfaction and sense of meaning and self.
Time use	The quality and quantity of people's leisure and recreation time (that is, people's free time when they are not working or doing chores).

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Also seen in Figure 10 are the *Four Capitals* (which represent the four foundations of wellbeing). These are further described in Table 2.

Table 2

The Four Capitals of the Living Standards Framework

Capital	Definition
Natural capital	All aspects of the natural environment needed to support life and human activity.
Financial and physical capital	The country's physical, intangible and financial assets that have a direct role in supporting incomes and material living conditions.

Capital	Definition
Human capital	People's knowledge, physical and mental health that enables them to fully participate in work, study, recreation and society.
Social capital	The social connections, attitudes, norms and formal rules or institutions that contribute to societal wellbeing.

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A third element of the 2018 LSF is *Risk and Resilience*. These factors relate directly to capital stocks; the quality and quantity of capital stocks relate to Aotearoa New Zealand's ability to withstand economic shock.

Although various iterations of the LSF had been in existence for almost a decade, the framework became more publicly recognised when it was released alongside the Labour Coalition Government's 2019 'Wellbeing Budget'. This budget was described as a "landmark moment" by the Minister of Finance Grant Robertson (The Treasury, 2019b, p. 3), and Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said that the Government had broadened the idea of success "to one that incorporates not just the health of our finances, but also of our natural resources, people and communities" (The Treasury, 2019b, p. 2). Subsequent Budgets (2020, 2021) have seen an emphasis on 'rebuilding together' with a COVID-19 response and focussed spending on public services and key infrastructure. The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in increased government borrowing and budget deficit. Wellbeing has continued to be a priority for the Labour Government when delivering its annual budget – in 2021 it sought to address poverty and inequality by increasing benefit levels for beneficiaries (Government of New Zealand, 2021).

In the two years since the 2019 Wellbeing Budget and the introduction of the LSF as a visible policy tool, there has been a wellbeing influence on some economic, social and environmental policies. Examples of this include an amendment to the Public Finance Act 1989, requiring ministers to be clear about their wellbeing objectives as well as fiscal objectives; and a directive that the Treasury must present 4-yearly reports on wellbeing (Little, 2019; Parliamentary Counsel Office, 2020). Finance Minister Grant Robertson (2020) also linked the LSF to the Government's response to COVID-19, stating that the foundation of the LSF meant that the government and its agencies were well positioned to work together to address issues raised by the pandemic. However, despite these positive adjustments, critics have identified areas of policy in which an LSF wellbeing approach could be beneficial but is

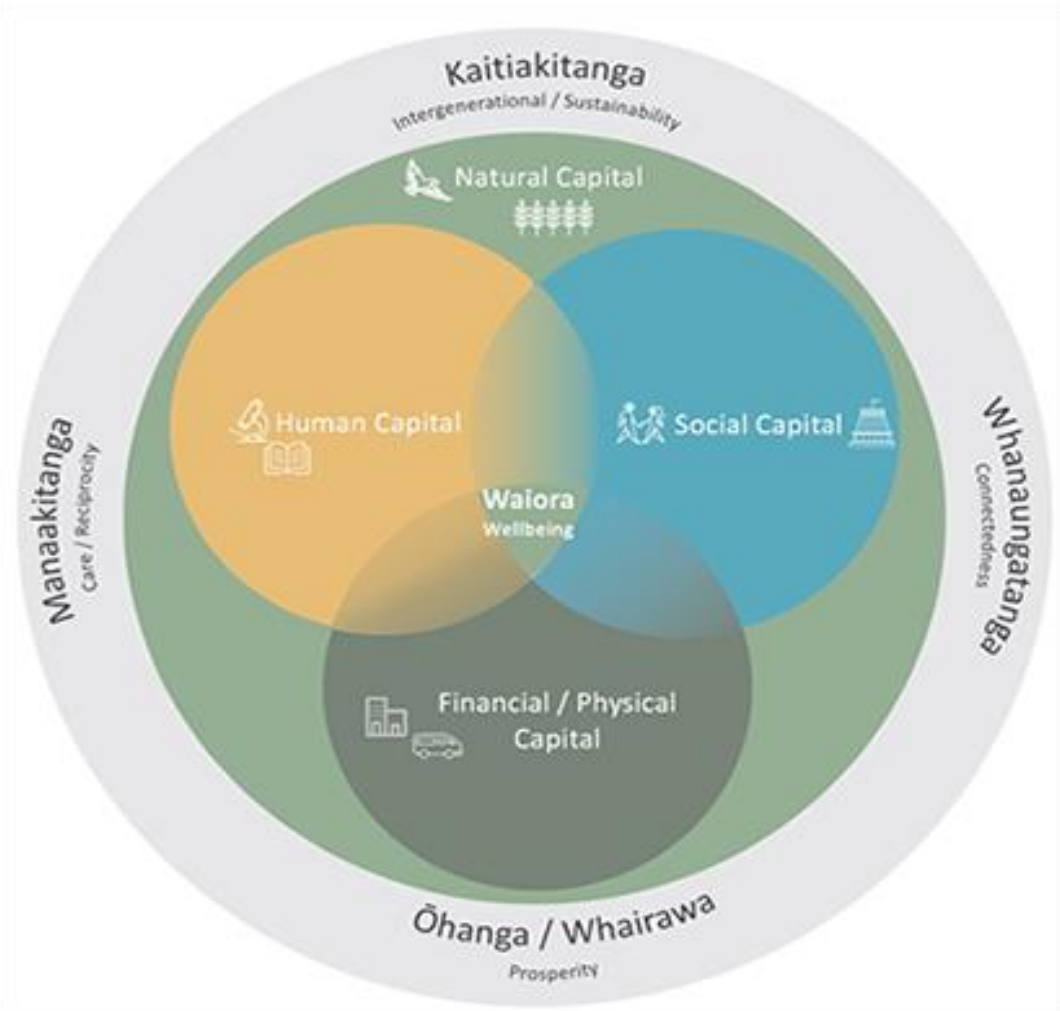
not being implemented. Examples include cultural accessibility, disability policy, and the value of unpaid labour, particularly that undertaken by women in a home setting or in the 'work' of reproduction (Berentson-Shaw, 2019; Dalziel et al., 2019; Murray & Loveless, 2021; Waring, 2018;). Dame Marilyn Waring, a well-known critic of the GDP as a measure of prosperity, disparaged the LSF as a missed opportunity "to establish a working policy framework of open architecture and modern relevance" (Waring, 2018, p. 8). Waring also asserted that the international framework from which the LSF is drawn fundamentally misses the bottom-up capability approach of Amartya Sen.

Another recognised shortcoming of the 2018 LSF was its lack of Māori influence and perspective. In response, a discussion paper *An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework* was released by Te Puni Kōkiri and the Treasury (2019). This document highlighted the importance of using Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, to actively work in partnership with Māori and protect future interests while addressing issues of inequity. By prioritising te ao Māori and incorporating concepts such as whakapapa (genealogy), whānaungatanga (relational connectedness), kaitiakitanga (stewardship), wairuatanga (spirituality), kotahitanga (collective action), and manaakitanga (caring relationships), the Indigenous Approach document provides a contextual approach that encompasses wellbeing for all New Zealanders. *An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework* will be further analysed and discussed in Chapter Four.

It should be noted that during this period the Treasury did incorporate a holistic Māori framework to understand waiora (a Māori view of wellbeing). *He Ara Waiora* was developed for the Tax Working Group by Ngā Pūkenga (who work with the Treasury); it was used in discussion papers alongside the 2018 LSF to give a fuller perspective of wellbeing for all New Zealanders (Cook et al. 2020; O'Connell et al., 2018). As seen in Figure 4, He Ara Waiora contains the same Four Capitals as the 2018 LSF.

Figure 11

The He Ara Waiora Model of Wellbeing



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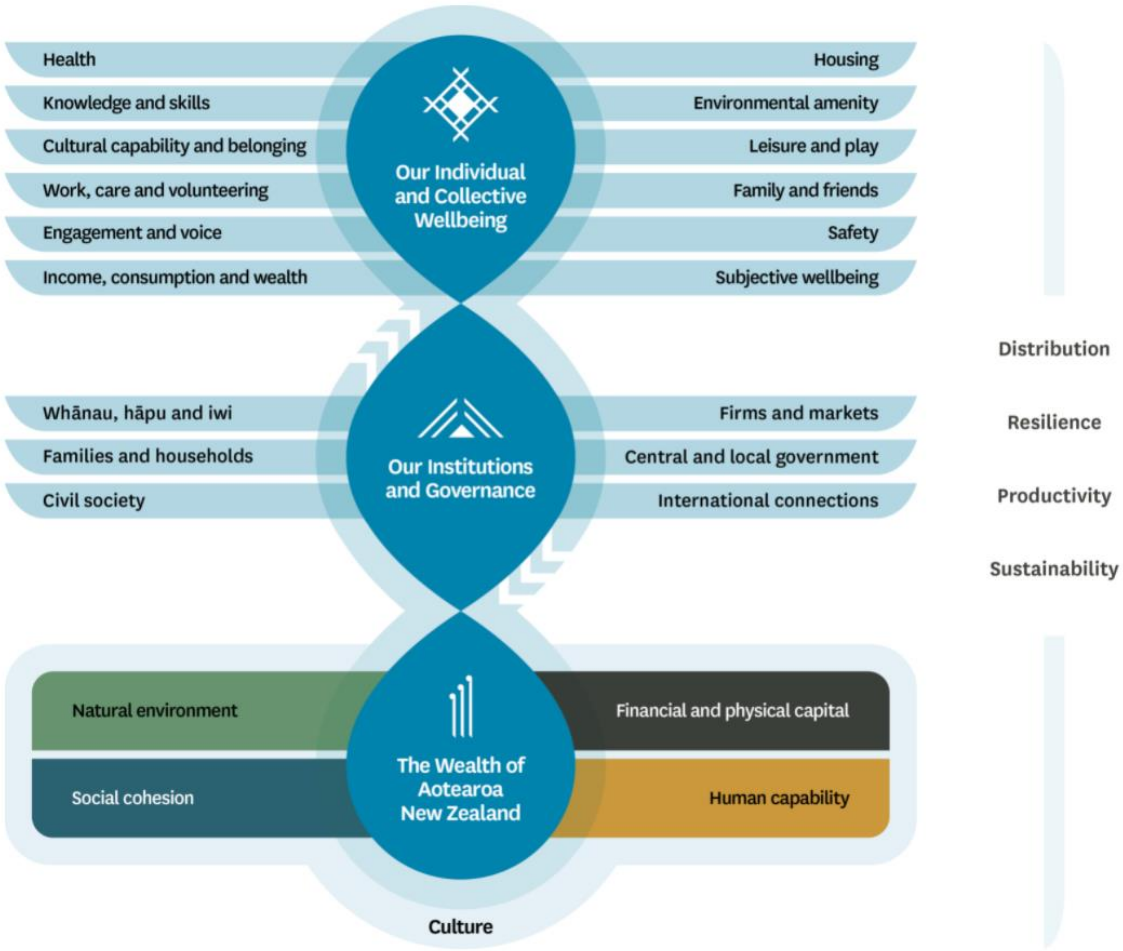
The latest iteration of the Living Standards Framework was released on 28 October 2021 (see Figure 12). This update was termed an "evolution" by the Treasury (2021b, p. 1), and indeed, the LSF framework has undergone an extensive renovation, rendering it quite different in appearance and content. The language has changed – gone are the mentions of 'Capitals', and many of the concerns raised about the 2018 LSF have been addressed.

Figure 12

The Living Standards Framework, 2021



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As mentioned previously, a key criticism of the 2018 LSF was its lack of Māori involvement and perspective. But Māori were not the only group who felt that their wellbeing was not adequately represented by the framework. Advocates for children, people with disabilities, other cultural groups, and people who participate in unpaid work all expressed disappointment at the scope of the LSF and its underlying focus on an OECD-inspired, neoliberal approach to wellbeing (Dalziel et al., 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019; Thomsen et al., 2018; Waring, 2018; Yong, 2018). The updated LSF recognises these shortcomings: "Our external engagement around the development of the LSF Dashboard in 2018 highlighted that our international approach may not fully capture the distinctive nature of wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand or the wellbeing of children" (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 7), and acknowledges that the 2018 version lacked a truly collective view of wellbeing that

reflected “the importance of families, whānau and community to the wellbeing of Māori, Pacific Peoples, and many other New Zealanders” (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 2). The Treasury has attempted to address these concerns by undertaking a complete redevelopment of its LSF framework, with a noticeable deletion of the ‘Capitals’ that formerly underpinned its model. The rationale for this change was that feedback had indicated that the term ‘capital’ can be “alienating” and “unintuitive” for non-economists (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 49). Instead, the updated LSF contains three levels: ‘Level 1: Our Individual and Collective Wellbeing’, ‘Level 2: Our Institutions and Governance’, and ‘Level 3: The Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand’. Level 3 has the most visual similarity to the 2018 LSF, however the ‘wealth definitions’ of natural environment, human capability, social cohesion, and financial and physical capital are all underpinned by a new cultural aspect of wealth which is defined as “our accumulated heritage from our ancestors, including knowledge systems, values and beliefs, and their manifestations in objects, practices and concepts” (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 16).

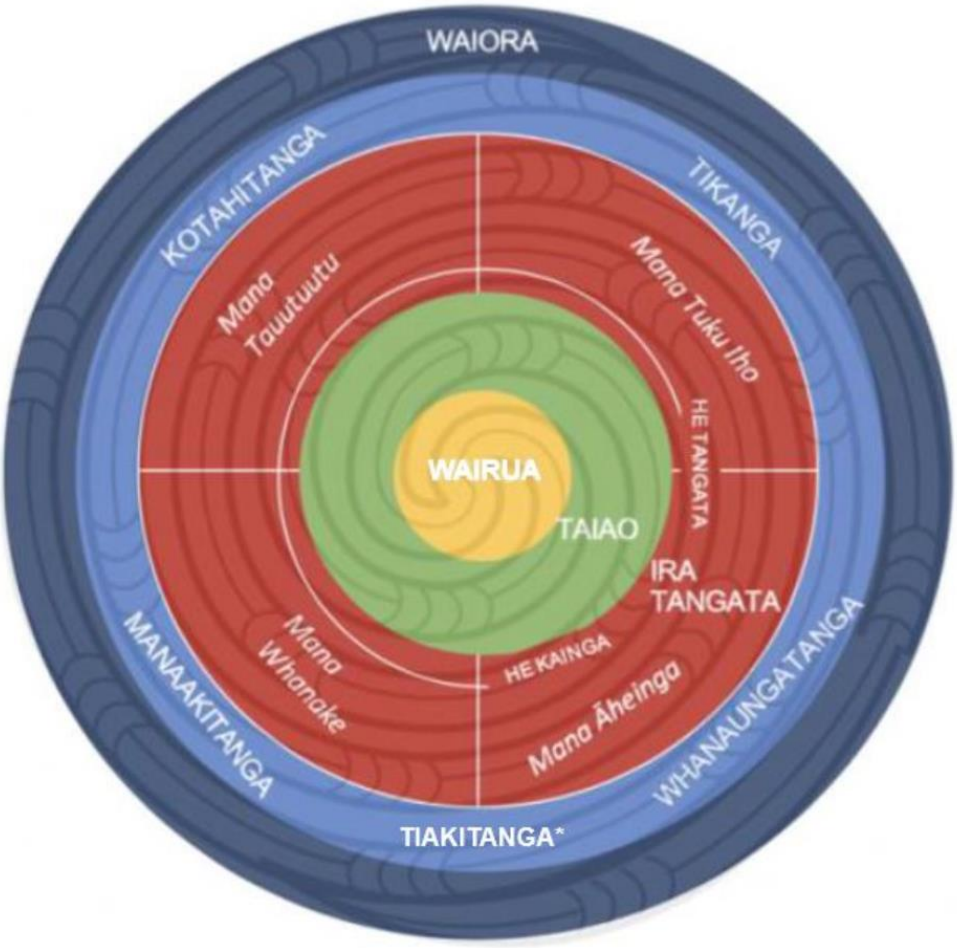
In the 2021 LSF, the Treasury has integrated many new concepts of wellbeing and recognised the importance of a multi-faceted, cultural perspective that better reflects the unique context of Aotearoa New Zealand. However, the Treasury acknowledges that it is difficult to incorporate everything that is important for children, Māori, and Pacific Island populations. To aid in providing a more comprehensive perspective for the aforementioned groups, other frameworks have been suggested as in-depth aids to maintain the “integrity of these complementary perspectives while also minimising the complexity of the LSF” (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 1). He Ara Waiora provides a Māori perspective; Lalanga Fou provides a Pacific perspective (The Ministry for Pacific Peoples, 2018); and the Children’s Commissioner’s Wellbeing Wheel (n.d.) provides a children’s wellbeing perspective.

He Ara Waiora is a particularly notable inclusion in the 2021 LSF. Originally designed by Māori to be used alongside the 2018 LSF to offer a Māori wellbeing perspective (McMeeking et al., 2019a), it underwent an extensive consultation process with Māori to create a framework “derived from mātauranga Māori, [with] many of its elements... relevant to lifting the intergenerational wellbeing of all New Zealanders” (The Treasury, 2021b, p.19). As seen in Figure 13, He Ara Waiora has undergone its own ‘evolution’, from a tikanga Māori framework that could guide tax policy, to a holistic model for wellbeing that is values-driven and has the potential to aid in challenging and addressing the “processes, assumptions and values that the Crown uses in policy making at systemic level, and in doing so, has the

potential to significantly advance the extent to which the Crown gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi" (McMeeking et al., 2019a, p.8).

Figure 13

The He Ara Waiora Model, as Included in the 2021 Living Standards Framework



Note. Reprinted from McMeeking et al. (2019a, p. 5). In *He Ara Waiora: Background Paper on the development and content of He Ara Waiora*. University of Canterbury.

During the review of the literature, I was unable to locate any information about the LSF in relation to L + N policy and programme implementation in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, it is apparent that, regardless of policy requirements, L + N programme providers consider participant wellbeing an important outcome alongside skills acquisition. A large study using a mixed-method approach (Alkema & Murray, 2020) found that, after completing a workplace L + N programme, 85% of participants reported feeling happier, 71% felt more relaxed, 71% felt confident to try new things, and 85% felt that they could make better

choices. The most reported wellbeing outcome from this study was confidence, both in the workplace and the community. Reported L+ N outcomes from Alkema and Murray's research included improvements in vocabulary and the confidence to speak up in workplace situations; improvements in writing, used to fill out forms; and improvements in numeracy practices, used to understand rosters and timesheets, and calculate resources needed on worksites. For a community-based perspective, a 2-year research project by Furness and Hunter (2019) found qualitative evidence that L + N programme participants felt proud of their accomplishments, used their newly acquired skills frequently in everyday life, and felt that improved communication skills enhanced their relationships.

The Tertiary Education Strategy and the Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Strategy.

The influence of policy on L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand is of particular relevance to this study. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) are two government departments that oversee all levels of learning in Aotearoa New Zealand. Two recent high-level policy documents from the TEC and the MoE directly influence adult L + N programmes; these are the *Tertiary Education Strategy (TES)* (Ministry of Education, 2021), and the *Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Strategy* (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015).

The TES was initially created by the New Zealand Government in 2001, for the purpose of aligning tertiary education with national priorities (Crawford, 2016); the first TES document was published shortly afterwards (2002/2007), and has been updated approximately 5-yearly since. It was last updated in 2020, after the LSF was launched alongside the Wellbeing Budget in 2019. The TES was issued under the Education and Training Act (2020), and was influenced by government investment in trades training and student wellbeing (Ministry of Education, 2021). It is designed to be used in conjunction with the *National Education and Learning Priorities* statement (NELP), which sets out priorities for early-stage schooling and education (Ministry of Education, 2021). Both the NELP and TES share objectives and priorities which are designed to adapt and grow with the learner. These priorities are in line with the MoE's objectives for learning and, upon initial reading of the policy document, seem to be reflective of a learner-focussed wellbeing approach. The five 'objectives' that underlie the 2021 TES use strength-based language with brief, powerful

statements: Learners at the centre; barrier-free access; quality teaching and leadership; future of learning and work; world-class inclusive public education. Under these objectives, eight 'priorities' form an action-plan for a holistic, learner-focussed approach to education delivery. These priorities include wider whānau and community involvement, and have a particular focus on Māori learners along with other marginalised groups (Ministry of Education, 2021).

The other key policy document, the Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Strategy (2015-2019) (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015), has not been updated since the 2019 Wellbeing Budget. Upon reading, it appears to contain a considered and thorough plan for the implementation of L + N programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, its approach does favour a neoliberal discourse of skills-based training for work purposes. Discussions of economy and employment feature prominently, with a repeated rhetoric that L + N skills are needed for economic and personal employment advancement rather than social benefit. Wellbeing and the importance of reaching Māori learners is mentioned, but instead of offering suggestions the discussion centres around working alongside other departments (such as the tertiary sector, iwi, and hapū), and 'considering' implementing a Māori L + N framework "as resources allow" (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015, p. 12). The Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Strategy does recognise that Māori and Pacific Island populations have been underserved by L + N services and are over-represented in low L + N statistics; however there is no discussion about why this may be the case, or recognition of the role of policy in contributing to poor wellbeing outcomes for Māori.

Conclusion

As discussed in this literature review, wellbeing is at the heart of community psychology as a practice, and the relationships between people, their whānau, hapū, iwi, language, the land and traditional 'ways of being' are critical for Māori wellbeing. Adult L + N providers in Aotearoa New Zealand understand these links, and base their programmes on a wider definition of L + N, one that emphasises skills acquisition alongside social and cultural practices. The LSF also strives to provide an insight into intergenerational wellbeing and honour what is important to New Zealanders – the evolution of the LSF over the past two decades reflects the increasing awareness of the unique context of Aotearoa New Zealand and the importance of the LSF being influenced by local knowledge rather than international

frameworks. Having outlined the epistemological approaches that underpin this research and reviewed the academic literature regarding the factors that are relevant to this study, the next chapter will discuss the methodology used to further unpack the elements of the LSF and adult L + N research and reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand in order to address the research question and objectives.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Method

Introduction

This chapter describes the overall methodological approach of this study, as well as the specific procedural steps that were undertaken. The first section of this chapter details the research question and objectives. The second section discusses the relevance and importance of community psychology and Kāupapa Māori values, as well as my personal values and considerations as a Pākehā researcher; the third section outlines the theories and frameworks that were chosen to inform this study. The final section of this chapter delineates the methods used; this includes a description of the document-based selection and data analysis processes, a summation of the research participants and recruitment, and an explanation of the interview process and data analysis.

Research Question and Objectives

As outlined in Chapter One, this research aims to contribute to the body of knowledge for a larger research project while also offering a unique perspective of adult L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand. To do this, I am seeking to understand the connections between adult learners, wellbeing outcomes, and the LSF by asking the question:

> How, and to what extent, does adult literacy and numeracy research and organisational reporting undertaken in Aotearoa New Zealand align with the key components of the *Living Standards Framework* and related Māori-led documents*?*

As demonstrated in the Literature Review, international and New Zealand-based research indicates that individuals with high L + N skills report high levels of wellbeing (Scott, 2018). Research by Furness (2012), Furness et al. (2013) and Potter et al. (2011) found that participants in adult L + N programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand reported high levels of personal satisfaction, confidence, and improved whānau and community interactions. However, no previous research has explicitly compared the LSF with the experiences of adult learners, and wellbeing outcomes that occur after participating in L + N programmes. The current study aims to explore these factors.

Three objectives were formulated to shape this research:

- The first objective was to identify the key components and the similarities between the LSF, L + N learning opportunities, and previously reported learner outcomes. The rationale for this objective was to explore whether positive learner experiences and outcomes (as recognised and highlighted by learners or researchers and organisational report authors) align with the values and beliefs that appear to underpin L + N programmes and the LSF. When referring to the LSF, I mean the 2018/2021 iterations, as well as the related Māori-led accompanying discussion documents (these will be further described in the document analysis section of this chapter). The methods used to address this objective included a content analysis of relevant LSF documents, and adult L + N research and organisational documents; interviews with key organisational representatives and research authors were also conducted.
- The second objective was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of actively engaging the LSF in adult L + N programmes and policies. The rationale for this objective was to establish the nature and extent of alignment (or misalignment) between the LSF and reported learner outcomes and values-based programme delivery; then consider the ways in which the LSF is/could be useful for achieving wellbeing through L + N programme participation. As discussed in the literature review, the initial purpose of the LSF was to provide a more holistic, wellbeing approach to government decision-making. This study aims to consider the practical application of applying the LSF to L + N policy and programme implementation – it had the laudable goal of providing intergenerational wellbeing for all New Zealanders, but is it actually capable of achieving this?
- The third objective was to identify ways in which the LSF is being updated to reflect Māori cultural views and values. The rationale for this objective was to acknowledge the importance of incorporating te ao Māori into an official wellbeing framework such as the LSF if genuine, Aotearoa-specific wellbeing outcomes are to be experienced by all New Zealanders. However, as discussed in the Literature Review, it was widely recognised that the 2018 LSF did not contain a suitably indigenous view (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019; The Treasury 2021a). In the present study, the 2018 LSF and An Indigenous

Approach to the Living Standards Framework (a Treasury discussion document) were compared and their components and values were discussed in relation to an updated 2021 LSF that was released after I had completed my initial analysis. This provided a relevant and timely opportunity for me to apply this objective in 'real time' by analysing the updated version to see whether it had genuinely addressed the concerns of Māori.

Research Approach and Values

My approach to this research was values-based and strongly informed by community psychology literature and Kaupapa Māori methodologies. My method of study was exploratory and used both deductive and inductive approaches to analyse the LSF, the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework, and selected adult L + N research documents and organisational reports. After reading all of the documents in their entirety, I identified themes using a combined deductive and inductive coding method. This data was augmented by interviews with those involved in producing some of the reports. A critical paradigm was applied in my discussion, which allowed recognition and critique of "discourses that normalize dominant ideology – that is, those lines of thinking that become so 'taken-for-granted' that people may fail to realize that they are power-laden discourses" (Leavy, 2017, p. 130). In alignment with a critical paradigm, implementing Kaupapa Māori principles also allowed critique of dominant ideology using three key elements: Māori knowledge bases, autonomy, and critical analysis (Levy, 2016).

The theme of 'values' is interwoven throughout this research report. This is primarily because community psychology is a "value-laden field in which action and research are intertwined" (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010, p. 49); in addition, any research that is authentically aligned with Māori interests needs to uphold a Māori worldview (Thompson & Barnett, 2008). Therefore, when considering the methodology of this study, 'values' are a key component. Community psychology values that I consider relevant for this research include holism, empowerment, social justice, respect for diversity, biculturalism and collaboration. Kaupapa Māori values and principles co-exist comfortably alongside community psychology values; using these principles in research, including tino rangatiratanga (absolute sovereignty), taonga tuku iho (cultural property and heritage), ako Māori (to teach and learn), kia piki ake i ngā raruaru o te kainga (the socio-economic mediation principle), whānau

(family), and kaupapa (collective vision and aspiration) prioritises and legitimises Māori ways of knowing (Bishop, 1999; L. T. Smith, 2015; L. T. Smith, 2021; G. H. Smith, 1992).

It is also important to recognise my personal values and ethnicity, and how these may influence my research. I am a Pākehā (New Zealander of European descent), and whilst I was brought up in a Pākehā cultural environment, I have had some graduate-level experience working alongside Māori students on a previous Kaupapa Māori research project. I have also undertaken a number of university-level papers in Tikanga Māori and as a result have recognised (and subsequently challenged) my privileged cultural background and upbringing. Through education, practical experience, and personal reflection, I feel that I am still on a journey to become an effective ally, but have an understanding of cultural protocols and resounding respect for te ao Māori. Community psychology also encourages active, engaged, participatory and reflexive processes that have enhanced my personal development (Mulvey et al., 2000). However, I appreciate that there are rightful concerns about Pākehā working in Māori research spaces, not least because non-Māori can, despite their best intentions, default to a colonial cultural worldview that detracts from important Māori perspectives and research advancements (Stevenson, 2018). It is also important to recognise the history of Pākehā research on Māori, which often disregarded the ongoing effects of colonial structures and expectations and instead focussed on cultural deficits (Smith, 1999). My personal approach to working collaboratively and respectfully in a Māori context is to critically evaluate and recognise what my role needs to be – I am cognizant of the fact that I have no personal experience of what it is to be Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, and as such I must be acutely aware of when my perspective can add value, and when to present Māori perspectives without adding my own voice (Huygens, 2000). In the current study, it is no task for me to position myself as a collaborator and 'non-expert' in line with community psychology principles – I am humbled that research report authors and professionals were willing to share their insights with me, a fledgling researcher.

Sociomaterialism and an Ecological Approach

To enhance my values-based research approach, it was important to use a holistic paradigm that aligned with both Kaupapa Māori and community psychology principles. A key theoretical approach that 'fits the brief' and underpins this thesis is sociomaterialism. A sociomaterial approach posits that L + N are social practices, with abilities and opportunities

to engage in L + N activities "woven into everyday patterns of social practice in locally specific ways" (Hamilton, 2016, p. 3).

Sociomaterialism is useful in this research because it challenges the dominant neoliberal approach which favours formal learning over informal and prioritises the use of standardised testing to validate achievement (Hamilton, 2016). Despite not being a dominant approach to L + N education or research, sociomateralism is becoming increasingly visible as the social role of effective communication increases alongside travel, immigration and the use of technology; modern society has led to an unprecedented intermingling of language and culture (Blommaert & Rampton, 2012; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015; all cited in Hamilton, 2016). One description that I found particularly resonant was Furness' (2012) two theoretical axis' that depict the different views of literacy (in the context of this research, they also apply to numeracy):

On one theoretical axis, literacy is thought of as an autonomous 'thing', a neutral set of skills, which is necessary for societal progress. On the other axis, literacy is thought of as a social construct and as social practice, with no meaning in and of itself but rather with its meaning embedded in social relations. Its implications for social progress are regarded as contingent rather than deterministic (p. 22).

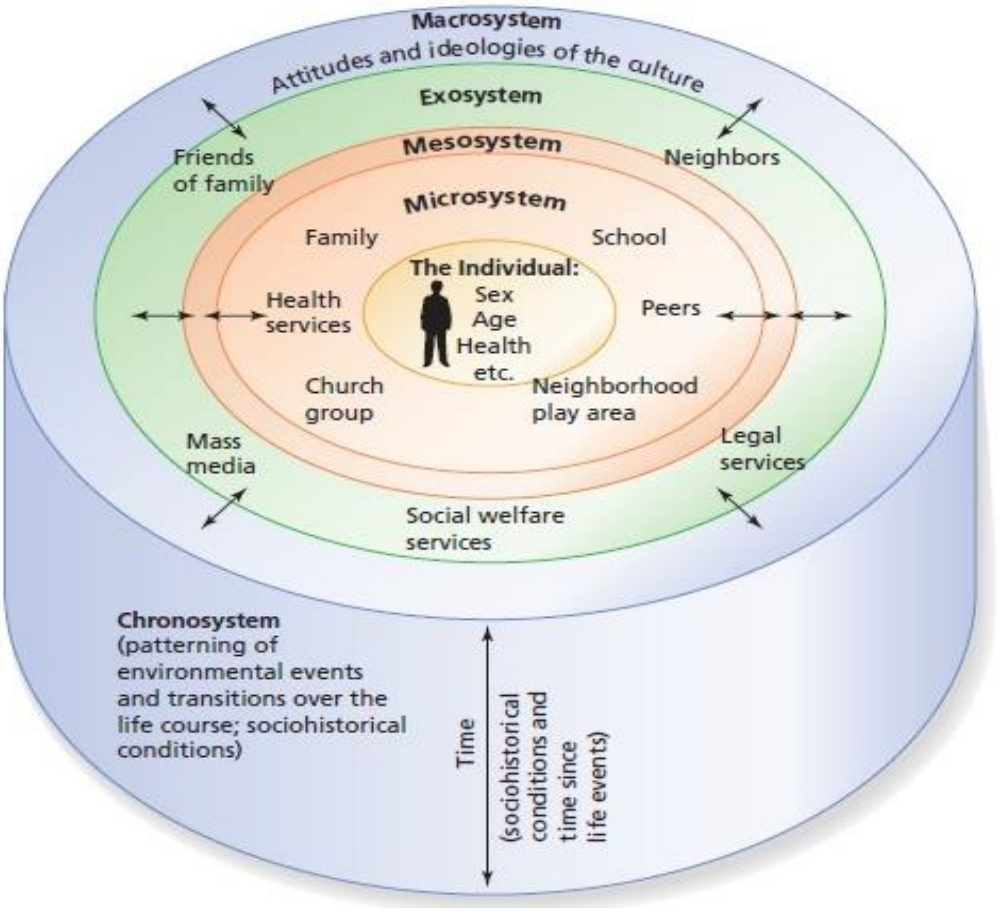
In this research, applying a sociomaterial lens, represented by Furness' 'other axis' was valuable because it allowed the documents to be analysed in ways that did not solely focus on linguistics and discourses. Instead, the material was considered to be "entangled in meaning" and included consideration of the authors, policy-makers and researchers involved in their creation (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. vi). Use of a sociomaterial framework also complemented the community psychology values of social justice, respect for diversity, and biculturalism. By applying a sociomaterial lens to actively challenge a dominant neoliberal approach, this research aimed to establish whether the LSF is genuinely a culturally-appropriate framework, or whether it is paying 'lip-service' to the idea while remaining aligned with the OECD and its approach of objective surveys and individualised skills-based economic approaches that convey very little of L + N's social impact (Yasukawa & Black, 2016).

Another approach that is epistemologically linked to a social view of L + N and was central to this research was an ecological perspective. With its holistic foundation, the ecological metaphor challenges the western dominant discourse of individualism and

neoliberalism, and instead places L + N in the context of communities and social systems. Originally developed by Brofenbrenner, the ecological model emphasises interactions between the environment and the individual, drawing attention to multiple levels of analysis, with a collaborative and interpretive approach (Brofenbrenner, 1981; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). A key principle of the ecological metaphor, interdependence, emphasises that different parts of an ecosystem are interconnected: change in one area will have a 'ripple' effect on other areas. The main layers of the ecological model can be seen in Figure 14; the micro and meso systems are the innermost layers that each person interacts with regularly, these shape their everyday conscious experiences. On a more conceptual level are the three outermost systems: the exosystem (representing elements that have an indirect influence on an individual such as structural institutions and policies), the macrosystem (consisting of cultural ideologies and norms), and the chronosystem (representing an individual's development over the lifespan) (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010).

Figure 14

Brofenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model



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The ecological metaphor is particularly relevant in this study because L + N skills develop, change, and are used in various ways throughout an individual's life, are shared across cultures and communities, and are directly influenced by educational institutions and governmental policies. The ecological metaphor is also a key paradigm that shapes a community psychology approach to wellbeing (Angelique & Culley, 2007; as cited in Furness, 2012); it is particularly relevant when identifying and understanding "pathogenic or oppressive qualities of human environments – those that block personal growth and create problems in living – and the positive qualities of environments that promote health, well-being and competence" (Cowen, 1994, as cited in Nelson and Prilleltensky, 2010, p.79). An ecological approach also naturally reflects te ao Māori beliefs and values, whereby interdependence is a key concept that shapes relationships between self and family, self and the environment, and the living and their ancestors. Māori wellbeing models are based on holistic, interdependent factors to create a picture of complete wellbeing. An example of this can be seen in the Te Whare Tapa Whā framework (Durie, 1998, as discussed in Chapter Two), in which the whare of wellbeing is built by strong walls that represent taha wairua, taha hinengaro, taha tinana, and taha whānau. If any of these walls becomes weak, the whole structure will fail.

Research Procedures

Ethical Approval

Prior to commencing any research activities, ethical approval was sought and granted by the University of Waikato School of Psychology Human Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix A: Ethics Application Approval). This research was conducted in accordance with the New Zealand Psychologists' Board Code of Ethics (2002). Cultural competence, sensitivity and safety are relevant for this research topic; the New Zealand Psychologist Board's Cultural Competencies Guidelines (2011) was closely adhered to in this instance.

Document Analysis

This research sought to answer the research question through a document-based content analysis of the LSF, related Māori-led documents, and selected L + N research and organisational reports. The aim of this process was to provide a fulsome view of any connections between adult L + N research and reporting, wellbeing outcomes for learners,

and the LSF. The selected documents were chosen because of their relevance to the research question while representing various approaches and perspectives on the LSF or L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand:

Burton, T. (2018). *The Treasury approach to the living standards framework.*

Furness, J. (2013). *Principles and practices in four New Zealand family focused adult literacy programs: Towards wellbeing in diverse communities.*

Furness, J. & Hunter, J. (2019). *Using a wellbeing framework to recognise, value and enhance the broad range of outcomes for learners in adult literacy and numeracy programmes.*

Hughes, T. (2021). *Towards a living standards framework for all Aotearoa: Culture, children and wellbeing.*

Hutchings, J., Yates, B., Isaacs, P., Whatman, J., & Bright, N. (2013). *Hei ara ako ki te oranga: A model for measuring wellbeing outcomes from literacy programmes.*

Literacy Aotearoa. (2018). *Literacy Aotearoa Annual Report*.

McLauchlan, J., & Farley, H. (2019). *Fast cars and fast learning: Using virtual reality to learn literacy and numeracy in prison.*

McMeeking, S., Kahi, H., & Kururangi, G. (2019a). *He Ara Waiora: Background paper on the development and context of He Ara Waiora.*

Potter, H., Taupo, K., Hutchings, J., McDowall, S., & Isaacs, P. (2011). *He whānau mātau, he whānau ora: Māori adult literacy and whānau transformation.*

Taupo, K. (2016). *Creating spaces for whānau wellbeing, literacy and numeracy in the context of neoliberalism in Aotearoa, New Zealand.*

Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury. (2019). *An indigenous approach to the living standards framework.*

The Treasury. (2018). *Living standards framework: Background and future work.*

The Treasury. (2021b). *The living standards framework 2021*.

Content analysis was considered the best approach for the document analysis because it is “a family of research techniques for making systematic, credible, or valid and replicable

inferences from texts and other forms of communication" (Drisko & Maschi, 2015, p. 6). A qualitative content analysis approach was specifically chosen because it allowed each document to be analysed via deductive and inductive methods. Categories were selected and refined through the addition of sub-themes and quotes; this ensured that the document analysis remained closely linked to the original documents. Content analysis also allowed me to uncover beliefs, assumptions, and themes beyond a surface level; these may not have been explicitly described by the author (Thomas & Hodges, 2010). From a community psychology perspective, identifying underlying meanings in this document analysis is important because the LSF introduced a new form of ideology to policy and government – a humanistic, social, holistic view of individuals that echoes community psychology principles and values. This is different to the position advanced by previous governments and is important to recognise because it offers an alternative perspective to the dominant behavioural practices, modes of thought and institutional structures that were previously commonplace.

The document analysis was completed in two stages:

1. Analysis of key LSF documents.

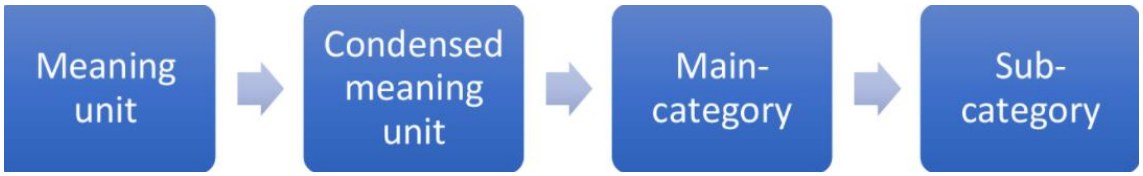
- The 2018 LSF and Indigenous Approach documents were analysed to identify themes consistent with the community psychology and Kaupapa Māori principles and values that underpin this research. The documents were also critically examined to decipher similarities and differences. To do this in a systematic manner, I tabulated my analysis, which provided a clear visual reference of the similarities and differences between the LSF and the Indigenous Approach document. Once this analysis was complete, I repeated the same process with the 2021 LSF and He Ara Waiora. I decided that tabulating the main features of these documents in the same way that I had done for the 2018 LSF and Indigenous Approach documents would be the most effective way to provide a similar level of comparison. When discussing the findings of this analysis, each section of the table was used as a heading, followed by a contrast and discussion.
- The aim of this process was to identify the themes and values that were expressed in each document; this enabled me to identify the underlying factors of each framework, how wellbeing is determined for the population of Aotearoa New Zealand, and whether this reflects the values and beliefs that are vital for Māori.

2. Analysis of the selected L + N research reports.

- Themes were initially created using a deductive coding method; this involved choosing a specific set of themes that aligned with the values that underpin this research and was decided upon prior to beginning my analysis. As I worked through each research report document I incorporated an inductive coding method, which allowed me to identify and include themes as they emerged. This combined approach was beneficial because it allowed me to identify themes central to this research, while not overlooking anything unexpected yet relevant (Kaefer et al., 2015). To assist in my analysis, I created a table for each document – the categories of each column are shown in Figure 15. I chose this approach because it allowed me to be thorough in my analysis while not becoming overwhelmed by the sheer amount of data. First, I took units of text in their largest form, condensed them, then categorised them (Vilhelmsson, 2018). I have provided an example of this analysis process in Appendix B

Figure 15

Process of Analysis



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The aim of this analytical approach was to establish what was reported in terms of outcomes and experiences for adult learners in L + N programmes, along with an understanding of the values and holistic approaches that are evident within the programmes and presented by L + N researchers. When presenting the findings of this analysis, overlapping themes and subthemes (between documents) were identified and discussed.

Interviews

Interview Participant Selection and Recruitment. Interviews were held with six L + N researchers/report authors and key informants from relevant organisations. While the document analysis aimed to provide a foundation of themes and an understanding of the values, beliefs and outcomes that resonate with adult learners, the purpose of the interviews

was to further augment the data by illuminating these elements and explore the values, beliefs, and experiences of the research authors. The recruitment process began after I had read extensively through the literature and decided on the research reports/documents to include in my analysis. Because each document was chosen for its relevant and interesting perspectives on adult L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand, all of the authors would have been valuable to include in my research. However, I only had capacity (due to time and thesis size constraints) to include 4-6 interviews. I had to reflect on each document, and decide which research I felt really resonated with the values and concepts that underpinned my research, which authors or key personnel were so experienced in their field that their perspective would be crucial, and who was doing research that was unique in perspective and approach. Once I had selected my potential interview participants, I consulted my supervisor, Dr Jane Furness. As an experienced L + N researcher who is involved in the larger L + N research project, Jane was well-placed to introduce me to the chosen authors (some of whom were consulting on the larger project, and some she knew from previous projects). I followed Jane's brief introduction with an email to introduce myself and my research, and asked if they would be interested in participating in a Zoom interview (see Appendix C: Introductory Email). Once they replied affirming their interest we worked out a suitable date and time, and I sent out a Zoom invitation along with an information sheet (see Appendix D: Interview Information Sheet) and consent form to review.

Participant Consent. Because the interview was conducted via Zoom the participant had to electronically sign the consent form (see Appendix E: Participant Interview Consent Form). They were advised that they could do this prior to the interview if they felt confident to do so; otherwise I would go through the consent form with them and capture a 'verbal consent' via my recording device. The participant could then electronically sign and send their consent form to me after the interview. Electronic consent forms were stored in a secure Google Drive. After each interview was transcribed, I emailed a copy to all participants; they were able to review it and withdraw their participation within two weeks if required.

Semi-Structured Interviews. Zoom interviews were planned to allow flexibility for busy schedules and geographical spread, and proved essential due to COVID lockdowns. Interviews were conducted between 14 November and 23 December 2021; each lasted approximately 45 minutes. The primary aim of these interviews was to gain perspectives from those with expert knowledge of the LSF, Indigenous Approach to the LSF, or L + N research and reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand. It was also valuable to hear their

perspectives on the underlying values of people (including their own personal values), and the societal and individual value placed on L + N by adult learners and organisations. A semi-structured interview method was chosen because the flexibility of such an approach allowed each interview to be tailored to the position and expertise of the interviewee (Dahlberg & McCaig, 2010) (see Appendix F: Interview Questions).

Because the interview participants are well-known in their fields and may have contributed to existing research, it was considered they may be somewhat recognisable in the context of my research reporting. To provide a layer of protection, all participants are referred to in this research report by the role they hold, for example ‘author’ or ‘researcher’, or the generic term ‘interviewee’. In-text quotes are not given any differentiation. To further assist in maintaining their anonymity they were given a copy of their interview transcript for review; they were able to edit or withdraw any information that they considered inappropriate for use, or that might have identified them too readily.

Transcription and Analysis. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the transcribed data in a systematic and thorough manner. This analytical process was chosen because it allowed me to respect the narratives within the data while retaining validity of the results. It is also an approach that lends itself well to what I consider to be the ‘journey’ of transcribing and becoming familiar with the raw data, then re-reading (while cleaning up the initial transcription) and generating initial codes and ideas. For a novice researcher, this process takes a substantial amount of time, but I found it beneficial because it allowed me to get a full sense of the data. The subsequent identification, review and definition of themes occurred quite naturally after the all-encompassing task of transcribing. The six phases of thematic analysis are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3

Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Note. Reprinted from Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 87). In Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(22), 77-101.

Raw interview data was transcribed in full verbatim, with only conversation fillers cleaned from the data ('um', 'ah', and unrelated introductory/conclusionary conversations). Apart from these exclusions, the entire interview was used in the analysis which ensured that no vital points were missed. While undertaking the task of transcription I familiarised myself with the interview data, and formulated initial ideas which I set out as notes in the margin. This process was followed by the generation of initial codes, which involved highlighting interesting features in different colours for easy reference. These highlighted features ensured ease of theme identification, and the colour-coding exercise continued when reviewing each interview transcript. Once all codes were grouped into larger themes, a thematic map was created, tying all interviews together and identifying themes that featured in multiple interviews. The thematic map allowed me to provide a sense of cohesion in my analysis, and provided a natural framework of themes under which to present my findings in this research report.

Chapter Four: Comparison Analysis of the Living Standards Framework and the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework

Introduction

This chapter begins with a comparison analysis and discussion of the 2018 LSF (Burton, 2018; The Treasury, 2018) and An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework document (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019). After completion of the comparison analysis, a newly updated LSF was released by the Treasury, along with the He Ara Waiora Māori wellbeing framework which has been developed to complement the LSF and add a holistic, te ao Māori perspective to government and policy. Although this update was scheduled for 2021, it had not been widely publicised and was not expected to be available for this research. However, the 2021 LSF marks a significant shift in the Treasury's approach to wellbeing, and it is relevant for inclusion as the most up-to-date iteration. To incorporate this development, a second comparison analysis was undertaken between the 2018 LSF and the 2021 LSF; the He Ara Waiora framework was also analysed and its components tabulated. The aim of this process was to further explore the contents of each document, provide an extensive view of the similarities and differences between the 2018 and 2021 LSF frameworks, and establish how the He Ara Waiora framework is to be used alongside the LSF. To conclude this chapter, interview data is presented, with the aim of augmenting the document analysis by adding the perspective of research authors and key organisational personnel.

The 2018 Living Standards Framework and An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework

It is important to clarify at the outset that, when comparing the LSF and the Indigenous Approach document, it is not a matter of comparing 'apples with apples'. The LSF is a policy document, while the Indigenous Approach to the LSF is a discussion document and, as such, does not carry any legislative weight. However, this should not detract from the relevance and importance of the Indigenous Approach document which offers valuable discussion and critical analysis of the 2018 LSF, particularly its strengths, weaknesses, and why it needs to address its admitted lack of Māori worldview.

The introduction of a Living Standards Framework provided a new and welcome approach to policy-development in Aotearoa New Zealand. The evolution of economic thinking beyond simply economic growth measures such as the GDP and market outcomes is indicative of a shift in governance approach both in Aotearoa and overseas (Makhlouf, 2017; Stiglitz et al., 2008; The Treasury, 2018). To provide relevant information about the background, development, and implementation of the 2018 LSF, two documents were analysed:

- Burton, T. (2018). *The Treasury approach to the living standards framework.*
- The Treasury. (2018). *Living standards framework: Background and future work*

These documents outlined the initial aims and purposes of the LSF, and were chosen as foundational documents that charted the development and implementation of a wellbeing framework that was heralded as an "exciting development in how we assess our success as a nation" (Robertson, 2018, as cited in Walters, 2018). An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019) was analysed as a stand-alone document. This was because there is no other discussion document that offers an Indigenous perspective and Māori worldview in direct relation to the 2018 LSF.

Comparison Between the LSF and the Indigenous Approach Document

For clarity and ease of comparison, key points of the LSF and the Indigenous Approach document were tabulated (see Table 4). The aim of this process was to identify the themes and values that were expressed in each document; this enabled me to identify the underlying factors of each framework. Each section of the table is then used as a heading to further present key information and discuss contrasting elements.

Table 4

Comparison Between the Living Standards Framework (2018) and the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework

	Living Standards Framework (2018)	**Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework**
Developed By	The Treasury	Te Puni Kōkiri – Commissioned by The Treasury

Based On	• The OECD's 'How's Life' Framework • Previous Treasury Work • Other OECD definitions to enable international comparability	• Te ao Māori ways of perceiving and understanding the world • Māori wellbeing literature, with influences from the 'Taskforce on Whanau-Centred Initiatives' (2010) and the Whanau Ora Partnership Group (2016) • 'Drivers of Wellbeing' specific to Aotearoa; recognised as values, beliefs, and relationships, marked by diversity
Theoretical & Practical Influences	• Capability Approach (Sen) • OECD's taxonomic approach • Empirical approach, using a scientific view of NZ-relevant and policy-relevant indicators that can be applied to "real world" settings • Ecological model	• Te ao Māori • Holism • Whānau centred • Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations • Ecological model
Main Components	• Four Capitals (natural, human, social, and financial/physical). These work together to support wellbeing. The Crown-Māori relationship is integral – an updated LSF will include more influence of Māori culture	• Acknowledgement that wellbeing differs between diverse populations and needs to be understood in context • An Indigeneity lens that provides a uniquely Māori perspective on wellbeing • 7 wellbeing domains that describe a holistic and intergenerational approach to wellbeing
Purpose	• To improve advice and complement the current suite of economic methods and tools for informing prudent fiscal strategy • To support government agencies to be more cohesive so that public policy of wellbeing, spending and other government interventions is aligned with intergenerational wellbeing.	• To articulate a Māori perspective of wellbeing, and how it can be considered via a practical tool that: • Supports the wider pursuit of a set of wellbeing indicators that work for all New Zealanders • Enables consideration of current and future capital stocks as measures of capabilities that support wellbeing, having taken into account an Indigenous approach
Values - As Described	• Respect for Treaty of Waitangi obligations and values • Respect for other aspects of New Zealand's unique diversity	• Strengths-based • Importance of relationships and te Tiriti obligations • Diversity – recognition of biculturalism and multiculturalism in Aotearoa • Recognising and respecting differences for whānau, hapū and iwi across Aotearoa

	• The four Capitals of the LSF are viewed through Māori values such as mātauranga (traditional knowledge), wairuatanga (spirituality), whanaungatanga (family relationships), kaitiakitanga (ancestral connections to the natural environment), manaakitanga (kindness, respect, and generosity), and mana (prestige)

Developed by/Based on/Theoretical and Practical Influences. The LSF was developed by the Treasury to address growing recognition that solely economic measures such as GDP may indicate a surface level of success while degrading the environment and allowing social suffering (Ardern, 2018, as cited in Hartcher, 2018). In the *Living Standards Framework: Background and Future Work* (The Treasury, 2018), it is stated that the LSF was primarily based on the OECD's 'How's Life' Framework, as well as previous Treasury work (which is unspecified) and other OECD definitions (also unspecified) to enable international comparability. It should be noted that interest in international comparability originates from the neoliberal approach favoured by the OECD, which allows participating countries to be ranked but does not allow for cultural or contextual specification. The Treasury also states that theoretical and practical foundations of the LSF include Sen's capability approach, the OECD's taxonomic approach, and an empirical approach that uses a scientific lens to examine indicators that are relevant to New Zealand and can be used in policy-making for "real-world" application (The Treasury, 2018, p. 4). These foundations are also cited as important for technical and political credibility which is "likely to be enhanced if the measure is designed by internationally well-respected apolitical bodies, particularly intergovernmental agencies such as the OECD or the United Nations (UN)" (Burton, 2018, p. 5).

The Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework was commissioned as a te ao Māori perspective on the LSF. It was authored by Te Puni Kōkiri, and published by The Treasury as a discussion document (The Treasury, 2018). From the outset, it is clear that the Indigenous Approach document provides a different perspective – rather than seeking international input and comparability, the Indigenous Approach is based on unique 'Drivers of Wellbeing' that are specific to Aotearoa and te ao Māori ways of perceiving and understanding the world. Theoretical and practical foundations are holistic in nature, firmly grounded in te ao Māori with a whānau-centred approach: "[An Indigenous approach] is both system facing and people facing… [it] enables linkages to be made between the wellbeing of

whānau, the individuals within them and the communities that comprise them, and the overall concept of national wellbeing" (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 1).

An ecological approach is mentioned in both the LSF and Indigenous Approach documents, although again, different approaches are taken: The LSF claims to offer a macro view across social, environmental and economic conditions, which is helpful because it allows national-level measurement that can be compared internationally. However, despite one mention of social and environmental conditions, The Treasury (2018) focuses on repeated use of the word "macroeconomic" (p. 4), indicating that economic considerations are prioritised from an ecological perspective. In contrast, the Indigenous Approach favours a micro-level view of whānau experiences that impact everyday wellbeing, capturing lived experiences rather than seeking international comparison.

Main Components. The LSF's main components are the Four Capitals, used to organise indicators of long-term wellbeing (Natural Capital, Human Capital, Social Capital, Financial/Physical Capital). These are then expanded by the addition of 12 wellbeing domains. As outlined in Burton (2018), all of these components have been directly transferred from the OECD's 'How's Life' framework; however, they were deemed to sufficiently capture elements of wellbeing "generally important to people in New Zealand" (The Treasury, 2018, p. 3). The Indigenous Approach used the same Four Capitals, with seven wellbeing domains that were developed by the Taskforce on Whānau-Centred Initiatives (2010, as cited in Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019). These seven wellbeing domains were based on Māori wellbeing literature and use an indigeneity lens to provide a uniquely Māori perspective on wellbeing (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019). While still encompassing the content of the The Treasury's 12 wellbeing domains, Te Puni Kōkiri suggested that their seven wellbeing domains are better suited to Aotearoa New Zealand because they look beyond a macro-level of wellbeing towards the micro-level experiences of whānau, providing the opportunity for diverse populations to describe the ways in which their unique version of wellbeing is achieved. The seven wellbeing domains as suggested in the Indigenous Approach document can be seen in Figure 16, with notes suggesting how they can be applied to both Māori and non-Māori.

Figure 16

Wellbeing Domains as Presented in the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework

Seven wellbeing domains	Indicators generated by applying an indigenous approach	
Confident in language and culture	• % Learning te reo • % Believe they have acquired enough knowledge of mātauranga and whakapapa to teach their children • % Participate in the transfer of te ao Māori knowledge • % Feel they have the opportunity to participate in cultural activities • % Marae functioning well (in good state of repair) • % Confident in organisations upholding their rights • % Satisfied that advocacy efforts are consistent with tribal history and values	Social
Cohesive, resilient and nurturing	• % Whānau/family satisfied with the amount of time spent intergenerationally • % Whānau/family that give care to older/younger members • % Whānau/family provide a nurturing environment	
Confidently participating in society	• % Voting in local elections • % Voting in school board of trustee elections • % Feel/trust that their whānau/family is treated fairly • % Feel their whānau are able to live as Māori • % Feel their whānau/family has satisfactory access to all necessary services • % Satisfactory access to early childhood education • % Truancy	Human
Living healthy lifestyles	• % Feel their whānau encourage healthy lifestyle choices	
Self-managing	• % Believe they have gained the skills/knowledge to adequately manage their lives • % Believe they have gained the skills and knowledge needed to contribute to their whānau/family • % Whānau that are aware of the capability that exists in their whānau network • % Whānau/households have a household emergency plan • % Whānau/households have home contents insurance • % Aware of their rights and interests regarding assets held in common	
Responsive to living and natural environment	• % Land development and productivity • Value of whānau landholdings • % Whānau/family have access to involvement in environmental management processes • % Whānau/family are satisfied with their access to physical environment/resources • % Homes are insulated • % Land type that housing is on (papakāinga) • % Whānau have access/opportunity to visit sites of significance	Natural
Economically secure and wealth creating	• % Whānau/family have a retirement savings plan • % Believe they have the skills to adequately manage the financial situation for themselves and their whānau/family • % Whānau/household have sufficient employment • % Increasing employees • % Whānau/household feel they would have the support needed to start a business	Financial/ physical

Note. Red text signifies indicators that are Māori-specific rather than for the full population. Reprinted from Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury (2019, p. 21). Copyright 2019 by The Crown.

Purpose. The purpose of the LSF appears laudable: it aims to support government agencies to be more cohesive so that policy-making and other government interventions are aligned with a foundation of intergenerational wellbeing. It has been designed to complement other economic methods and tools to inform prudent fiscal strategy. The Indigenous Approach makes no mention of economic or fiscal considerations, but outlines a purpose that enables consideration of current and future capital stocks from an Indigenous perspective, as capabilities that support wellbeing for all New Zealanders.

Values – As Described. The values described in the LSF are not particularly explicit; the importance of respecting Treaty of Waitangi obligations and values is stated, as is the importance of respecting 'other aspects' of New Zealand's 'unique' diversity — however there is no specification of what the other aspects are, or how this respect should transpire. In contrast, the Indigenous Approach clearly stated many values, all with a holistic, Māori worldview. Te Tiriti o Waitangi was prominently featured, with firm emphasis on its importance as a constitutional document that must form the basis for all interactions between Māori and the Crown. Another key value highlighted the importance of a strengths-based approach:

> It will be critical to focus less on the failings of Māori in terms of statistical outcomes and instead look to the potential capability within the Māori population that will support improved wellbeing. (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 4)

Other values included recognition of the diverse nature of Aotearoa's population with biculturalism as a primary focus, but also including multiculturalism; and recognition of the differences between whānau, hapū and iwi across Aotearoa. Finally, the Indigenous Approach adapted the Four Capitals of the LSF to incorporate Māori values such as mātauranga (knowledge), wairuatanga (spirituality), kaitiakitanga (connection to the environment), manaakitanga (hospitality, generosity, and respect), and mana (integrity and prestige).

Alignment Between the LSF/Indigenous Approach Documents and the Frameworks That Underpin this Research

When considering the LSF and Indigenous Approach documents in the context of this research, it is important to apply the underpinning frameworks: Te Pae Māhutonga, Te Whare

Tapa Whā, Whiti Te Rā, and an ecological perspective. Both LSF documents (Burton, 2018; The Treasury, 2018) mention 'intergenerational wellbeing' multiple times; this is a wellbeing factor reflected in both Te Pae Māhutonga and Te Whare Tapa Whā. Durie (2011) described the Te Pae Māhutonga model as a strategic model that incorporates "cultural identity, the natural environment, constitutional arrangements, socio-economic realities, and indigenous leadership" (p. 199). The LSF could also be considered a 'strategic model' that incorporates social, human, natural and financial/physical components; the term 'Capitals' is not holistic, but the sentiment of the Four Capitals could nevertheless be aligned with the components of Māori wellbeing as outlined in Te Pae Māhutonga. The LSF Capitals could also be applied to the four walls of Te Whare Tapa Whā (taha wairua, taha hinengaro, taha tinana, and taha whānau). However, there is a difference in scope: Te Whare Tapa Whā focuses primarily on individual and whānau wellbeing rather than wider societal issues such as the natural environment and economics. An ecological approach is mentioned in the LSF, however, the most repeated form is 'macroeconomic', while other factors are described as 'macro' and suitable for international comparison. To be truly reflective of an ecological model, the LSF would need to show that the Capitals are holistic, interactive, and inter-connected – it does not attempt to do so.

The Indigenous Approach document, through its themes and language, is clearly based on a holistic, Māori worldview. In its executive summary, the Indigenous Approach argued that "wellbeing considered from an Indigenous perspective moves the public policy discourse beyond western constructs of wellbeing and enables an improved lived experience of wellbeing for everyone" (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 1); this viewpoint is carried throughout the document. The Indigenous Approach is also based on factors such as the wellbeing of individuals, whānau, communities, society, and the natural environment – these are presented as interlinked and interdependent in a way that reflects the concepts of Te Whare Tapa Whā, Te Pae Māhutonga, and an ecological approach. While none of the Māori frameworks are mentioned in the document, they feature in the reference list, indicating that they are present in theme if not by name. An ecological approach is mentioned, with the Indigenous Approach described as "uniquely able to consider wellbeing at both micro and macro levels, and enables linkages to be made between the wellbeing of whānau, the individuals within them and the communities that comprise them, and the overall concept of national wellbeing" (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 1).

Applying Whiti Te Rā to the Indigenous Approach document provides an in-depth, holistic perspective – current Māori wellbeing could be considered mauri moe (in a weakened state): "Māori currently score poorly across all monitored wellbeing measures" (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 4). However, an approach to wellbeing using an indigeneity lens as outlined by Te Puni Kōkiri and The Treasury (2019) would encourage a progression to mauri oho (awake, alert) and onto mauri ora (an active state of wellbeing). The Indigenous Approach document also highlights pathways similar to those found in Whiti Te Rā: Mātauranga; wairuatanga; retaining a healthy mauri; important relationships and interactions between the individual, their whānau, marae, kāinga (whanaungatanga), and with the natural environment (including ancestral connections with water and land).

Contrast and Discussion of the LSF and Indigenous Approach Document

When looking beyond the surface level comparison of the LSF and the Indigenous Approach document, fundamental differences become apparent. The LSF was originally developed using the OECD's 'How's Life' framework, whereas the Indigenous Approach criticised this approach, claiming that the western-based Four Capitals are "generic" (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 3) and that it should be reframed to more accurately represent Aotearoa New Zealand's history and context. The LSF is presented as an "unapologetically pragmatic" approach (Burton, 2018, page 1), with an aim of supporting government agencies to be cohesive in aligning their policies on wellbeing, spending, and other interventions and policies. The Indigenous Approach could also be described as having an unapologetic approach, but rather than supporting the economic discourse of pragmatic policy-making, it applies a holistic perspective that offers a strengths-based, community, Indigenous response to policies and governance. As explained by Te Puni Kōkiri and The Treasury (2019), Aotearoa's colonial history has seen Māori move from a successful tribal society who undertook international trade, farmed, and governed themselves, to being an Indigenous minority population whose wellbeing could be characterised as 'poor' by government measures and compared with non-Māori: a high prison population, low educational attainment, high unemployment, low home-ownership rates, and high levels of preventable illness. The LSF-speak of intergenerational wellbeing is difficult for Māori, who are dealing with intergenerational trauma and disadvantage stemming from loss of land, language and culture. When considering a LSF wellbeing perspective, it must be recognised that the current wellbeing of Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand is significantly worse than non-Māori. The Indigenous Approach document recognises these factors and posits that, in order

to achieve wellbeing, Māori need equitable access to capital stocks and the tools, resources and opportunities that other New Zealanders have at their disposal.

At first glance, the LSF documents reviewed for this research contain plenty of appealing buzzwords: 'Intergenerational wellbeing'; 'evolution of economic thinking'; 'capability approach'; 'real-world settings'; 'diverse beliefs, worldviews, values of New Zealanders'. Whilst analysing the LSF, it is apparent that by including the concept of intergenerational wellbeing, the Treasury is attempting to offer a more expansive view of success as a nation than the traditionally used economic approach that fails to recognise the importance of people's values and choices in everyday life, or "what matters for wellbeing in New Zealand" (The Treasury, 2018, p. 1). Te Puni Kōkiri and The Treasury agree that the LSF offers a significant advancement on previous policy-making considerations: "[it] presents an opportunity for Aotearoa New Zealand to debate the way that, as a nation, it considers and pursues wellbeing for its citizens" (p. ii). The Indigenous Approach document also recognises that the underlying aim of the LSF, to be used in real-world settings across the public sector in policy development and implementation, is an important goal.

The Treasury's claim that the health of the Four Capitals reflects how well government agencies are delivering their "stewardship" (Burton, 2018, p. 3) role for public policy and wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand is refuted in the Indigenous Approach document. The current high levels of Māori living in precarity and poverty would suggest that the New Zealand Government's 'stewardship' is not resulting in wellbeing for Māori (Stubbs et al., 2017; Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019).

The importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is discussed repeatedly in the Indigenous Approach document. While obligations of Te Tiriti are mentioned briefly in the LSF, the Indigenous Approach document outlines the importance of Te Tiriti as a central part of the "constitutional underpinning for Aotearoa New Zealand... fundamental to the Crown/Māori relationship" (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 8). Crown obligations of partnership, active protection, and redress are all highlighted in the Indigenous Approach document, with recognition that the principle of partnership, including Māori participation and government understanding of te ao Māori when setting priorities or policies to achieve wellbeing, has not been consistent. As a result, Māori wellbeing is often misunderstood or inadequately considered when establishing and implementing policy, counter to the intention of Te Tiriti.

The authors of the Indigenous Approach document provide a research-based insight into the application of te ao Māori to the LSF, along with a holistic perspective of wellbeing. There are many examples of robust, well presented points, such as: “the key challenge is whether Aotearoa New Zealand is mature enough to recognise the richness that will come from achieving a positive intergenerational wellbeing across all its population groups” (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 27). The overarching tone of the document is strengths-based and reasoned, with a discussion based on a critical analysis of the LSF as well as factual and holistic arguments outlining the importance of adding an indigeneity lens to any wellbeing framework that is expected to benefit Māori. The indigeneity lens is presented as a major discussion point in the Indigenous Approach document, comprising of three critical factors: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, te ao Māori, and whānau-centred thinking. Community Psychology values are also readily identified in the Indigenous Approach document: headings such as ‘values and beliefs’, ‘relationships’, and ‘diversity’ are key foundational principles in both Kaupapa Māori and community psychology practices. The importance of biculturalism is also outlined in the proposed indigeneity lens, with importance placed on the historical context of Te Tiriti of Waitangi and the expectations it provides for partnership and wellbeing for Māori. Whānau-centred thinking is also highlighted, in recognition of the fact that whānau is the foundational unit of Māori society – therefore Māori wellbeing *is* whānau wellbeing. Interestingly, the whānau-centred approach that Te Puni Kōkiri advocates reads like a community psychology checklist: whānau-centric, holistic wellbeing, self-determination and autonomy, strengths-based methods, effective relationships, a foundation of holistic te ao Māori and kaupapa Māori perspectives and methods, integrated systems, and a supportive, collective environment.

The LSF could be considered a judicious framework, based on sound international economic principles; However, the Treasury’s (2018) *Living Standards Framework: Background and Future Work* document appears to have little in common with the wellbeing frameworks that underpin this research. Supporting the use of “existing tools in the Treasury’s fiscal and economic advice toolkit” (p. 2), with an empirical approach to developing policy-relevant indicators of wellbeing doesn’t speak to holism or a framework of wellbeing that encapsulates body, mind and spirit. However, it should be noted that beyond the economic, governmental department-speak, there are some sound community psychology values and principles. Because the LSF is designed to be used across departments, it is important that it is anchored in evidence and does not stray too far from what has been used

previously. To reassure the audience of this, the Treasury balances the philosophical underpinnings of the LSF with economic-speak:

> We use our professional judgement to generate impartial macroeconomic and fiscal assessments and forecasts. This is based on clear assumptions that may be questioned and which make clearer the macroeconomic and fiscal situation the Government faces, within which it makes its prioritisation and other decisions. (The Treasury, 2018, p. 3)

It could be surmised that perhaps the Treasury stayed close to the original OECD wellbeing framework to 'play it safe' by using a renowned and internationally respected approach. The LSF is based on empirical factors, while more holistic factors are designated as 'alternatives' to "illustrate other possibilities at the LSF (theoretical) level" (The Treasury, 2018, p. 3).

The Treasury has been transparent about critical feedback on the LSF, specifically regarding 'gaps' in the wellbeing framework. A list of these gaps is presented in the *Background and Future Work* document (The Treasury, 2018), and includes: Te ao Māori, cultural identity, children, health (specifically mental health, suicide, and non-communicable diseases), environment, housing, education, jobs and income, safety (specifically domestic violence), inequality (specifically gender and income), civic engagement, data disaggregation, and entrepreneurship freedom and rights. When developing the LSF Dashboard as an additional tool, the Treasury took note of these gaps and added components to include mental health and non-communicable diseases, environmental measures, housing quality and affordability, education, income and employment, homicide and domestic violence rates, and population breakdowns to depict inequality. However, there was no attempt to address these 'gaps' in the full LSF framework. It should be noted that there appears to be a difference between the way that Treasury and Te Puni Kōkiri interpreted this omission: Treasury suggested that some gaps take time and investment to fill, whereas Te Puni Kōkiri suggested in the Indigenous Approach document that filling these gaps requires "maturity" (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 5) from the New Zealand Government.

A final sentence from the Treasury in the *Background and Future work* document appears to be an attempt to appease those critical of the lack of Māori perspectives or cultural values in the LSF:

> It will develop and evolve as we learn more about what matters to New Zealanders, theoretical and empirical knowledge about the science of wellbeing grows and as we find out more about what is useful in practical policy advice processes. (The Treasury, 2018, p. 3)

However, these sentiments are not supported by any stated plan, and the lack of such leaves them feeling somewhat hollow. In contrast, the Indigenous Approach document provides a thorough, evidence-based discussion on what is needed for Māori wellbeing: a strengths-based wellbeing framework with an indigeneity lens, not more western policies and interventions.

The 2021 Living Standards Framework and He Ara Waiora

To aid in analysing the changes announced as part of the 2021 LSF update, a second table analysis was undertaken to compare the 2018 LSF and the 2021 LSF. A third table outlining the He Ara Waiora framework was also compiled. This approach allowed me to ascertain the values and elements that underpin the updated works, and compare them to the previously analysed 2018 LSF documents and the Indigenous Approach document.

For this part of the analysis, three additional documents were chosen:

- The Living Standards Framework 2021 (The Treasury, 2021b)
- Towards a Living Standards Framework for all Aotearoa (Hughes, 2021)
- He Ara Waiora: Background Paper on the development and content of He Ara Waiora (McMeeking et al., 2019a)

These documents are, at the time of this research, the most up-to-date, official sources of information about the LSF.

Comparison Between the 2018 LSF and the 2021 LSF

Using the same categories as above, the key points of both the 2018 and 2021 LSF were tabulated (see Table 5). Each component was then further explored with key discussion points raised.

Table 5

Comparison Between the 2018 LSF and the 2021 LSF

	2018 Living Standards Framework	**2021 Living Standards Framework**
Developed By	• The Treasury	• The Treasury
Based On	• The OECD's 'How's Life' Framework • Previous Treasury Work • Other OECD definitions to enable international comparability	• Described as an evolution of the 2018 LSF • External engagement on the 2018 LSF highlighted a concern that an international approach did not capture the distinctive nature of wellbeing in Aotearoa
Theoretical & Practical Influences	• Capability Approach (Sen) • OECD's taxonomic approach • Empirical approach, using a scientific view of NZ-relevant and policy-relevant indicators that can be applied to "real world" settings • Ecological model	• Extensive feedback from the development of the 2018 LSF Dashboard • Extensive feedback from the previous LSF discussion papers • 'Key agencies and wellbeing experts' – unspecified • Review of the literature – unspecified • Ecological model
Main Components	• Four Capitals (natural, human, social, and financial/physical). • These work together to support wellbeing. The Crown-Māori relationship is integral – an updated LSF will include more influence of Māori culture	• Three Levels: 1. Our Individual and Collective Wellbeing; 2. Our Institutions and Governance; 3. The Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand – All elements are underpinned by 'Culture'

Purpose	• To improve advice and complement the current suite of economic methods and tools for informing prudent fiscal strategy • To support government agencies to be more cohesive so that public policy of wellbeing, spending and other government interventions is aligned with intergenerational wellbeing.	• To support the Treasury in delivering policy advice • Provides a framework that enables Treasury to understand the drivers of wellbeing and consider the broader impact of policy advice. • To update the LSF framework to better reflect children's wellbeing and culture (particularly Māori and Pacific) • To be used alongside He Ara Waiora, to incorporate He Ara Waiora tea o Māori perspectives into policy development
Values – As Described	• Respect for Treaty of Waitangi obligations and values • Respect for other aspects of New Zealand's unique diversity	• An integrated approach incorporates a focus on te ao Māori and the recognition of Treaty responsibilities • The wellbeing of all ethnic groups in New Zealand, recognised by the concepts of collective wellbeing, cultural capability and belonging • Emphasis on the unique and central role that Indigenous institutions and whakapapa connections play in sustaining the wellbeing of tangata whenua

Developed by/Based on/Theoretical and Practical Influences. Both the 2018 and 2021 versions of the LSF were developed by The Treasury. As reported in the previous section, the 2018 LSF was based on the OECD'S 'How's Life' Framework, alongside previous (unspecified) Treasury work and other (also unspecified) OECD definitions to allow international comparability. The 2021 LSF eschews these mentions of international influences, instead describing itself as an 'evolution' of the 2018 version, with recognition of the concerns raised by stakeholders that the 2018 LSF's "international approach may not fully capture the distinctive nature of wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand" (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 7). Feedback from stakeholders is frequently referenced throughout the 2021 LSF document, and appears to underpin a lot of the changes in the updated framework. It is laudable that the Treasury has taken this feedback so seriously. One example of this is the

consideration of where to place ‘culture’ in the LSF update: “Stakeholders recognised that culture is intertwined with the other aspects of Aotearoa New Zealand’s wealth, but many want it to be more visible in the framework to reflect its importance to our wellbeing” (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 20). Other feedback critiqued the inclusion of cultural identity as one of the 12 wellbeing domains in the 2018 LSF, claiming that it was “too narrowly conceived” (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 20). As a result of this feedback, the Treasury reconceptualised culture into a domain titled ‘cultural capability and belonging’, which incorporates a relational, two-way connection between an individual and their culture.

An ecological perspective is apparent in both the 2018 and 2021 versions of the LSF, although it should be noted that the ecological approach is different to that used in community psychology, and is instead economic in nature: the 2018 LSF claims to offer a ‘macro’ view across social, environmental and economic conditions which is primarily valuable for international comparison; whereas the 2021 LSF discusses the value of capturing “microeconomic distribution of advantage and life circumstances across individuals and groups”, and a “macroeconomic aggregation of ... wealth across the whole country, including wealth held by individuals, partners and institutions” (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 26). Micro and macro levels of risk management are also discussed.

Main Components. The 2018 LSF’s main components are the Four Capitals, used to organise indicators of long-term wellbeing. These Capitals, and the 12 wellbeing domains that accompanied them, were considered by The Treasury to capture elements of wellbeing that were relevant in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, feedback from stakeholders did not support this; as mentioned previously, the international influence on the LSF was seen as “not sufficiently attuned” (Hughes, 2021, p. 13) to the wellbeing needs of New Zealanders. Additional feedback suggested that the language used in the 2018 LSF was also problematic, with the term ‘Capital’ considered “both alienating and unintuitive in meaning for non-economists” (The Treasury, 2021b, p.49). As a result, more accessible language was prioritised in the 2021 LSF, and three of the Four Capitals were renamed: Social Capital became social cohesion; Human Capital became human capability; and Natural Capital became natural environment. The original Four Capitals can be found (renamed) in the ‘Wealth’ level of the 2021 LSF; however as a whole, the framework is very different in content and appearance to the 2018 version. There are 3 levels: Level 1 is ‘Our Individual and Collective Wellbeing’, which expands the 2018 LSF’s individualised wellbeing basis, instead introducing the concept of collective wellbeing in recognition of “the importance of

families, whānau and community to the wellbeing of Māori, Pacific Peoples, and many other New Zealanders" (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 2). Level 2 is 'Our Institutions and Governance', which is a new level, encompassing the role that different institutions play in facilitating the wellbeing of individuals and groups. Level 3 is 'The Wealth of Aotearoa New Zealand', which aims to capture the wealth of Aotearoa as a whole, "including aspects of wealth not fully captured in the system of national accounts, such as human capability and the natural environment" (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 3). In the visual presentation of the 2021 LSF, each level is centred in a sphere-like shape, with different domains branching out to the left and right of each. The Treasury describes this diagram as quite simple, to enable casual users of the LSF to glean the information that is relevant to them; however for more advanced users, there are more detailed nuances that can be explored in the explanations of each element.

Purpose. Both the 2018 and 2021 versions of the LSF have a similar purpose: To support Treasury and other agencies in delivering policy advice that reflects a wellbeing approach. The 2018 LSF mentioned economic tools and 'prudent fiscal strategy', whereas the 2021 LSF is interested in drivers of wellbeing and the broader impacts of policies on wellbeing. Another key aim of the 2021 LSF update is to address the feedback and criticism of its predecessor, specifically that it not consider children's wellbeing, nor a truly culturally resonant view of Māori or Pacific Island wellbeing. To address these shortcomings, the 2021 LSF is designed to be used alongside specific models designed for the specific needs of marginalised groups. As such, He Ara Waiora was presented as a complementary framework to incorporate te ao Māori perspectives into policy development.

Values – As Described. The 2018 LSF stated some fairly generic values: Respect for Treaty of Waitangi obligations and values and respect for 'other aspects' of Aotearoa's 'unique diversity'. The 2021 update is far more explicit; Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations and responsibilities are mentioned (again, not in as much detail as one would expect, given that it is Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document), and Te Tiriti is recognised in Level 2 as one of Aotearoa's most important institutions. The discussion of an integrated approach incorporates the values of te ao Māori and wider cultural contributions to wellbeing. The inclusion of concepts of collective wellbeing, and cultural capability and belonging, aim to represent the value that Treasury places on relational interdependence, and the wellbeing of all ethnic groups in New Zealand (The Treasury, 2021b). In the 2021 LSF, Treasury also aims to place an emphasis on the "unique and central role Indigenous institutions play in sustaining the wellbeing of tangata whenua" (The Treasury, 2021b, p.44), along with

highlighting the values of whakapapa connections and the basis it provides for hapū and iwi, allowing Māori to exercise mana motuhake (mana through self-determination) and sustain Māori cultural practices for future generations.

Contrast and Discussion of the 2018 LSF and 2021 LSF

At first glance it is clear that the 2018 and 2021 are very different in style, but are they also different in substance? Aside from both being wellbeing frameworks developed by the Treasury to aid in policy-making, the answer appears to be 'yes', although with a caveat – it is impossible to accurately predict whether the 2021 LSF framework will be as widely applicable as is planned, and there have been some limitations recognised in stakeholder feedback.

The Treasury uses the LSF as a monitoring and analytical tool; the Public Finance (Wellbeing) Amendment Bill (2020) requires the Treasury to prepare a report on Aotearoa New Zealand's wellbeing every four years, with the first due in 2022; the Public Service Act (2020) also requires all government departments to produce a regular Long-term Insights Briefing (Hughes, 2021). However, beyond simply a measuring tool, the Treasury has a long-term goal that by highlighting wellbeing, the LSF will assist in "lifting living standards for all New Zealanders... we want New Zealand to be prosperous, and for that prosperity to be sustainable and inclusive" (Hughes, 2021, p. 2).

If applying a strengths-based perspective to the 2018 LSF, it can be ceded that the framework was a significant advance on the 2011 LSF, grounded in empirical research on wellbeing and allowing for an improved economic viewpoint of Aotearoa New Zealand's performance locally and internationally. However, as previously discussed, wellbeing in Aotearoa needs to include holistic factors that have meaning for Māori and other cultural groups, and incorporate a sociomaterial rather than primarily neoliberal view of wellbeing. In a discussion document released alongside the Treasury's 2021 LSF, Hughes (2021) acknowledges that the 2018 LSF was so aligned with international frameworks it was "not sufficiently attuned to the specifics of this country, of its history, its people and its cultures" (p. 13); Dalziel et al. (2019) also critiqued the narrow conception of culture in the 2018, and this has been acknowledged and addressed in the 2021 LSF with the incorporation of more cultural consideration. The 2021 LSF redefined the capital stocks to incorporate culture, and expanded the cultural identity domain to become 'cultural capability and belonging' in

recognition of the "two-way connection between an individual and the culture(s) they belong to" (Hughes, 2021, p. 4).

A distinct contrast in approach between the 2018 and 2021 versions of the LSF is apparent when looking at theoretical and practical influences. As mentioned previously, the 2018 LSF was predominantly influenced by overseas frameworks and approaches, whereas the 2021 LSF is influenced by factors that are unique to Aotearoa New Zealand, including extensive feedback from stakeholders and discussions with various cultural groups. While the purpose of the 2018 LSF was to incorporate wellbeing advice and complement the current suite of economic methods and tools for informing prudent fiscal strategy, the 2021 iteration is far more expansive and holistic in its definitions of purpose, describing a need to support the Treasury in its policy advice and reporting and improve recognition of important wellbeing factors for children, Māori, Pacific Peoples, and other marginalised groups. Interestingly, in the 2021 LSF, the Treasury describes its updated framework as reflective of its "maturing approach" (The Treasury, 2021b, p.7). This term was also used in the Indigenous Approach document to describe the attitude required from the New Zealand Government to achieve change for Māori (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019), and suggests that the Treasury has taken on board this challenge.

The wellbeing domain of *knowledge and skills* is particularly relevant to this research, and while it was part of the 2018 LSF, it lacked any real explanation beyond being "intrinsically valuable for humans, fulfilling desires to learn and respond to changing environments" (The Treasury, 2018, Appendix 1). Indicators of knowledge and skills wellbeing were neoliberally based: educational attainment (tertiary), educational attainment (upper secondary), cognitive skills at age 15. In the 2021 LSF, the knowledge and skills domain is expanded to include processes that help an individual to grow and develop, such as learning. This was a particularly important inclusion for stakeholders interested in children's wellbeing, and interestingly it was more to do with the process of learning and what that means for wellbeing and development, rather than 'education' which is focussed on attainment levels and qualifications. It must be noted that the discussion about knowledge and skills in the 2021 LSF still tends towards neoliberalism: "Being knowledgeable and skilful also has significant instrumental value, certainly in the labour market, but also in other areas of life such as unpaid work. It is common in economics to distinguish between the private benefits of education (or skill, more generally) and the public benefits" (The Treasury, 2021b, p. 30).

Despite the promising updates to the 2021 LSF, there are some important stakeholder views that may not have been adequately addressed. Murray and Loveless (2021) suggest that the disabled population of Aotearoa, which was estimated in the 2013 Disability Survey to be 24% of New Zealanders, face significant barriers to wellbeing. Disabled people require high levels of resources to enable a decent standard of living, and these are dependent on structural factors that often do not account for inequalities and diversity within the disabled population (Murray & Loveless, 2021). The Treasury acknowledged Murray and Loveless' concerns in the 2021 LSF (The Treasury, 2021b), and state that they "hope" (p. 29) that the newly implemented institutional level in the LSF will address the issue. However, because a comprehensive examination has not been undertaken, this remains to be seen. It was also noted in feedback on the 2021 LSF that Asian New Zealanders were an important omission in the update (The Treasury, 2021b). Stakeholders also recognised that the He Ara Waiora framework was valuable in adding a te ao Māori perspective, but some felt that the LSF and He Ara Waiora should be presented in conjunction rather than as two distinctive frameworks. Other feedback suggested that there needed to be clearer guidance on how the different complementary frameworks should be used, and that the 2021 LSF as a stand-alone framework "does not recognise the dual responsibilities that the Crown has to Māori as citizens and as tangata whenua" (The Treasury, 2021b, Appendix 3).

To conclude the comparison between the 2018 and 2021 LSF, it seems pertinent to reflect on the quote that was used to conclude the 2018 LSF/Indigenous Approach Document comparison section (see pp. 58-59). The Treasury pledged to develop and evolve the LSF as they further investigated wellbeing in an Aotearoa-specific context, and that further theoretical, empirical knowledge and practical experience in applying wellbeing to policy development would continue to influence their processes (The Treasury, 2018). The promised 2021 update certainly appears to have evolved, in fact 'evolution' is the buzzword accompanying the new LSF. There is undoubtedly a great deal of improvement, and it is heartening to see the level of feedback and consultation that has taken place since the 2018 LSF. However, I would suggest that the second half of the above quote is still to be determined – it remains to be seen whether the 2021 LSF will prove to be useful in practical application.

He Ara Waiora – How Does it Fit in?

As seen in Table 6, the main components of He Ara Waiora were tabulated using the same categories as the previous comparison tables. The aim of this was to identify key elements of the framework so that it could be further explored and discussed in regards to how it 'fits' alongside the 2021 LSF.

Table 6

He Ara Waiora Main Components

	He Ara Waiora
Developed By	• The Tax Working Group (TWG), with leadership from Hinerangi Raumati. • Had extensive consultation and engagement with Māori
Based On	• A tikanga Māori framework, originally developed to guide tax policy • Further evolved into a mātauranga Māori approach to the concept of wellbeing that could align with the LSF
Theoretical & Practical Influences	• Extensive consultation with Māori which led to the following views/influences: Strong support for the development of a tikanga framework and acknowledgement of the genuine intention and engagement process; recommendations to strengthen the framework to support policy development; caution about distorting tikanga within Crown processes • Te Tiriti of Waitangi as Aotearoa's founding constitutional document • Professor Mānuka Henare (a thought leader) developed a He Korunga o Ngā Tikanga – a spiral or matrix of ethics' approach that included Kawa (foundational principle); Tikanga (principles, ethics and values); Ritenga (behaviours and enactment); and Āhuatanga (attributes, traits and characteristics)
Main Components	• Wairua at the centre of the approach • A Takaranga pattern overlaid on the model to illustrate the interrelationsip between the elements of wellbeing • Dimensions of wellbeing; Facets of wellbeing; Tikanga; Ritenga; Āhuatanga
Purpose	• To provide a framework that can be aligned with the LSF and applied across Crown Policy • Aid in rewiring the processes, assumptions and values that the Crown uses in policy making at systemic level • Significantly advance the extent that Te Tiriti o Waitangi influences policy (p 8)
Values – As Described	• An 'ends and means' relationship: 'Ends' are the objectives, values or 'inherent good' dimensions of wellbeing. 'Means' are the values that should underpin how government acts responsibly

	• That a model of wellbeing should not be human centric and recognise that the wellbeing of the Taiao is a paramount and a pre determinant of human wellbeing • That Māori approaches are wellbeing are inherently relational

Developed by/Based on/Theoretical and Practical Influences. He Ara Waiora has an extensive background: it was initially developed by the Tax Working Group (TWG), which was established in 2017 to examine the New Zealand tax system and provide recommendations on improving its fairness, balance, and structure (McMeeking et al., 2019a). To engage with Māori and canvass their views, 15 hui were held across the North Island of New Zealand, with discussion on how tikanga Māori could support a future focused tax system. A further two consultation hui were held in Wellington and Auckland, to establish the key tikanga concepts that would be most helpful in a framework, culminating in a "skeleton" tikanga framework that was based on submissions and feedback (McMeeking et al., 2019a, p. 9). In 2018, this skeleton framework was developed into He Ara Waiora, which was tested on a "think tank of Māori academics and practitioners" (McMeeking et al., 2019a, p. 9), and then trialled on a larger scale with five hui attended by representatives of Māori organisations. An important outcome of this level of Māori engagement throughout the development process was: "a shared and strong call for He Ara Waiora to have broader operation across all government policy as a macro Crown framework" (McMeeking et al., 2019a, p. 9). He Ara Waiora was subsequently ministerially endorsed to become used alongside the LSF.

The extensive collaborative process undertaken throughout the development of the He Ara Waiora framework has led to the formation of some key views and influences. Strong Māori support for the development of a tikanga framework is a key foundation that underpins He Ara Waiora. Feedback from Māori groups led the recommendation to strengthen the framework to support policy development, however this comes with a cautionary note to beware of distorting tikanga within Crown processes. Other theoretical and practical foundations of He Ara Waiora include prioritising Te Tiriti of Waitangi as Aotearoa's founding constitutional document, and the involvement of Professor Mānuka Henare (a thought leader) who developed *He Korunga o Ngā Tikanga* – a spiral or matrix of ethics that included Kawa (foundational principle); Tikanga (principles, ethics and values); Ritenga (behaviours and enactment); and Āhuatanga (attributes, traits and characteristics).

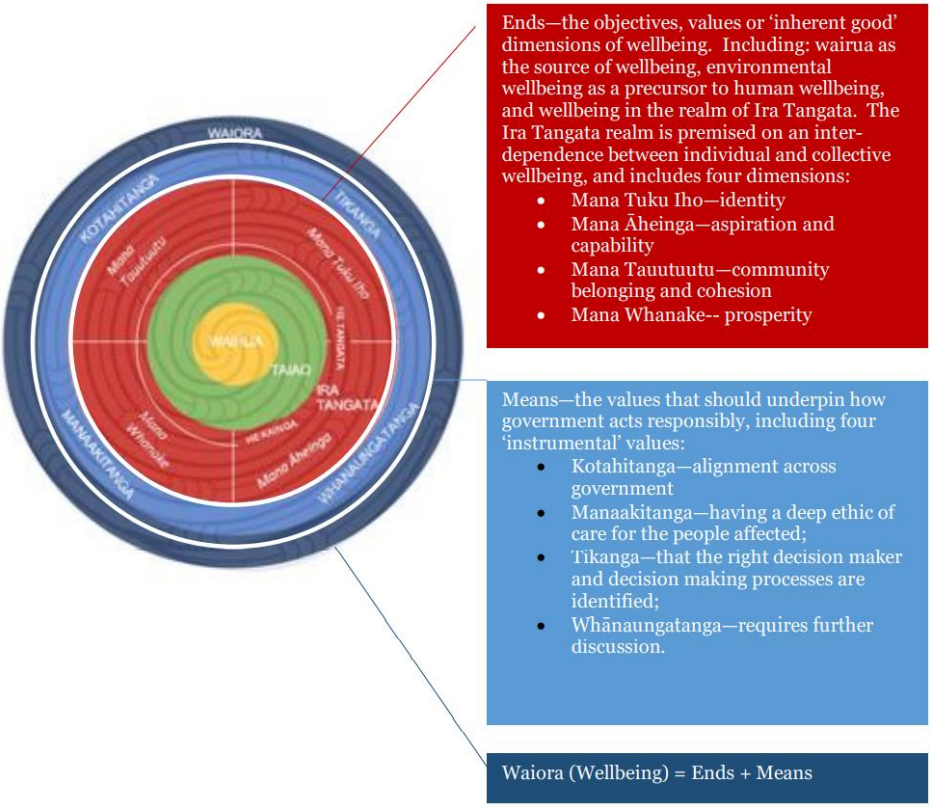
Main Components. As depicted in Figure 17, He Ara Waiora offers a holistic framework that is visually engaging; the overlaid Takaranga pattern illustrates the connected relationship between different elements of wellbeing. Wairua forms the centre of the approach, with dimensions of wellbeing that contain subsets or facets, supported by ritenga and āhautanga (outcome and behavioural guidance indicators). Each facet can be measured in a similar way to the LSF, allowing policy decisions to be reviewed for their alignment with various elements of wellbeing (McMeeking et al., 2019a).

Purpose. As mentioned previously, the He Ara Waiora model was initially intended as a tool to guide tax policy, but has evolved into an interactive model that can be used alongside the LSF. This evolution offers potential benefits for Māori, who have long appeared to be an afterthought when developing policy, rather than a valued partner in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. McMeeking et al. (2019a) suggests that the use of He Ara Waiora alongside the LSF could aid in challenging and addressing the "processes, assumptions and values that the Crown uses in policy making at systemic level, and in doing so, has the potential to significantly advance the extent to which the Crown gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi" (p. 8).

Values – As Described. In He Ara Waiora, McMeeking et al. (2019a) present a key set of values as a process of *ends and means*, with *ends* being "the objectives, values or 'inherent good' dimensions of wellbeing" (p. 16), and *means* being "the values that should underpin how government acts responsibly" (p. 16). The *means* (kotahitanga, tikanga, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga) are the tikanga values that help in achieving the *ends* (wairua, te taiao, te ira tangata). These values are further described in Figure 17.

Figure 17

Values of He Ara Waiora, Depicted as 'Ends' and 'Means'



Note. Reprinted from McMeeking et al. (2019a, p. 16). In *He Ara Waiora: Background Paper on the development and content of He Ara Waiora*. University of Canterbury.

How Does He Ara Waiora fit Alongside the Living Standards Framework?

It is apparent through the analysis of McMeeking et al.'s (2019a) description of He Ara Waiora that the framework represents te ao Māori and provides a holistic approach to wellbeing that accurately represents a unique Aotearoa context. As discussed, He Ara Waiora has evolved into a holistic model that offers a complete picture of wellbeing from a Māori perspective. Ngā Pūkenga (the group of Māori thought leaders who initially developed He Ara Waiora) is still actively working with The Treasury, Te Puni Kōkiri, and Te Arawhiti to apply He Ara Waiora to policy work (Cook et al., 2020). An example of this can be seen in a discussion paper: *He Kāhui Waiora: Living Standards Framework and He Ara Waiora COVID-19 Impacts on Wellbeing* (Cook et al., 2020). The key observations and findings from an analysis of He Ara Waiora as applied to the management of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic suggest that He Ara Waiora provides a valuable perspective on the impact of crisis situations on Māori, and can assist iwi and other Māori organisations in their response.

Interviewee Perspectives on the Living Standards Framework

Interview discussion on the LSF was dependent on the interviewee's field of expertise. However, all of the interviewees shared the same consensus: that the 2018 LSF did not reach far beyond an economic level, and certainly did not reach far enough to influence any change in L + N programmes or outcomes for learners. One interviewee described the LSF as "too prescriptive", while another posited that it has "not resulted in greatly improved outcomes for Māori". One interviewee expressed concern that the LSF was not able to capture the depth of culturally-resonant wellbeing for Māori:

> I get the rhetoric and I get the attempt, but there's no room to really kinda unpack what is leading the change... it's like measures are measures, but if they are done without the value that underpins whānau-led change or kaitiaki, the ability to be the stewards of and guardians of knowledge and information, so that when you're asking people to give you information about where they're from – their hapū or their – that's got to count as one of those wellbeing measures.

The 2021 LSF was released just prior to the interviews being conducted for this research; for that reason many of the interviewees were not familiar with the updated framework and it was not discussed. However, one organisational representative did have some knowledge of it, and felt that it was "a good attempt to keep heading down the right path". They also posited that the changes to the LSF framework reflect a recognition that wellbeing for Māori is:

> Particularly difficult to capture and measure... And I think that became really obvious, going back again to: well we've got this amazing framework that measures wellbeing and we've asked agencies to sign up to it and use it in developing their policies and interventions for all New Zealanders, and yet we still saw Māori being left behind not only in terms of the rate but in terms of the equity trends, and so how do you address that?

However, despite the 2021 LSF's wider scope of wellbeing, the interviewee expressed some concern that wellbeing for Māori is still not truly understood:

> We're going to have to step into a meaningful proliferation of qualitative kind of engagement I think if we're going to get the real movement on this... And I

> think that the way that we improve that space has to be through understanding, getting the kōrero straight from those who it affects, and we're not doing anything that I can see that's kind of a meaningful uplift in that space.

Interviewee Perspectives on the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework

The Indigenous Approach document was presented as a Māori response to the LSF, authored by Te Puni Kōkiri and The Treasury (2019). According to one interviewee, at the time of its publication there was a sense that the LSF presented a concept of wellbeing for all New Zealanders, but lacked the recognition that "wellbeing for Māori is not necessarily the same as wellbeing for non-Māori". There was also a concern that:

> Concepts of Māori wellbeing hadn't been explored adequately and therefore it left too much open to the, I guess, inferences of agencies in particular who were either writing into budget bids or into their development of policy, and they were saying this is a good thing for Māori – well actually I think the establishment of what is good for Māori didn't necessarily have a Māori perspective put into it.

When asked about the Indigenous Approach's discussion of "a level of maturity... required to achieve the change needed which in turn requires a commitment to investing in a new way of doing things" (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019, p. 5), the interviewee felt that this reflected the importance of thinking outside a 'widget counting' framework to see what really counts as wellbeing for different groups in Aotearoa. The maturity is being able to "sell that complexity across agencies, to the public, believe in it yourself":

> I guess I would describe it as, taking sort of courage and being organised in a way and being confident in a way that says: "This is the right thing and we will do it the right way, and yes it is quite different and it's going to be really hard for you to kind of attribute your investment to whatever those outcomes are, and we know that there's going to be massive data gaps and yes, it'll show up that you can't measure everyone by the same yardstick.

Concluding Comments

In this chapter, my primary aim was to identify the 'key components' of the LSF and Indigenous Approach document. To do this, I developed a comparison table that provided a clear outline of the development, background, theoretical influences, and values of both documents. This analysis process has led me to identify the following points as the key components of the 2018 LSF:

- Heavily influenced by international theory and research, with a neoliberal focus that allows for ease of international comparison.
- Four Capitals form the central focus of the LSF (natural, human, social, financial/physical). These work together to support wellbeing.
- The purpose of the LSF is to advise government agencies and provide a cohesive framework for policy, intervention, and other government initiatives, using an intergenerational wellbeing perspective.
- Respects Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations, and respects other aspects of Aotearoa New Zealand's diverse make-up.

Using the same process, I have identified the key components of the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework:

- Based on and influenced by te ao Māori ways of perceiving the world and previous Māori wellbeing research.
- Contains an indigeneity lens that provides a uniquely Māori perspective on wellbeing; also contains seven wellbeing domains that describe a holistic and intergenerational approach to wellbeing.
- Is strength-based, holistic, and recognises the importance of diversity within New Zealand and within Māoridom.
- The Four Capitals of the LSF are viewed through Māori values such as mātauranga (traditional knowledge), wairuatanga (spirituality), whanaungatanga (family relationships), kaitiakitanga (ancestral connections to the natural environment), manaakitanga (kindness, respect, and generosity), and mana (prestige).
- While it is based on te ao Māori perspectives of wellbeing, it aims to articulate a view that is relevant for all New Zealanders and can guide wellbeing indicators that work in the unique context of Aotearoa.

As mentioned previously, the release of the 2021 LSF was somewhat unexpected for the timeline of this research. However, it offered the opportunity to more fully address the first part of Objective 3: *Identify ways in which the LSF is being updated to reflect Māori cultural views and values*. After undertaking an analysis of the 2021 LSF and the He Ara Waiora Framework, I can conclude that the 2021 LSF has been updated to better reflect Māori cultural views and values. I have highlighted the following points as having particular significance:

- The recognition that the international influence on the 2018 LSF did not capture the distinctive nature of wellbeing in Aotearoa.
- It was based on extensive feedback from the previous LSF discussion papers (of which the Indigenous Approach document was one).
- It has reframed its focus away from 'Capitals' and is more holistic in both visual and theoretical representations.
- It still has the primary aim of supporting Treasury and other government departments in policy advice and implementation, but enables Treasury to further understand the drivers of wellbeing in Aotearoa, and the broader impacts of policy decision-making.
- It has explicitly addressed its prior shortcomings and has been updated with the goal of better reflecting children's wellbeing, and cultural wellbeing (particularly for Māori and Pacific Island New Zealanders).
- The values of the LSF have become more detailed and cognizant of Te Tiriti responsibilities, and the unique and central role that Indigenous institutions and whakapapa connections play in sustaining the wellbeing of tangata whenua.

The introduction of He Ara Waiora as a complementary framework to be used alongside the 2021 LSF was not unexpected; I had noted its inclusion in some previous Treasury documents. However, it's transformation into an extensive Māori wellbeing model was surprising and impressive. As outlined in this chapter, He Ara Waiora offers an Aotearoa-specific, holistic model that has been designed by Māori for Māori. It is my view that in order to see culturally-resonant wellbeing for Māori (as measured in equitable outcomes), and therefore for the whole of New Zealand, the He Ara Waiora framework must be treated as an extension of the LSF. It certainly

appears to have been developed for use in this manner. However, one question remains, echoing a similar sentiment I expressed after analysing the 2018 LSF and the Indigenous Approach document – why was the He Ara Waiora framework (in full or abridged) not just integrated into the 2021 LSF?

Chapter Five: Research and Organisational Report Analysis

Introduction

As discussed in Chapter Three: Methodology and Method, selected research and organisational reports were analysed and explored. The initial aim of this process was to identify whether positive learner experiences and outcomes (as recognised and highlighted by learners or research and organisational report authors) align with the values and beliefs that appear to underpin L + N programmes and the LSF. However, during the inductive analysis it became clear that learners and their outcomes are intrinsically linked to the values and approaches of programmes, and the values and approaches of researchers. As a result, the document analysis was expanded to include the values and approaches that are apparent in L + N research and reporting.

To begin this chapter, the documents chosen for analysis will be briefly described, and the reason for their inclusion discussed. Next, each of the themes identified during the data analysis process will be used as headings, supplemented by the findings from each document. This format enables easy identification of commonalities between each document, and clear distinction between themes. In addition, the findings of the interviews with research authors and key organisational personnel will be used to extend the data and offer an additional perspective.

Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga: A Model for Measuring Wellbeing Outcomes From Literacy Programmes (Hutchings et al., 2013). Although this report predates the launch of the LSF, it outlines the development of Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga – a holistic, Kaupapa Māori adult literacy and wellbeing assessment tool. It is relevant to this study because it describes the extensive work that has been undertaken to address concerns about western-based approaches of L + N, and suggests tangible and thoroughly researched Kaupapa Māori options for learner wellbeing outcomes. It offers an example of a strengths-based, holistic, te ao Māori framework that has been used as a benchmark for other research reporting.

He Whanau Mātau, He Whānau Ora: Māori Adult Literacy and Whānau Transformation (Potter et al., 2011). This report was chosen because it offers a perspective that should not be overlooked: the transformational impact of adult participation in L + N programmes on tamariki and whānau. This qualitative research project followed adults through their involvement in L + N programmes, with a focus on the outcomes for them, their tamariki, and wider whānau. Potter et al. actively challenges deficit thinking, and rather than

viewing Māori L + N as a "problem to be remedied" (p. ix), the research used a Kaupapa Māori approach aimed at strengthening and supporting Māori self-determination. The aim of this research was to form recommendations for policy makers on adult L + N education that, reflective of an ecological approach, would have far-reaching benefits of improving "Māori student engagement and achievement in schools and enhance whānau wellbeing" (p. ix).

Literacy Aotearoa Annual Report (Literacy Aotearoa, 2018). Literacy Aotearoa is a national organisation that established its first literacy scheme in 1974 and has since become a leading provider of adult literacy programmes and contributor to research and policy (Literacy Aotearoa, n.d.-a). Its annual report was chosen for analysis because it provides an insight into the workings, values, and approach of an organisation that contributes heavily to adult literacy education in Aotearoa New Zealand. The last annual report released was in 2018; it is recognised that a lot has changed since then, including the release of the LSF framework and COVID challenges, but there is still value in reviewing a Literacy Aotearoa approach to literacy education.

Principles and Practices in Four New Zealand Family Focused Adult Literacy Programs: Towards Wellbeing in Diverse Communities (Furness, 2013). This journal article discusses a study that explored the wellbeing outcomes of participation in family-focused adult literacy programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand. Furness recognised that family are often key motivating factors for adult learners who enrol in L + N programmes, while providers must contend with neoliberal policies that do little to support family focused approaches. This article was included in the document analysis because the methodological and theoretical approach used in the study reflect the holistic, community psychology underpinnings of the present study.

Creating Spaces for Whānau Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy in the Context of Neoliberalism in Aotearoa, New Zealand (Taupo, 2016). This article challenges the growth of neoliberalism in adult education policy development and implementation in Aotearoa New Zealand. Taupo reviewed research on three literacy, language, and numeracy programmes specifically designed for Māori adult learners and their whānau, and examined the success of these holistic approaches against a backdrop of neoliberal ideologies. This article was included for analysis because it provides direct discussion on neoliberalism in

education policy and programming, and has a holistic, Kaupapa Māori focus in its approach to L + N skills acquisition.

Using a Wellbeing Framework to Recognise, Value, and Enhance the Broad Range of Outcomes for Learners in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Programmes (Furness & Hunter, 2019). This article describes a two-year project undertaken to investigate Literacy Aotearoa's adult L + N programme design and delivery, with a focus on holistic wellbeing outcomes for learners and their whānau. Of particular relevance for the current research, Furness and Hunter situate their research within a sociomaterial ideological approach, with context and social convention seen as central to L + N practices: "participants' diverse experiences, cultures, history, current circumstances, and resources dynamically influence the communication and the context" (Barton et al., 2006, as cited in Furness & Hunter, 2019, p. 3). Also of relevance for this research is the application of Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga as a holistic assessment tool. This provides a comprehensive view of this framework in action, allowing insight into the types of outcomes that are recognised as important by learners in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Fast Cars and Fast Learning: Using Virtual Reality to Learn Literacy and Numeracy in Prison (McLauchlan & Farley, 2019). The last article chosen for analysis is quite different in scope. It is based on a small qualitative research project in Otago that used virtual reality technology to teach L + N skills to prisoners. The project was commissioned by the Department of Corrections and run by the Methodist Mission Southern. Incarcerated learners are an important but often unrecognised cohort of New Zealanders who have low L + N skills; approximately 60% of prisoners "lack the functional numeracy and literacy they need to fully participate in everyday life" (McLauchlan & Farley, 2019, p. 1). Because correctional facilities are primarily concerned with custodial security, research projects within such facilities can be difficult to run, and pilot programmes using highly technical equipment are difficult to implement. Recruiting participants can also be challenging; prisoners can be difficult to engage because they have often had negative previous experiences with education or undiagnosed learning difficulties. The stigma and potential ridicule for being considered "dumb" (Ricciardelli et al., 2015, as cited in McLauchlan & Farley, 2019, p. 3) can also be a barrier to participation. As is often the case in qualitative research, this study was small with nine participants, three of whom were released prior to project completion. The use of virtual reality and cutting-edge technology in adult L + N

education was not found in other New Zealand literature; this factor, as well as the points outlined above, made this article very interesting and relevant for inclusion in this research.

Community Psychology values

Community psychology values were the most prominent theme, consistently present throughout all the documents. Due to the nature of this research, community psychology themes were expected; the sub-themes were discovered through an inductive method of analysis to ensure that nothing was missed. Sub-themes included: collaboration, empowerment, strength-based, relationships/trust, diversity, holism, human flourishing, biculturalism, social justice, an ecological approach, and the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. For clarity in this section of the report, each sub-theme will be used as a heading.

Collaboration

The sub-theme that was repeated most frequently throughout all documents was *collaboration*. Potter et al. (2011) described a literacy programme that prioritised a collaborative approach by ensuring the programme had an ethos of "student first" (p. 20). This was done by prioritising learners' needs and adapting learning plans to address learner progress and evolving goals. These adaptations included the recognition that learning can be a "stop-start process because life happens" (p. 21). Collaboration also occurred at community level; programmes were developed based on the needs expressed by the community and included fishing, gardening, cooking, home management, parenting, and skills to assist in engaging with 'systems' such as social welfare or children's schools. The programme's collaborative approach also extended to include whānau involvement:

> One tutor told us that they collaborate with learners' whānau by bringing them in at the beginning of each year to ascertain what learning support mechanisms might be needed at home so learners can be present and participate, such as childcare. Time is spent helping the adult learners set up such support. (Potter et al., p. 20)

In Furness and Hunter (2019), collaboration was interwoven throughout all facets of the research: in the design of the L + N programme, between researchers and tutors, between tutors and learners, and between learners themselves. This ensured that everyone was able to contribute to the goals and objectives of learning, and it created a level of respect and

engagement within the programme. A collaborative approach also allowed tutors to combine learning with skills that were relevant:

> Needs voiced by the learners themselves were addressed in the programme. One example arose from a learner who was anxious about reading the airport signs when travelling on her own. The class visited the local airport, took photos, and made practice vocabulary cards. (p. 9)

The wellbeing outcomes of this collaborative approach were well-documented:

> Learners reported a strong sense of community in their programmes. They cited several ways that tutors enhanced their sense of self-worth and belonging.... learners and tutors reported working collaboratively to develop group protocols for mutually respectful interaction. (p. 11)

Similarly, McLauchlan & Farley (2019) developed their prison-based L + N programme by adopting a collaborative approach:

> The environment was co-designed with prison-based learners based on their original concepts for a mechanics-based setting for contextualized literacy and numeracy learning. The construction of the VR garage environment was an interactive process undertaken by a small team of educators, software developers, and prison learners via several user testing sessions over 12 weeks. (p. 4)

McLauchlan & Farley (2019) also reported an interesting and unexpected outcome of the virtual reality prison L + N programme: learners felt inspired to become educators, and collaborated with other prisoners to share their knowledge outside of the programme.

Taupo (2016) outlined the Literacy Aotearoa ethos of "business as unusual" (p. 44). This is designed to counter the effect of neoliberalism on tertiary education policy and provision in Aotearoa New Zealand, while also signifying an approach that caters to the complex needs of unique learners. Taupo explained that Literacy Aotearoa aims to provide "quality literacy and numeracy provision and the ability to co-construct with the learner their learning goals and learning process" (p. 44). This flexible, collaborative approach is embodied by the tutors of Literacy Aotearoa programmes, who have a crucial role in not only teaching, but providing pastoral care and recruiting extra support such as social workers. Taupo also outlined the important role that tutors played in ensuring their students felt

culturally safe and comfortable in their learning environments, with spaces that could be adjusted to reflect participants' needs. The result of these collaborative, proactive practices were students who "felt they could now participate in learning and also found more enjoyment in participating in interactive activities" (p. 48). Taupo noted that co-construction of learning plans led to high levels of learner engagement and success; and highlighted the fact that this type of collaboration and flexibility is not a common feature of the standard, neoliberal approach to adult L + N education.

Furness' (2013) research was community psychology based, describing a collaborative approach that included programme staff and tutors, learners, whānau, and wider communities:

> The Benley Program tutor spent considerable time getting to know her students and maintaining rapport so that she could understand where literacy might help them in personally meaningful ways. She would illuminate these links where they were personalised beyond the primary purpose of the program; for example, bringing low-sugar recipes for a diabetic participant which he read and his wife cooked. (p. 47)

One important and unique outcome of Furness' (2013) research was the recognition of the importance of collaboration and communication to create healthy environments for learning:

> The programs acknowledged that people had already existing lives and that these lives were often very busy and often complex and that some people had multiple problems with which they had to deal... Effort was made to accommodate participants' already-existing lives... This accommodation of people's lives reflects a view of participants that does not define them solely by the problems they are experiencing but by their whole selves. (p. 49)

> Staff demonstrated that they believed that, in general, all parents care about their children but that sometimes, for various reasons, children were not getting enough of some of the important things they needed to flourish. The approach taken was to build a relationship with the parents, to share information with them, to model supportive behaviour towards children, to support families by providing the necessary equipment for the children to use for homework, and to

> encourage the parents through positive affirmation... in addition, to recognise, refer to, draw on the wider network of people in the children's lives as additional supports for them. (pp. 50-51)

Hutchings et al. (2013) also identified collaboration as an important approach for engaging Māori learners: "Research in the field of Māori adult literacy has shown that when adult literacy programmes are relevant to and support the aspirations of learners' whānau, hapū and iwi, Māori are committed and successful participants" (p. 6). As described by Hutching et al., the components of the Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga assessment model use collaborative elements that ensure the learner is getting what they need from the programme. Rather than solely establishing skill level, an initial assessment aims to develop a relationship of trust between learner and tutor; while the formative and summative assessment process is prefaced with a whakataukī that highlights the importance of a te ao Māori approach, and encourages a holistic and collaborative discussion about learner goals. At programme completion, exit statements provide an opportunity for the learner to validate their success, with tutor and whānau input.

Hutchings et al. (2013) invited learners to share their views on the Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga wellbeing model for L + N education. Overall they reported that the collaborative process was a positive experience, and programme providers reiterated this view: "All participating providers stressed that the initial interview was a crucial step in establishing the relationship with the learner and whānau, and that the establishment of an effective relationship had implications for engagement and retention" (p. 20).

Empowerment

The sub-theme of *empowerment* was also reported in all documents: Empowerment of learners, their whānau, communities, and even the programme providers themselves. Potter et al. (2011) reported that almost without exception, the adult learners that participated in their research had enrolled in an adult L + N course because they wanted to empower themselves to provide better quality care for their children, were aspiring to get a better job to support their families, or had personal motivations for a better quality of life. As demonstrated in the following set of quotes, the adult learners in Potter et al.'s study also described empowerment outcomes such as increased participation in whānau and community life; participation in the economy; increased sense of self and others; and independence:

> I want to be able to do more and be more. I want to be able to go more places and meet more people. (p. 33)
>
> I've gone from being a depressed woman to a woman who wants to be alive, wants to share, who wants to enjoy life, and who wants to enjoy the simple thing of reading. (p. 32)
>
> It's helping me read all of the things at work. I put myself forward more at work. I can now understand more the boss's point of view, and I can put my views forward about things more. (p. 31)
>
> I wrote a letter about a parking ticket I got. I wrote it all by myself. I wouldn't have been confident enough before and I didn't have the words to write down.... I got let off the fine too! (p. 30)

Furness and Hunter (2019) reported that family literacy programmes and tutors incorporated learning into the development of life skills that were relevant to their learners. This empowered learners to try new things and communicate confidently with others: "One learner reported learning ways to say no when she and her whānau would be negatively affected by others imposing their expectations. Making better choices for her whānau helped her feel empowered and more fulfilled as a parent." (p. 12). Furness and Hunter also identified empowerment-related outcomes of L + N programme participation, including increased autonomy and independence, and a sense of optimism and planning ahead: "One learner explicitly identified L + N as a springboard for future plans" (p. 13).

Empowerment outcomes were also apparent in McLauchlan and Farley's (2019) virtual reality L + N research. Unexpected responses from participants showed the great potential of such an approach for personal development. Participants were empowered to share their learning experiences, teach others, and develop interpersonal communication skills. Additionally, participants rapidly progressed through the levels of learning and developed confidence in the learning environment: "Universally, participants felt that future learning content needed to be made more challenging. This indicated that the learners ... readily mastered the content and gained self-confidence" (p. 7).

Taupo (2016) reported approaches designed to empower learners in Literacy Aotearoa programmes, namely the use of life-skills workshops, role-modelling positive parenting, and

gaining a sense of identity through te reo Māori. Learner outcomes reflected this empowerment-approach:

> They [participants] use more positive language and are happier about seeing their children's own happiness; have better relationships as they work together with their whānau; ... seek employment opportunities; have changed negative attitudes and behaviours for positive affirmative attitudes and behaviours; and have learnt how to draw on their own life experiences, which now enables them to reflect and apply critical thinking skills to a range of situations. (p. 49)

Furness (2013) noted that the programmes involved in her research all encouraged criticality and discussion, and prioritised the empowerment of learners to be able to participate more confidently in community settings:

> One way a critical approach was taken was by teaching the literacy and numeracy strategies and the educational language used in the school so the parents could talk to and ask questions of their children's teachers, understand their children's school progress reports, talk to their children about school, help their children with their learning and know as much or more than their children about aspects of schooling. (p. 48)

A Māori perspective on empowerment was outlined by Hutchings et al. (2013) with their Māori-specific definition of literacy: "Literacy in te reo Māori and English, of giving expression to a Māori worldview, and as constituting a process of rebuilding hapū and iwi literacies and empowering whānau" (p. 7). Empowerment and literacy (in both social and material forms) strengthen Māori identity:

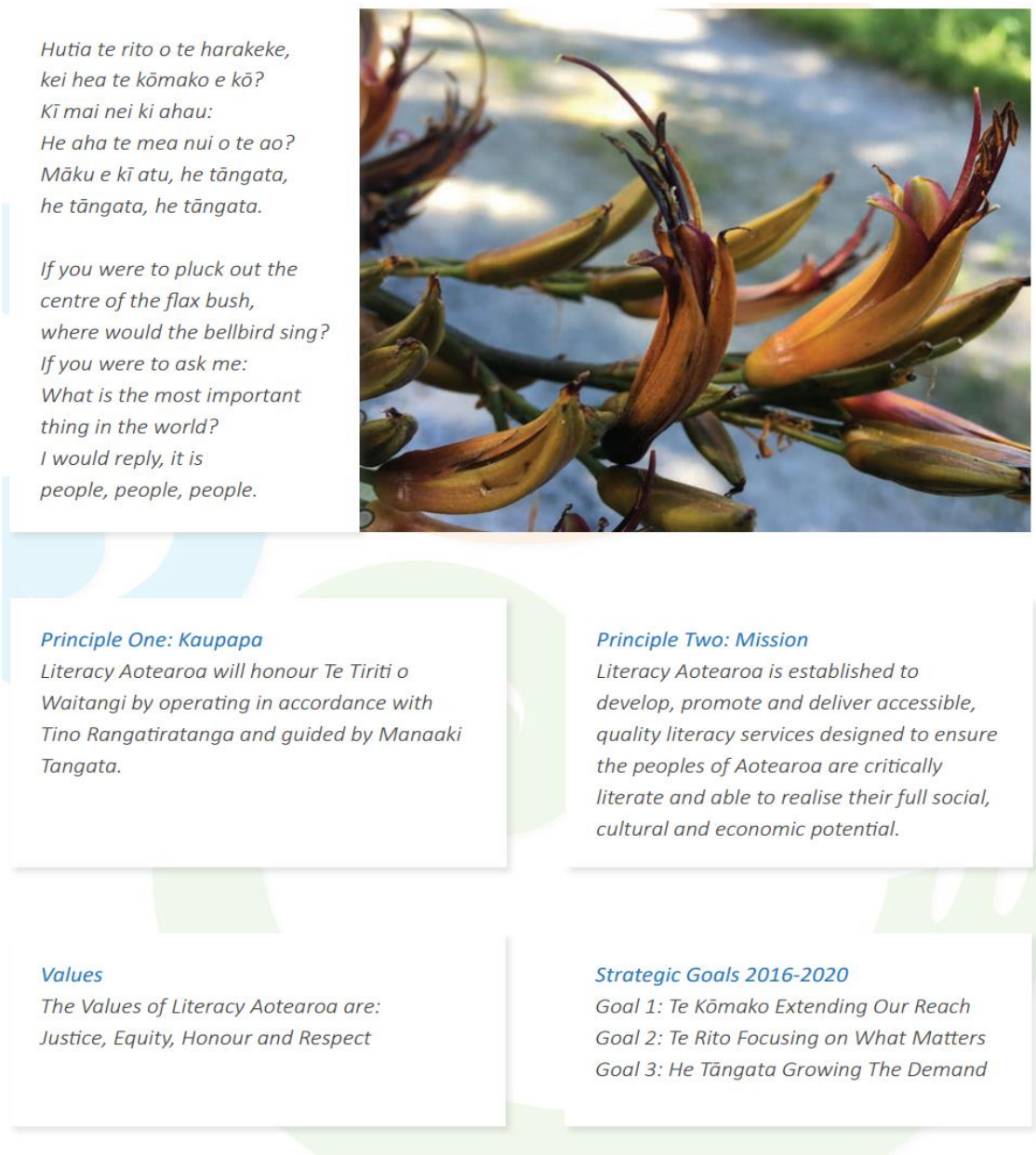
> Being able to read and give expression to Māori worldviews. This includes being able to name one's hapū and iwi boundaries, and geographical features, as well as those of adjacent lands; and being able to read the lands, skies and waterways. It means being able to read the stories and meanings inscribed in the symbols of whakairo, tukutuku and kowhaiwhai in the context of where they are located; and being able to read body language. It means being politically literate, of knowing about colonisation and having an analysis of how it has impacted on Māori and Māori literacies. It is the never-completed journey of developing these capabilities, and living them. (p. 6)

Holism

Rather than being a topic of explicit discussion, the sub-theme of *holism* was identified during analysis as an underlying theme of L + N programmes. The holistic approach of Literacy Aotearoa's Annual Report (2018) began within the first pages – a tribute to those involved in Literacy Aotearoa who had passed away within the previous year. The principles of Literacy Aotearoa were then laid out, setting a holistic tone for the entire report (see Figure 18).

Figure 18

The Principles of Literacy Aotearoa



Note. Reprinted from Literacy Aotearoa (2018, p.1). Copyright 2018 by Literacy Aotearoa.

The headings used throughout the Literacy Aotearoa Annual Report (2018) reflected a very holistic, learner-focussed approach. Examples include: “Our Learners, Our Impact” (p. 4); “Our Stories” (p. 8); “Everything has to provide benefit to learners” (p. 9); “Our impact on wellbeing” (p. 9); “Celebrating learners and practitioners” (p. 18).

Furness and Hunter (2019) also described practices that were holistic in nature: Tutors valued participants, were genuinely concerned for their welfare and wellbeing, and saw them as people with multi-faceted lives. They outlined a holistic approach to enhancing outcomes for adult L + N learners by prioritising unique goals and contexts, with assistance from “tutors who practised consistent encouragement, trust, and dedication to learners’ success and constructed a supportive learning community” (p. 15).

Taupo’s (2016) report aimed to challenge neoliberal education policy in Aotearoa New Zealand, and it did so by focussing on the importance of holistic approaches to adult L + N. Taupo posited that, to truly help those with low L + N skills, a holistic approach must be multi-dimensional and include cultural, financial, environmental, and supportive pedagogical and pastoral elements. According to Taupo, Literacy Aotearoa achieve this by embedding L + N learning in authentic contextual approaches and everyday life experiences, and adding elements of te ao Māori, te reo Māori, and whanāu involvement. However, providing this type of multi-dimensional support is challenging for non-profit organisations such as Literacy Aotearoa, who often find themselves ‘jumping through hoops’ to meet neoliberal requirements for funding and other support.

Holistic approaches were also apparent in Furness’ (2013) analysis of four family focussed adult L + N programmes. Values and beliefs were highlighted, along with the ideological nature of L + N programme development and its “holistic concern for the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities” (p. 37). Programme staff recognised the importance of a multiliteracy approach for participant wellbeing; this could take many forms such as Māori or Pacific oral and written language, performance, or art.

Hutchings et al.’s (2013) Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga wellbeing model is an example of a holistic approach applied to a ‘real world’ context. It aims to empower learners and whānau by offering a way of measuring L + N learner outcomes that reflect individual contexts and goals. It describes L + N outcomes in wellbeing terms – how has the learner improved their confidence, what changes have experienced, and how has this impacted themselves and their whānau? Importantly, the use of Māori cultural approaches throughout the framework,

including whakataukī at the beginning of the formative and summative assessment process, ground the experience in a holistic and culturally safe manner for Māori learners.

Strength-Based Approach

Community Psychology always utilises a *strength-based approach*, and this was identified consistently as a sub-theme throughout all of the analysed documents. One of the key findings in Potter et al.'s (2011) research was that L + N learning was successful when programmes were taught using a strength-based approach. The Literacy Aotearoa Annual Report (2018) also indicated a strength-based approach in their delivery of adult L + N programmes:

> A starting point that centres on establishing a positive relationship with each learner. By getting to know their learners and their interests they find the strengths of each learner. They focus on the goals each learner has and wants to achieve. They then work with each learner to enable those goals to be met (p. 6).

Furness and Hunter (2019) described a strengths-based approach in the L + N programmes they analysed, with tutors who saw their students as adults with many strengths and capabilities, rather than simply as 'learners' in a classroom context. This strength-based approach was also apparent in learners' wellbeing outcomes:

> Skills improvement and certificates attest to learners' social competence and help challenge the keenly felt stigma they carry for being labelled as low literate – an unfortunately well-known stigma throughout New Zealand society. Skills accomplishments do enable greater autonomy in learners' everyday lives. Thus, strong emotional wellbeing is related in this way to improved literacy skills. (p. 16)

Despite McLauchlan and Farley's (2019) research not being based on a community psychology framework, the research they conducted was noticeably strengths-based. By identifying the type of learning that the prisoners were interested in, they were able to start from a place of strength and interest, rather than recreating a classroom environment that, for many participants, held memories of struggle and embarrassment as they coped with (in many cases undiagnosed) neurodiverse conditions that made learning difficult. An unexpected strengths-based outcome of McLauchlan and Farley's research was that

participants wanted to share their learning with others, and took the skills learned in the virtual reality classroom into their real-world interactions with other prisoners.

Taupo's (2016) report was founded on a strengths-based approach: "Instead of focusing on the negative aspects of neoliberal policy, this article proposes to focus on the strengths of three whānau adult literacy and numeracy programmes" (p. 42). Through its "business as unusual" (p. 44) ethos, Literacy Aotearoa offered learners the opportunity to build on their strengths and aspirations through strengths-based programmes that incorporated life skills development, positive parenting, and used te reo Māori and culturally safe learning environments. By encouraging learners to draw on their own life experiences, learner outcomes included the ability to change negative attitudes and behaviours, and critically reflect on experiences to provide skills to deal with new or challenging situations.

Similarly, Furness (2013) reported on programme staff who recognised the importance of different literacies for different people. This strength-based approach enabled learners to prioritise the literacy that was most relevant to them, rather than adhering to the status quo of dominant literacy. Effort was also made to accommodate participants' outside commitments and needs: "This accommodation of people's lives reflects a view of participants that does not define them solely by the problems they are experiencing but by their whole selves, a strengths-based rather than a deficit view" (p. 49). Furness also emphasised the role of tutors:

> [Tutors] demonstrated and articulated respect for them [learners] as capable adults who, in the same vein, could be capable learners. A high level of trust and belief in their abilities and capacities was exhibited. This was a strengths-based view of adults. (p. 49)

Within the first paragraphs of Hutching et al.'s (2013) report, a strengths-based approach was cemented: "Since British and colonial settlement Māori have found inventive ways to foster their educational wellbeing through cultural, political, social and economic means" (p. 1). Hutching et al. also actively challenged a deficit view of Māori adult L + N skill attainment by outlining a plan for "Māori wellbeing, achievement and success" (p. 5) that used a Kaupapa Māori framework and a definition of literacy that would resonate with Māori learners. The Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga assessment framework uses a strengths-based approach, with questions that can be personalised to the learner and their goals. The 'Exit Statement' process undertaken at programme completion enables the learner to validate their

success. Hutching et al. found that by using a strengths-based approach, Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga is able to capture the complexity of wellbeing for Māori learners. Specifically, it is able to recognise the importance of the interconnected nature of individual and whānau wellbeing, and can support both through the learning process.

Diversity

Recognition of the diversity of learners was a sub-theme that was identified in some of the documents. Furness and Hunter (2019) described their aspirations for a democratic society that would "value diversity (e.g., in culture, ableness) and despise inequity (e.g., in food access, housing adequacy)" (p. 4). Tutors from the L + N programmes reviewed by Furness and Hunter also recognised the importance of diversity in people's backgrounds, experiences and beliefs, and understood that learners could have diverse notions of wellbeing.

McLauchlan and Farley (2019) also recognised diversity in their participants, particularly in relation to backgrounds of hardship and neurodiversity:

> Neurodiverse learners reported enjoying the visual and audio prompts available in the VR and tablet exercises and felt confident trying new exercises in the headset and while wearing headphones.... It appears there is strong potential to use VR to supplement the conventional 'whole language' approach to adult literacy and numeracy delivery with more targeted skill development for individual learners where appropriate. Neurodiverse learners with probable trauma histories reported feeling comfortable in the VR headset relative (sp) quickly (once they were aware of the classroom set-up and had established trust and comfort with other class members). (p. 7)

Diversity was also identified as a sub-theme throughout Furness' (2013) report into family focused adult literacy programmes. Recognition of learners as adults with unique psychological, social and relational needs was an important factor in programme delivery, along with an assertion that those who were parents must also be recognised outside of that role:

> Adults who are parents are also people in their own right.... Within this view of them as adults (which included as already skilled, multifaceted, and cultural) their role as parents often took centre stage but was never the only aspect of their adult status of interest or concern. (p. 51)

Relationships

The importance of learner-tutor relationships, programme-staff relationships, parent-parent relationships, parent-child relationships, wider whānau relationships, and student relationships are often not explicitly mentioned, but were nevertheless identified as key underlying factors in the success of adult L + N programmes. This was apparent when considering the sub-theme of *collaboration*, however the broader sub-theme of *relationships* also warrants recognition. Potter et al. (2011) discussed the importance of whānau involvement in adult L + N programmes, particularly the desire to be "good role models" (p. 41), able to support their tamariki and mokopuna in their schoolwork. Learners also expressed satisfaction when they could use their improved L + N skills to read recipes and food labels to provide nourishing food for their families.

At the beginning of their Annual Report, Literacy Aotearoa (2018) paid tribute to members who had passed away in the preceding year. This set the tone that aroha and respect for relationships are key concepts that underpin a Literacy Aotearoa approach. The next page was headed with a whakataukī that further expressed the importance of relationships (see Figure 18). The learner stories spread throughout the annual report also expressed the vitality of relationships and how interpersonal relationships assisted learners by motivating them and supporting them to achieve their goals.

Furness and Hunter (2019) noted that tutors recognised the importance of forging strong relationships with learners. This often occurred outside the classroom environment: "spending informal time with learners provided opportunities for wellbeing outcomes to surface as a natural dynamic of strong relationships" (p. 9). Learners also reported that they recognised the benefit of these relationships, which they attributed to tutor acceptance, patience, dedication and positivity. Inter-student relationships were also identified as an important contributor to a positive classroom environment; learners worked collaboratively to develop group protocols, resulting in a supportive peer culture and mutually respectful interactions. The findings of Furness and Hunter's (2019) research reflect a strong relationship-focused ethos in literacy programmes; learners also expressed benefits such as a "sense of inclusion", "sense of safety", and "flow-on effects to whānau" (p. 13).

McLauchlan and Farley (2019) recognised the importance of relationships and 'status' in a prison setting, noting that it was difficult for prisoners to fully engage in L + N learning because they feared being ridiculed or considered stupid. Interestingly, the use of virtual

reality tools for learning seemed to dispel some of these barriers, and participants were openly sharing their learning with others both in and outside the programme: "[A] participant requested that a multi-user virtual classroom environment be created, which could accommodate the avatars of other participants" (p. 8).

Taupo (2018) identified an important relationship-based outcome of adult L + N education: Students were able to interact with their whānau in ways that they could not previously. Examples of this included taking their children to the library to access books, reading with their whānau at home, understanding school newsletters and reports, and assisting with homework.

Furness' (2013) research also found that improved L + N skills encouraged parents to interact academically with their children and improved their confidence in conversing with teachers and assisting with homework. Furness (2013) also noted that programme staff considered relationships to be "fundamental to all human endeavours" (p. 51). As such, warm, positive, respectful relationships were highly valued:

> It was apparent that program staff viewed literacy as social practice in which skills played a part but in which relationships were paramount, that they had concerns for both the interests of adults as well as children and that they were concerned for both the individual good and the collective good (p. 52).

Furness (2013) also described tutors who built strong relationships with learners so that they could build on their strengths and interests to "understand where literacy might help them in personally meaningful ways" (p. 47).

Hutchings et al. (2013) found that the initial assessment used in Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga aimed to solidify an interconnected relationship between the learner, their whānau, the tutor, and the programme. This foundational relationship had a positive impact on learner outcomes:

> [The assessment] provides the opportunity for learners to reflect on their past experiences of education and learning.... [and] was a crucial step in establishing the relationship with the learner and whānau, and that the establishment of an effective relationship had implications for engagement and retention. (p. 20)

The importance of these relationships within a Māori context will be discussed further in the *Māori framework* theme.

Biculturalism

Biculturalism was recognised in five of the documents as important for adult L + N programme delivery and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand; this will be outlined here in brief and discussed further in the *Māori framework* theme. As mentioned previously, Literacy Aotearoa (2018) set the tone for their Annual Report by starting with a whakataukī in te reo Māori, followed by their first Principle of operation: "Literacy Aotearoa will honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi by operating in accordance with Tino Rangatiratanga and guided by Manaaki Tangata" (p. 3). These inclusions ensure that Literacy Aotearoa's approach of prioritising biculturalism is apparent from the outset.

Biculturalism and the importance of understanding te ao Māori were two concepts that were frequently discussed throughout Potter et al.'s (2011) research report. Despite evidence of intergenerational trauma and experiences of an education system that shunned Māori culture and language, adult learners were rediscovering the importance of te ao Māori in their lives: "These parents also talked about now having a greater interest in understanding more about marae kawa and tikanga, and sharing this with their tamariki... each aspired for their tamariki to grow up literate in English and te reo Māori" (Potter et al., 2011, p. 8).

Biculturalism and bi-literacy was identified by Furness and Hunter (2019) as vital for a nation founded on Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Their definition of literacy drew on the Māori Adult Literacy Working Party's publication *Te Kāwai Ora: Reading the word, reading the world, being the world* (2001, as cited in Furness & Hunter, 2019):

> The authors suggest literacy is the ability to read and interpret the world through symbols, nonverbal communication, artefacts, and other media. It includes the ability to be bi-literate where Māori and non-Māori can function in both worlds. (p. 4)

Te ao Māori values such as whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and reciprocity were also prioritised as important approaches to be used in a bicultural learning environment.

Taupo (2016) addressed the importance of a bicultural approach to learning in Aotearoa New Zealand, highlighting the negative experiences of Māori learners in mainstream classrooms:

> Students have been recruited from diverse backgrounds including: workplace, community, vocational, school and whānau based. Of these students, the

> majority said they had negative and complex experiences with learning at school. They also said they had no or limited passive understanding of their own language and identity as Māori. (p. 42)

To counter this approach, Literacy Aotearoa define literacy as: "Listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and critical thinking, interwoven with the knowledge of social and cultural practices" (Taupo, 2016, p. 43). Additionally, whakapapa and whānau are recognised as important links for learners. Alongside English L + N skills acquisition, learners were encouraged to gain a sense of their Māori identity by using te reo Māori to engage in cultural practices such as pepeha, karakia, and waiata.

Furness (2013) recognised that the dominant approach adopted by the New Zealand Government towards family literacy had not been adapted to sufficiently address the unique cultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand. One key finding of Furness' (2013) research was that 'People are cultural beings':

> The programs demonstrated a valuing of people's different 'ways of being': their beliefs, values, and behaviours. These different cultural ways were seen as connected to their identities, the diversity of which was acknowledged and respected. Matching the program content and pedagogy with participants' cultural ways demonstrated awareness of and respect for differences between people. Staff understood the hegemony of the dominant culture and that differences in cultural ways of being can cause misunderstandings. (p. 50)

Hutchings et al.'s (2013) Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga wellbeing model highlighted the importance of using an approach that has meaning for Māori:

> What is proposed instead for success with Māori adult literacy learners, is the use of a Kaupapa Māori-based definition of literacy that widens the scope of what is understood as literacy to include te reo Māori and those literacy practices which give expression to Māori worldviews. Such a definition enables Māori adult learners to access the learning of forms and uses of literacy that are relevant and meaningful to them. Research in the field of Māori adult literacy has shown that when adult literacy programmes are relevant to and support the aspirations of learners' whānau, hapū and iwi, Māori are committed and successful participants. (pp. 5-6)

Hutchings et al. (2013) also discussed the importance of biliteracy for Māori; this included knowledge of personal connections, the natural world, Māori art and expression, and the ongoing impacts of colonisation and dominance. Feedback from learners in the pilot programme indicated that the Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga wellbeing model captured the unique complexity of learning and wellbeing for Māori.

An Ecological Approach

Community psychology uses an ecological approach to demonstrate the interrelated effects of each part of an individual's life, or in the interactions between people or communities. In the context of the documents reviewed for this study, the *ecological approach* sub-theme was identified in relation to the interrelated nature of literacy programmes, tutors and staff, learners, and whānau. The interconnected relationship between learners and their outcomes is also reflective of an ecological approach.

Potter et al. (2011) was interested in exploring transformative benefits for whānau when members participated in adult L + N programmes. Individual improvements were recognised, but an ecological perspective was also applied, with skills improvements viewed for their wider impact on tamariki, whānau, and community wellbeing. Central to this transformative approach was self-determination and healing for whānau:

> The adult learners said they were able to be more active participants in their whānau, and whānau were enabled to be more active participants in the worlds around them, including te ao Māori... The adult learners said that this had led to greater whānau togetherness and cohesion, and being better able to plan together as a whānau and work through painful past issues. (p. 49)

Furness (2013) found that, within the programmes she reviewed, learners were viewed through an ecological lens: "People were seen as multifaceted with each part affecting the other and thus, in the context of the program, were regarded holistically" (p. 49).

Hutchings et al. (2013) also highlighted an ecological approach to learning, with te ao Māori knowledge and 'ways of being' central to learner wellbeing. The research found that the Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga wellbeing model was able to capture the complexity of wellbeing for Māori learners, with the importance of interconnection between individual and whānau wellbeing recognised for wider wellbeing effects.

Social Justice

Social justice is a core community psychology value, and it was recognised as a sub-theme in some of the documents. The Literacy Aotearoa Annual Report (2018) presented justice as one of its core operating values, alongside equity, honour and respect. A social justice sub-theme was also identified in Furness and Hunter's (2019) explanation of the importance of shifting traditional perspectives of ownership of learning to encompass methods that emphasise contextual features. The relevance of this shift in approach is the recognition that people's lives are influenced by multiple globalised networks, relationships, and modes of communication. Thus, learning must reflect and support a changing social landscape. Furness and Hunter (2019) also emphasised that, while some learner's goals and achievements might appear to be simple daily activities, to the learner they are significant and life altering and should be recognised as such.

Social justice featured repeatedly as a sub-theme in Furness' (2013) research on family focused adult literacy programmes. Alongside the bicultural sub-theme outlined previously, Furness described issues of social justice within the dominant approach to adult L + N adopted by the New Zealand Government. On a positive note, improved literacy skills helped one learner to improve her sense of social justice by being able to "read union news on her workplace noticeboard when she obtained new employment" (p. 46). A social justice sub-theme was also apparent in Furness' discussion of findings. Programmes and programme staff encouraged criticality and discussion which was deemed vital for learners' "human rights" (p. 48).

Human Flourishing

Human flourishing was a sub-theme found in Furness and Hunter's (2019) report on the use of a wellbeing framework (Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga) to enhance outcomes for adult L + N learners. It featured in their report as a key conceptualising factor of wellbeing:

> We agree with Shah and Marks (2004) that 'one of the key aims of a democratic government is to promote the good life: a flourishing society, where citizens are happy, healthy, capable and engaged – in other words with high levels of well-being'. (p. 4)

Neoliberalism and the Impact of Colonialism

The impacts on neoliberalism and colonialism must be acknowledged when discussing adult L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand. State education policies for Māori from the mid-1800's to mid-1900s were monocultural and monolingual. Assimilating Māori children was the goal, and educating them enough to be literate in English for manual and domestic work was considered ample (Potter et al., 2011). A neoliberal society was beginning to flourish in Aotearoa New Zealand, with a capitalist economy "based on assumptions of English cultural and intellectual superiority" (Potter et al., 2011, p. 16). Many of the participants in Potter et al.'s research spoke of the intergenerational effects of policies designed to suppress Māori language and culture:

> Half of the adult learners told us they had parents or grandparents who spoke te reo Māori and would do so with others of their generation, but not with them. Each noted that this was an outcome of the policy to suppress Māori language in schools, a finding that has been documented and discussed by a number of researchers. (p. 9)

Participants in Potter et al.'s (2011) research also said that although their parents and grandparents wanted them to do well in school, they were unable to offer any support in their learning and did not know how to navigate the school system. Some of this was directly related to an intergenerational dislike of school or the traumatic effects of physical punishment for speaking te reo Māori. Other effects of colonisation and a neoliberal society were identified and discussed by Potter et al. These included the erosion of traditional whānau and hapū family structures where multiple generations lived and worked together to raise tamariki, and separation from ancestral lands, communities, and spiritual ties. Experiences of alcoholism, domestic conflict, and sexual abuse often further derailed the home environment and had an effect on learning.

Furness and Hunter (2019) discussed the prioritisation of "official markers of accomplishment" (p. 12) such as unit standards, completion of Open Polytechnic programmes, or Māori literacy certificates. These records of 'officialdom' could be considered neoliberal in their rigid approach to meeting learning criteria; however, Furness and Hunter (2019) recognised their importance for empowerment and self-confidence, and in a holistic wellbeing approach, these accomplishments could be aligned with learners personal goals rather than neoliberal societal expectations.

Addressing neoliberalism in adult L + N was the focus of Taupo's (2016) report. Taupo described the challenges for not-for-profit organisations such as Literacy Aotearoa to implement their holistic agenda when faced with the requirements of dominant neoliberal policies and funding bodies. One of Taupo's research questions highlighted this dilemma and sought strength-based solutions: "How can whānau literacy programmes counter neoliberal policies that affect adult education in New Zealand?" (p. 42). Taupo asserted that current educational policy is based on neoliberal policies that hinder learners from diverse backgrounds accessing and thriving in educational settings. Specifically, the Tertiary Education Commission's Literacy, Language and Numeracy Action Plan (2008-2012) defines a neoliberal, monocultural approach to adult literacy as skills for potential workers with economic potential:

> The written and oral language people use in their everyday life and work; it includes reading, writing, speaking and listening. Skills in this area are essential for good communication, critical thinking and problem-solving in the workforce. It includes building the skills to communicate (at work) for speakers of other languages. (Tertiary Education Commission, 2009, p. 6, as cited in Taupo, 2016, p. 43)

According to Taupo (2016), the Tertiary Education Strategy (2014-2019) also sets out the Government's strategic neoliberal agenda – to build international relationships that contribute to improved competitiveness and support business development. Echoing Furness and Hunter's (2019) findings, Taupo reported that learners were interested in setting personal goals to increase their employment opportunities by improving their literacy skills. They were also interested in activities that would help them develop a curriculum vitae, or gain a driver licence to improve job opportunities. However, these personal and vocational goals sat alongside, rather than instead of, personal development.

Overall, Taupo's (2016) findings addressed the ways in which whānau literacy programmes counter neoliberal agendas. The research showed that, although neoliberal agendas are difficult for whānau literacy providers to navigate, organisations such as Literacy Aotearoa are able to meet their requirements while also providing a holistic approach that meets the needs of their vulnerable, diverse adult learners.

Furness (2013) also highlighted the New Zealand Government's neoliberal agenda which had made "little progress ... on government policy to support family focused

approaches in adult literacy and numeracy education" (p. 33). Furness outlined her personal experience in working for the Tertiary Education Commission and her increasing concern that adult literacy policy and funding frameworks were not actively considering the value of L + N skills for social benefit. Furness also noted that the dominant neoliberal approach adopted by the New Zealand Government towards family literacy was unduly influenced by international agencies and does not sufficiently address the unique cultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand. While Furness' report highlighted a sociomaterial view of adult L + N, she did acquiesce that the dominant literacy approach was useful in some contexts, such as navigating everyday life, and to understand and work within the neoliberal western systems that Aotearoa New Zealand has implemented from its colonial foundations (e.g. the education system, justice system, and political system).

Hutchings et al. (2013) highlighted the impact of colonisation on Māori literacy, specifically the colonial ideas that have formed the basis of Aotearoa New Zealand's education system: "The processes and practices of colonisation have not only determined what literacies will be valued, taught and practised, but have also imposed how literacy is to be defined and understood" (p. 5). Hutchings et al. also asserts that the definition of literacy as "the ability to decode and encode in written and spoken English" (p.5) reflects a narrow concept of literacy that reflects western dominance. To counter this approach, Hutchings et al. developed a Kaupapa Māori framework and definition of literacy that incorporated te reo Māori and Māori worldviews. The research found that this culturally appropriate approach encouraged Māori to engage and become successful learners. Hutchings et al. also suggested that Māori literacy needs to include political literacy to enable an understanding of colonisation and its impact on Māori and Māori literacies. It was recognised that the development of this type of literacy for Māori learners required high levels of trust between programme providers, tutors, and learners to ensure that "learners experience a learning environment where they feel sufficiently safe to reflect and comment on their life experience as well as their programme and its impact on their whānau" (p. 20).

Sociomaterialism

There were many examples of the importance of L + N as a social practice, with recognition of different types of L + N that resonate with learners. Potter et al. (2011) reported that levels of isolation and exclusion were improved by increased literacy skills.

Potter et al. also found that while most learners spoke of the benefits of being able to read more efficiently and understand bills and forms, there were also wider social implications: "Some talked about their delight in being able to have an informed personal opinion and share it with others, and some felt they were more aware of and interested in community life and political events." (p. 30). Another interesting benefit that was mentioned by most of the participants was an "increased sense of self and an enhanced understanding of others" (p. 31). Some even expressed a sense of improved self-discipline and respect for others, and they reported that they were less likely to rely on a physically violent response when faced with challenges or frustrations.

Literacy Aotearoa's approach to L + N is firmly sociomaterial, and this is reflected in their 2018 Annual report. As mentioned previously, Principle One in the Annual Report outlined bicultural priorities, while Principle Two offered a sociomaterial foundation: "Literacy Aotearoa is established to develop, promote and deliver accessible, quality literacy services designed to ensure the peoples of Aotearoa are critically literate and able to realise their full social, cultural and economic potential" (p. 3). Literacy Aotearoa also offered their view on the definition of wellbeing in the context of L + N: "Wellbeing is the 'confidence to do' and raise one's horizons to be able to participate constructively in family, whānau, communities and work" (p. 20).

Furness and Hunter (2019) prefaced their research report with their fundamental belief that L + N are social endeavours, influenced by relationships and multiple background factors. They cited previous research by Barton et al. (2006) that indicated that participants' diverse experiences, culture, history, current circumstances, and access to resources all dynamically influence their ability to communicate. Furness and Hunter also identified that adult learners' willingness to engage in L + N programmes is contingent on the programme being relevant and meaningful to them. According to Furness and Hunter, context is also important, as is the attention paid to diversity and culture, particularly for Māori who thrive in a bi-literate space that supports their beliefs and values. The OECD's Better Life Initiative and the New Zealand Treasury's Living Standards Framework (with Sen's capability approach to wellbeing) were referenced as providing a deeper level of understanding and a sociomaterial approach that offered the potential for a welcome change to policy-making.

In alignment with these views, Furness and Hunter (2019) used sociomaterial approaches and methods in their research. First, they conducted a workshop for tutors with

the aim of learning how to develop graphic and/or social network maps that would help learners recognise the interconnection between wellbeing, L + N learning, and what they valued in their everyday lives. Tutors were also encouraged to pay attention to wellbeing outcomes and their relationship to L + N learning as a part of normal classroom discourse. Furness and Hunter reported many wellbeing outcomes in their research report, linked to three key elements: 1) Tutor development of connectedness and belonging among the group of learners; 2) Tutor-instigated, regular, collaborative mind-mapping exercises that linked L + N learning with wellbeing outcomes for learners; 3) Natural classroom discussions about L + N learning and wellbeing outcomes. In addition, learners expressed pride in their L + N achievements, some of which were quite small in broader achievement terms, but represented the achievement of goals and were significant gains in skill and confidence for learners. Social competence and overcoming the stigma of being labelled low literacy was linked to increased self-worth and improved self-image. Furness and Hunter described their research as evidence of a shift from traditional perspectives of individual "ownership of learning" (p. 14); instead, a sociomaterial approach highlights contextual features, recognising that people's lives are "powerfully shaped by and integrated with multiple globalised networks, relationships, and modes of communication" (Fenwick & Landri, 2012, as cited in Furness & Hunter 2019, p. 14).

An outcome reported by McLauchlan and Farley (2019) also had a sociomaterial theme:

> One participant of the pilot was sharing a cell with a person who was keen to participate in the pilot but failed to meet the eligibility criteria. The participant was working through a difficult engine assembly task and took very detailed step-by-step notes of what he was doing and drawing diagrams of key processes. He then took the notes back to his cellmate and revised them with him. (p. 8)

The high motivation to share knowledge in a social manner, using a spontaneous method of communication, was beneficial for both prisoners in this instance – the pilot participant improved his literacy skills by performing extra non-compulsory tasks and gained socially by sharing his knowledge, while the cell-mate gleaned some information that he would not have been otherwise privy to.

By highlighting the social practices that influence learners to engage in adult L + N programmes, and recognising the cultural importance of incorporating whānau into learning

environments, Taupo (2016) actively challenged neoliberalism by presenting the strengths of a sociomaterial approach. She highlighted Literacy Aotearoa's definition of literacy as "listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and critical thinking, interwoven with the knowledge of social and cultural practices" (p. 43). Taupo also recognised that applying a sociomaterial approach is not without challenge when addressing systems that are set up from a neoliberal perspective. However, she countered these challenges by describing Literacy Aotearoa's student-centred focus and flexible approach for vulnerable learners, a key demographic who may otherwise become disillusioned or disengaged. In addition to applying a social lens to her research, Taupo (2016) identified the importance of recognising whakapapa and whānau as important social, cultural, and economic links for learners: "These two concepts of whānau and whakapapa share parallel themes in that they are socially and culturally constructed... It relates to extended family and family members who are the primary economic unit of traditional Māori society" (p. 44).

Throughout Taupo's (2016) research report, examples of a sociomaterial approach to adult L + N were apparent. L + N learning was embedded in everyday activities such as grocery shopping or putting together a school lunchbox; parents were assisted in improving their parenting skills by applying listening and speaking strategies; learners were guided to gain a sense of their cultural identity through te reo Māori; and tutors worked with learners to provide flexible, culturally safe learning plans and strategies. Taupo also acknowledged that, for some learners, personal goals involved the development of skills that reflected neoliberal concepts, such as creating a curriculum vitae or gaining a drivers license to improve employment prospects. A key outcome of Taupo's research was that learners reported improvements in self-confidence and L + N skills in daily life. Wellbeing improvements were also reported, both individually and in a whānau context. These outcomes illustrate that a holistic approach that limits neoliberal influence can have significantly positive impacts for learners.

Furness' (2013) research reflected her interest, having worked at the Tertiary Education Commission, in exploring the potential of family approaches to L + N. This interest was piqued out of concern that adult literacy policy and funding frameworks were not actively considering the value of L + N skills for social, rather than economic benefit. As discussed previously, Furness recognised that proficient knowledge of the dominant literacy was important in some contexts; however, broad and inclusive multiliteracies were also deemed vital. These could take many forms including Māori or Pacific language, or include

other modalities such as oral, performance, or art. Furness' research also identified the importance of literacy as a social and relational activity; programme staff considered the technical aspects of literacy to be inseparable from their social and relational contexts of use. Overall, it was apparent that programme staff:

> Viewed literacy as social practice in which skills played a part but in which relationships were paramount, that they had concern for both the interests of adults as well as children and that they were concerned for both the individual and the collective good. (p. 52)

Hutchings et al. (2013) applied a cultural lens to wellbeing and adult L + N; defining literacy from a Kaupapa Māori viewpoint "that widens the scope of what is understood as literacy to include te reo Māori and those literacy practices which give expression to Māori worldviews" (p. 5). Using the Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga assessment framework, this research used a wellbeing approach to L + N skill acquisition for Māori learners; specifically establishing how the learner improved in confidence, and exploring the changes and benefits experienced by the learner and their whānau. Hutchings et al. explained that the purpose of using a wellbeing model such as Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga was to "capture stories of the learners' changes, and to validate the social practices that learners develop following their involvement in the adult literacy programmes" (p. 17).

Māori Wellbeing Frameworks

The theme of *Māori Wellbeing Frameworks*, identified throughout many of the documents analysed, included sub-themes such as *te ao Māori*, *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, and the specific Kaupapa Māori frameworks used to underpin this research: *Te Pae Māhutonga*, *Te Whare Tapa Whā* and *Whiti Te Rā*.

Potter et al. (2011) identified key elements of Māori wellbeing in the results of their research. Intergenerational learning, whanaungatanga, and whānau self-determination were all recognised as benefits of increased adult L + N skills. The participants in Potter et al.'s research had a collective sensibility, reflective of a te ao Māori worldview. The acquisition of L + N skills was not to solely benefit them, but their whole whānau. As learners developed their skills, they became more confident to explore whakapapa and tikanga, and were interested in sharing this cultural knowledge with their tamariki and mokopuna. Potter et al.

also recognised the benefit of L + N programmes located on marae: “the course was particularly useful in supporting marae wānanga, as it had enabled those with previously low literacy to participate in learning whānau, hapū and marae knowledge” (p. 45).

Potter et al. (2011) also reported that relationships between whānau members were improved when individuals gained L + N skills. Other benefits included improved communication skills and self-confidence, resulting in better parenting and stronger whānau relationships. Aspirations for greater wellbeing through education were also reported, and learners felt able to help themselves and their whānau achieve their goals. One learner expressed this insight: “Our children are the future generation and our generation needs to be able to show them a better life. I want more for my girls and my mokos” (p. 48).

The Literacy Aotearoa Annual Report (2018) had strong Māori themes throughout. As mentioned previously, it began with a te reo Māori tribute to those who had passed away, followed by a whakatoukī to set the tone for the report. The first principle outlined the importance of a bicultural, mātauranga Māori approach: “Literacy Aotearoa will honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi by operating in accordance with Tino Rangatiratanga and guided by Manaaki Tangata” (p. 3). Throughout the document, headings often incorporated Māori language and included stories of Māori learners.

Furness and Hunter (2019) also highlighted the importance of Māori wellbeing in their report. They recognised that to engage Māori adult learners in L + N programmes, the content and delivery must be relevant and meaningful with particular attention paid to diverse cultural contexts and the need for Māori (and other cultural groups) to be able to function in a bi-literate space with support for their beliefs and values. Furness and Hunter found that the Māori values of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and reciprocity were embodied in the way that tutors and programme staff valued participants and saw them as strong people with multi-faceted lives. One of the key wellbeing findings of this research: “Belonging/whanaungatanga within the programme” (p. 13) made participants feel safe and secure in their learning environment, helped participant engagement, and had flow on effects to whānau.

Taupo’s (2016) report highlighted a te ao Māori view of literacy that includes symbols, nonverbal communication, and artefacts. It also recognised the importance of bi-literacy in Aotearoa New Zealand: “This position includes living by Māoritanga values and ways of knowing and being while also enjoying the full rights of citizenship under Te Tiriti o

Waitangi" (p. 43). When discussing the importance of whānau involvement in L + N learning, Taupo highlighted the connection between the concepts of whānau and whakapapa: "[they] share parallel themes in that they are socially and culturally constructed" (p. 44). The use of te reo Māori as a tool to improve self-identity was also discussed:

> Students engaged in cultural practices such as karakia (incantations), waiata (songs) and whaikōrero (formal speech). They began to memorise kupu hou (new words) that linked to information from their pepeha (tribal aphorism) which took into account Māori formulaic expressions of connecting landmarks and waterways that they spiritually identified with, such as Ko Wai to Maunga (who is your mountain?) Ko wai to awa (who is your river?). (p. 48)

Furness (2013) noted that, despite her concern about neoliberal influences in adult education policy, there were positive signs that Māori and Pacific learner involvement was becoming increasingly prioritised, alongside a recognition that culturally appropriate L + N programmes were needed to attract, engage, and ensure success for diverse cultural groups. Furness also reported ways that learners were able to influence the delivery of programmes to make them more culturally resonant:

> The pattern of talking together enabled the participants to stamp their cultural mark on the way the program operated, instituting from the outset a protocol of opening and closing lessons with a prayer. Beginning and ending with prayer was usual everyday practice and/or familiar to all members of the group and they appreciated it in the program. (p. 50)

Hutchings et al. (2013) also reported the importance of a Māori approach to literacy:

> [It] widens the scope of what is understood as literacy to include te reo Māori and those literacy practices which give expression to Māori worldviews. Such a definition enables Māori adult learners to access the learning of forms and uses of literacy that are relevant and meaningful to them... When adult literacy programmes are relevant to and support the aspirations of learners' whānau, hapū and iwi, Māori are committed and successful participants. (pp. 5-6)

In alignment with the Te Pae Māhutonga and Whiti Te Rā Māori wellbeing frameworks that underpin this research, Hutchings et al. (2013) highlighted the importance of biliteracy for Māori:

> Being able to name one's homelands, hapū and iwi boundaries, and geographical features, as well as those of adjacent lands; and being able to read the lands, skies and waterways. It means being able to read the stories and meanings inscribed in the symbols of whakairo, tukutuku and kowhaiwhai in the context of where they are located; and being able to read body language. (p. 6)

Hutchings et al. (2013) recognised that the already successful Kaupapa Māori approaches to education that are in operation at all age levels (Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori and Wānanga) give Māori a platform from which to develop further educational programmes and goals that can be incorporated into the wider mainstream sector:

> The theory is necessarily grounded in a Māori worldview. Key elements are whakapapa and the affirming of an identity as Māori and that of taonga tuku iho wich is concerned with legitimising Māori language, knowledge, values and practices. The overarching theoretical principle is that of tino rangatiratanga, the political autonomy for Māori to determine for Māori. (p. 7)

In the Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga wellbeing model developed by Hutchings et al. (2013), whakataukī is used to establish a Māori context and initial connection. This connection and relationship-building process was recognised by learners as crucial because it provided the opportunity for them to reflect on their past learning experiences and establish a firm and trusting connection between them, their whānau and the tutor/programme provider. In a Kaupapa Māori context, this relationship provides a crucial foundation and has a direct influence on learner engagement. At the conclusion of their study, Hutchings et al. expressed confidence that the Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga wellbeing model was able to capture the complexity of wellbeing for Māori learners. Specifically, the model captured the interconnected nature of cultural, individual, and whānau wellbeing, and supported each element through the learning process.

Interviewee Perspectives on the Values, Beliefs and Perspectives Underlying Their Research and Reporting

Interviews were undertaken, with the goal of adding an extra perspective to the data gleaned from the document analysis; they specifically allowed me to gain an understanding

of the values and beliefs that underpinned their adult L + N research and reporting. Thematic analysis was used to code and identify themes within the transcribed interview data; these were then placed into five categories: Reasons for the research; Values underlying the research; Beliefs underlying the research; Learners and their outcomes; Programmes/Processes; The Living Standards Framework; The Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework; Te Tiriti o Waitangi; Te ao Māori perspectives. Community psychology values and Māori wellbeing were also repeatedly discussed in the interviews, along with sociomaterialism, neoliberalism, and the impacts of colonisation on Māori. Sub-themes that reflect those used in the document analysis are identified and italicised throughout this section.

Reasons for the Research

When asked about the reasons for their research, the interviewees had varied responses, but all expressed a desire to understand more about the challenges that faced L + N programme providers and adult learners. Community psychology themes of *social justice*, *empowerment* and *human flourishing* were apparent when an interviewee who also assists in developing programmes, expressed that the main reason for their research was problem-solving, with a particular interest in improving outcomes by establishing what type of adult learning environment works best for marginalised learners.

Collaboration, social justice, an *ecological approach,* and the importance of a *holistic, relationship-focussed* approach, alongside a critical view of *neoliberalism* was apparent when another interviewee spoke of wanting to understand the processes of an adult L + N programme provider. Specifically, they wanted to explore how the provider met targets for funding and meeting regulations, while still implementing programmes that resonated with learners who are marginalised, without "the ability or the tools to even engage in an equitable society". They also wanted to understand how programme managers and tutors contributed to the programme, whether they could influence content, and how they made their programmes engaging and suitable for a range of learners. Their research also explored how tutors and leaders were able to reflect on their practices and improve on them. Underlying all of this was an overarching desire to know – "How do we know what success looks like"?

Values Underlying the Research

All of the interviewees described values, whether implicit or explicit, that underpinned their research; these values influenced the chosen topic, the research questions, and the processes used. Values in alignment with community psychology values were apparent, as were te ao Māori values, personal values, the links between personal and organisational values, and sociomaterialism.

A *strengths-based approach* of valuing people, irrespective of their circumstances, was expressed as a vital foundation for the research by one interviewee; all interviewees also highlighted the importance of recognising the skills and resilience that all adult learners have regardless of L + N skill level. A *sociomaterial approach* that reflected the value of *human flourishing* was also apparent when an interviewee described the role that education can play in helping people to build further resilience through skills, knowledge, and learning: "I think we see education probably being undervalued in its ability to build that resilience and wellbeing in a social sense".

The importance of *relationships*, particularly between whānau members was also discussed by one interviewee, who described the intergenerational benefits of providing adults with improved L + N skills. Their organisation adopts an *ecological approach* and works *collaboratively* with both children and adult learners because "you really can't do much for our tamariki without supporting the adults in their lives". Adult L + N education is also viewed as a tool for larger wellbeing outcomes: "It's an important thing to have in your kete... it's not enough of an outcome just on its own for us, we know it leads to bigger and better things".

Te ao Māori values, particularly *biculturalism*, the importance of *relationships, collaboration, empowerment* and *human flourishing*, were also recognised as essential for Māori learners, leading to positive interactions and engagement when they were incorporated into L + N programmes:

> So there's the skill development – but what really underpinned the success of it was the wraparound support, the application of values that were natural to those Māori that instilled their core – what they do on the daily – and that's to be respectful, to exercise the value of manaakitanga, so that's valuing people and their relationships with each other.

Interviewees also spoke of their personal curiosity and the values that they bring to their work; examples of this included whakautu (the art of reciprocity), the ako principle (sometimes teacher, sometimes learner), and manaakitanga: “I value you as an individual no matter what your issues or whatever is going on for you”. One interviewee described a connection between their personal values and the values held by their organisation towards learners capabilities:

> They come with a knowledge and an understanding about their world, and your task is to help to see what that looks like, understand the strengths, and then from that basis then start to layer the skills and the knowledge and the opportunities, and then you get to see this evolution of understanding and deeper awareness.

Beliefs Underlying the Research

Interviewees consistently described a desire to understand more about issues that they had noticed in adult L + N education, and to challenge some of the ideas that they recognised as incorrect or narrow in scope: “There’s more to literacy than just literacy and numeracy skills and acquisition, competencies etc. There’s a whole growth of experimentation and confidence”. *Social justice* was a sub-theme identified repeatedly. One interviewee described wanting to understand more about the measurement tools that were being used to assess learners, having noticed that they appeared narrow and *neoliberal* – based on a particular set of skills designed for international comparison: “They may be good at ranking people and ranking countries, but they are not very good at showing what people can do with literacy, what they can *actually* do”. Another described wanting to challenge the assumption that adults with low levels of L + N skills cannot function in society; they noted that while the skills certainly help, people consistently show themselves to be very adaptable and able to function in daily life, even with low levels of L + N. The same interviewee also wanted to challenge the *neoliberal* “deeply ingrained notion” that by learning to read and write, possibilities will suddenly open up for learners and their issues will disappear: “it just doesn’t happen that way”. For this interviewee, the beliefs that underpinned their work were *sociomaterial* in nature, based on their early research when they noticed that children were using group process writing not to improve their skills but rather to maintain their social relationships and social hierarchies: “I began to see how much deeper literacy is than just getting the skills”.

One interviewee expressed a recognition of changing times and changing needs for learners; and a desire to ensure that L + N training was keeping pace to enable *human flourishing*:

> In the last year or two our focus has gone onto the future of work, and what are those skills that are going to be needed when things are more automated in 10/15/20 years? And increasingly where that leads you is to those social skills – problem solving ability, the ability to work through things in teams – it looks a little different, it's not so focussed on traditional quantitative measures of progress; it's looking around what's happening with the person as a whole, and how can you start to find strengths that they have that a machine or bot couldn't do.

A s*ociomaterial* approach is alluded to in the quotes above; one of the interviewees explicitly expressed a need to challenge *neoliberal* ideas towards adult L + N:

> What is neoliberalism? If anything it's that thing about supporting the economic wealth, the global, you know – we're global citizens – it's like, 'No we're not, we're citizens of Aotearoa at the bottom of the Pacific!'... Neoliberalism is seen as necessary for economic development, but it shouldn't be to the detriment of the labour force or those who have, through poor schooling or challenges in early life, who fall through the cracks of a neoliberal system.

Learners and Their Outcomes

All of the interviewees saw qualities of strength, resourcefulness and resilience in adult learners. *Relationships* and the importance of whānau and community connections were also described as vital to learning. One interviewee observed that learners were able to thrive when programmes and teaching was *strengths* and *relationship based*, and said that, in their research, a sense of community in class "really, really seemed very important". However, they did add a cautionary note that there can sometimes be a downside to the tight relationships formed in learning environments. After one programme that had been very successful in forging bonds between participants ended, one of the learners, who was particularly engaged in the collaborative environment, struggled with low mood and motivation: "because if there's a lot of sense of community in the class, as there are in many community classes... what happens afterwards?"

The *empowerment* of learners through relationships forged in class was described by another interviewee:

> You could see the little changes and the little steps – suddenly 12 weeks later when I came back to meet them at their last hui and they were all sharing – she's no longer wearing her hoodie and holding the baby. Her hoodie's off, she's walking around, she's proud as.

The importance of *empowerment, collaboration, relationships* and a *sociomaterial approach* was also apparent in a description of strengthened whānau relationships when whānau were welcomed into a learning environment: "The kids were able to influence and support Mum to step out of her comfort zone and get a little bit uncomfortable". The impact on whānau dynamics, and the possibility that outcomes can be changed for tamariki through parental involvement in adult L + N programmes was also noted:

> Mum's just constantly washing dishes, washing clothes; Dad's working. So it's just a household constantly humming, but then the children, that's all they see, so there's no interaction with them, it's almost like they're part of the chores – so then what does that do to their value? And so this Mum, after being on the programme for 12 weeks she was starting to walk the talk and then be the influencer of change.

Another interviewee reiterated the importance of a *strengths-based approach*, *empowering* learners who have often been marginalised or have struggled in educational settings:

> I think what we typically do is we – for understandable reasons – get very focussed on the deficit view of that, and it's important to be realistic about barriers, but we also know from that group – there's a real strong and very noticeable streak of creativity and innovation and you know, thinking differently.

This interviewee also recognised that the best ideas are born out of a *relationship* of trust between the programme facilitator and the learner, but that it is also important to know your limits as a practitioner. In their programme, utilising peer group learning strategies can be *empowering*, with positive outcomes for learners:

> It's not some do-gooder NGO coming in for some weird reason to teach you literacy and numeracy, it's your mate in jail who's also good with cars but doesn't like reading – it's a completely different perspective.

While a *strengths-based approach* was described by all of the interviewees, it was also recognised that learners have often had to overcome challenging experiences just to get into the classroom. *Social justice* was a key theme; countering the effects of *neoliberalism* and the ingrained views of L + N that sometimes exist in marginalised communities: "you don't get encouraged to read at home, if you were sitting around reading a book you were lazy", to challenging outsiders views: "I'm sick of people saying, 'oh you know they have the same opportunities', and I'm like, 'says who? What opportunities are you talking about?", to the intergenerational harm that was caused by systemic racism and *Aotearoa's colonial history*:

> With my Nan she was, her first language was reo, until she was beaten at school and all the rest of it, so she just left school, she just left and went to work, had children, whatever. And then she self-taught, and then she became an author... I remember being in 5th form and asking her to teach me my own Pepeha or mihimihi, she said: 'No I'm not teaching that, it's not worth it'... So then I asked my Mum – my Mum didn't know – and it's my Mum's generation that missed out, and it's my generation that also missed out.

Interviewees also recognised the need to support, *collaborate* with, and *empower* learners as they overcame these challenges:

> Some people come and they don't want to admit that they don't know how to do stuff. And I think that was another key that was actually trying to shift the psyche but actually, acknowledge it for what it is: 'You're here because, you know, school didn't work out for you, you're here because things didn't happen, so now you have to develop some stuff. It's going to get uncomfortable because you recall that learning environment was really unfriendly, you got a whole lot of negative feedback or whatever, we've got to shift that.

> You almost want to have a whole day to just kind of purge and just go: 'Bleurgh, this all happened' so then you can chuck it all in the fire pit, burn it, and then go: 'Right, the slate's clean, let's get it all out'... and they've got to be ready,

> they've got to be willing, and your role, the tutor's role is just to walk alongside them.

Interviewees also recognised that workplace L + N training can create issues for learners who do not want to admit to the gaps in their knowledge because it may negatively impact their employment. The resilience of these individuals should be noted – they are often able to carry out their jobs without being able to fully read or comprehend training or manufacturing manuals and instructions. Two of the interviewees described encountering employees in this situation who had been able to *flourish* in challenging circumstances and adapt their roles. If employers notice that something is amiss it is often attributed to laziness or 'cutting corners' rather than an employee's inability to understand written procedures or workplace jargon.

Beliefs About Programmes and Processes

Interviewees identified factors that they felt were crucial to successful adult L + N programme development and delivery; these included respecting the *diversity* of learners, taking the time to build and maintain *relationships*, clear and respectful *collaboration* and communication between tutors, learners and whānau, and providing a variety of learning opportunities that resonated with learners and reflected their interests. One interviewee described the importance of encouraging learners to *flourish* by exposing them to a "diversity of rich life and rich exposure to many different things", which offered benefits beyond traditional classroom learning. An example of this was a cooking literacy class, criticised by some as irrelevant to literacy learning – however as the interviewee explained, literacy is embedded into *sociomaterial* 'outside the box' learning practices which can then translate into *empowerment* and confidence in other facets of life such as reading food labels at the supermarket, reading and trialling new recipes, and sharing food with others.

Another interviewee expressed the importance of "the tutors being able to meet the learners where they were at" in their lives, which involved *relationship-building* and being aware of learners needs – rather than a *neoliberal* approach of making learners fit the requirements of the programme:

> You know it's valuing people – really valuing them where/who they are and where they are at. Now that's, I don't know if that's a skill, but it's certainly a conflict when it comes to account and report for the return on investment, which is fair enough, we all need to do it, we all need to be accountable, but at the

> same time we need to be really clear about: 'What does it take to be able to support communities to really thrive and flourish?" And if it means having to take a little bit longer... so be it.

When considering a *neoliberal* approach to adult L + N versus a *sociomaterial* approach, one interviewee suggested an *ecological perspective*: "The economics will come as a result of some of the shifts, and some of the influence, and some of the incremental changes that take place as a result of just shifting". Another interviewee outlined the challenges that L + N programme providers face when trying to strike a balance between the different facets of their work:

> We try to, in a general sense – take an evidence-based approach to delivering or developing services, but always being aware that even the term 'evidence-based' has a particular bias or worldview sometimes attached to it, so you've got to be looking a bit more holistically and qualitatively around what else is going on.

One interviewee was blunt in their summation of policy development in Aotearoa New Zealand:

> This is what we know about the racist policy implementation in this country – unless you actually start by prioritising what's going to work for Māori and what's going to work for Pasifika – unless you do that you'll get exactly the same thing as we've got with this incredible lag for COVID.... If we continue to actually use Pākehā as the benchmark for what is normal, if you do that everyone's going to keep on lagging. And actually even Pākehā in that benchmark lag. So then you get a particular socioeconomic bias against it too.

All of the interviewees were aware of the limitations of traditional L + N assessment tools such as the LNAAT. While it was recognised that officially recording learner progress was useful for programme facilitators and developers, the LNAAT was deemed "not necessarily the tool that kind of captures people's awareness, people's understanding". All of the interviewees had witnessed skills in learners that are not recognised in typical assessment situations. Resilience, common sense, and an ability to adapt to a workplace where you can't understand written or numerical instructions were all described as common skills possessed by learners. Mātauranga Māori was also discussed as knowledge that is vital for Māori flourishing, but is not recognised in L + N assessment tools. Interviewees noted that

important skills in Māori communities such as cultural knowledge, historical knowledge, songs, traditional practices, situational awareness, and environmental knowledge are not valued in western assessment, despite representing a high level of cognition.

One interviewee was unsure about how LNAAT data was used at Government level:

> It gives them a system that lets them know that we're all doing it but I never get any reports about how remarkable we're doing as a sector because of that; and if they did do that then that would be valuable cause then we'd get to see – 'oh so LNAAT is actually enabling us as a sector to do better'. But we don't get that, we get it through ourselves but we don't get it for the sector.... What is the value of what you ask us to measure?

Another interviewee discussed the limitations of LNAAT as a form of assessment:

> We're careful not to get too caught up on how much of a shift you've made on an LNAAT tool, or how much more employable you are as a result – because we know either those assessment approaches, or those views of employers have got some inbuilt blind-spots, or inbuilt kind of limiting factors that we're trying to get around.

The interviewee also described the importance of constant research and development to ensure L + N programmes remain reflective of learners and their needs. Sometimes this involves a change in perspective and approach:

> As we started to work through the programme and understand what learners wanted, we became clearer about what our niche is here... Our focus is to work with disengaged learners, develop their confidence, develop some interest, develop some foundation skills and then send them on – to get them on a pathway of either learning, training or employment – whereas when we started we were much more focussed around thinking: 'let's take some learners at step one of the literacy and numeracy progressions and get them up to a step five, and then our job's sort of done' – that's certainly not irrelevant to what we're doing but it's not the main outcome now.... It's a subtle shift but it changes quite a bit of how we engage with learners.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Three interviewees shared their perspectives on Te Tiriti o Waitangi from a Māori perspective. One felt that there is respect between Iwi and Crown, but in terms of a partnership, the power differential is stark: "In that relationship the Crown holds all of the money, the Crown holds much of the intelligence and data about Māori for example, and they hold the channels. So the decision-making is kind of not fair, it's unbalanced".

Another interviewee was concerned that the State-Owned Enterprises Act (1986, Parliamentary Counsel Office, n.d.) enabled judges to interpret Te Tiriti and make judgements on what they felt was applicable. These actions favour a neoliberal approach, dilute the intention of Te Tiriti and lead to inequitable outcomes for Māori:

> My own personal perspective is that this dilution continues to feed the narrative of decision makers – a prime example of this is the current COVID health response. The vaccination rates among Māori are low for a range of reasons – one of them being a lack of trust of the State and for the very reason that because Māori are, we're never invited to the table when these things happen – ever.

Alternatively, the interviewee suggested that the Articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi should become a focus, to:

> Underpin the framework for where we position ourselves. If it was on an axis you'd have the Crown here, rangatiratanga here. You'd have equity, the equity conversation, the partnership conversation... and Māori are both citizens as a right under Article Three but we're also rangatiratanga, we're also mana whenua and tangata whenua – so it's having that dual citizenship.

For this perspective to work, the Crown and Iwi must understand and agree on the terms of partnership, including when to interact and when to step back: "If it's an Iwi conversation the Crown doesn't get involved – in fact you just step away Crown – it's something for the Iwi to figure out. Maybe there's a supporting role that we could provide, but at this point in time it is Iwi to Iwi".

Te Ao Māori Perspectives

One interviewee described a positive, *strengths-based approach* to Māori wellbeing and Māori *empowerment*:

> I think there's a public appetite for us to do better and especially for certain pockets or demographics of Māori. We've got much stronger rangatahi coming up and they're smart, and they're engaging, and they're confident and really able to I guess fend for themselves in a way that we haven't quite seen before.
>
> Māori have had for a long time… a number of good responses to different situations, they just haven't been allowed because of that kind of gap in either measuring them, or they've been seen as folklore or you know – some other kind of derogatory terms that have been used to explain them. But I think the more – as concepts of wellbeing in general and mental health in general have surfaced – people have more started to accept that, "hey, maybe the Māori were onto something here when, you know, in terms of wellbeing – we should try and look into that a bit further".

Concluding Comments

In conjunction with Chapter Four, the purpose of this chapter was to contribute to answering the research question that guides this thesis: *How, and to what extent, does adult literacy and numeracy research and organisational reporting undertaken in New Zealand reflect the key components of the Living Standards Framework and Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework?*

In order to be able to identify whether adult L + N research and organisational reporting reflects the key components of the LSF and the Indigenous Approach discussion document, it was necessary to analyse the selected research or report documents, looking for the themes and approaches that underpinned each work. Interviews with researchers and organisational representatives were also valuable, providing an in-depth understanding of what underpinned their research. Interviewee insights into adult L + N programmes and learner characteristics were also valuable in providing a fuller picture of adult L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand.

According to my analysis, there are several key components that underpin adult L + N research and organisational reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand:

- Community psychology values were prominent through all documents. Collaboration and empowerment were most frequently identified, followed by

holism, a strengths-based approach, diversity, relationships, biculturalism, social justice, and human flourishing.

- All documents referenced the challenges of policy driven by neoliberal agendas, and the impact a neoliberal society has on learners and their outcomes.
- Colonisation was repeatedly identified as a factor that continues to impact Māori learners and their whānau.
- A sociomaterial approach was identified in all documents, frequently referenced as an approach to adult L + N that really resonated with learners and allowed them to attain impactful outcomes for them and their whānau.
- Māori wellbeing frameworks, the importance of a te ao Māori approach, and the inclusion of whānau in adult L + N programmes were all identified as key elements for Māori learner engagement and success.

The points above were reflected in the interview data; many of the same themes were also identified, along with important insights into the values and beliefs that underpin adult L + N research and reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand. Some additional key points include:

- The realisation that LNAAT and other western assessment tools do not provide a truly authentic view of learners, their needs, and their outcomes.
- That Te Tiriti o Waitangi is still not being enacted in a way that ensures equitable outcomes for Māori; policy implementation favours a neoliberal approach and dilutes the intention of Te Tiriti. A number of interviewees used the example of the current COVID vaccination approach as an example of the inequity and disregard of Māori 'ways of being and doing'. To address this issue, the Crown and Iwi must understand and agree on the terms of partnership, including when to interact and when to step back.
- A neoliberal approach to adult L + N is still favoured by government funding bodies. This is despite consistent evidence that learners value social outcomes alongside skills acquisition.

In the following, concluding chapter, the findings of the document analysis and interviews will be discussed in relation to the identified aims and components of the LSF and the Indigenous Approach to the LSF.

Chapter Six: Final Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

This study aimed to contribute to the body of qualitative knowledge that supports the larger L + N research project: 'The expression, experience and transcendence of low skills in Aotearoa New Zealand' (New Zealand Work Research Institute, 2020). I considered my research to be unique and valuable because no previous study has explicitly compared the LSF wellbeing framework and its components with the experiences and outcomes learners reportedly value from their participation in L + N programmes. This was relevant for the larger research project because one of the aims of the project (improved public service delivery to improve outcomes for people with low levels of L + N) stems from policy-making, in which the LSF plays a central role. In the course of my research, I explored the key components of the LSF, as well as the interconnected nature of adult L + N skills acqusition and wellbeing; challenging individualistic views on wellbeing, and the dominant neoliberal approach to L + N policy and funding. In this chapter, I summarise my research process and findings; I then present a final discussion on my findings and their implications, based on the theoretical concepts that were discussed in the literature review and methodological chapters. Lastly, I outline the limitations of this research, as well as recommendations for further research. Final comments will draw this chapter, and research, to a close.

Research Summary

This research study set out to explore the LSF and its related Māori-led documents, and establish whether adult L + N research and organisational reporting in Aotearoa aligns with the key components in each. The release of the 2021 LSF towards the end of the research period expanded the scope of this study, and provided the opportunity for further analysis. The three objectives sought to:

- Identify the key components and the similarities between the LSF, L + N learning opportunities, and previously reported learner outcomes.
- Consider the strengths and weaknesses of actively engaging the LSF in adult L + N programmes and policies.

- Identify ways in which the LSF is being updated to reflect Māori cultural views and values, and whether these are also reflected in L + N research and organisational reporting.

In Chapter Four an analysis of two documents related to the 2018 LSF (Burton, 2018; The Treasury, 2018), and the Indigenous Approach discussion document (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019) identified the similarities and differences between a western and Māori approach to wellbeing. This analysis was expanded by adding the 2021 LSF update (The Treasury, 2021b) and the He Ara Waiora framework (McMeeking et al., 2019a). It was established that although the 2018 LSF aimed to consider intergenerational wellbeing for all New Zealanders, its approach was neoliberal with an economic focus that did not adequately address the unique context of Aotearoa. Of particular note was the lack of Indigenous perspective. In response, The Treasury commissioned Te Puni Kōkiri to author a discussion document; the resulting Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework provided a te ao Māori view of wellbeing with an approach that would allow the LSF to be more holistic, ensuring wellbeing for all New Zealanders. The 2021 LSF represents a significant update that attempts to address the criticisms of the 2018 version, however it does not appear to have taken on board any of the suggestions raised in the Indigenous Approach document. Instead, a new framework, He Ara Waiora has been presented alongside the 2021 LSF and is to be used as a Māori cultural wellbeing framework to further guide policy. He Ara Waiora is a holistic te ao Māori model that has undergone an extensive feedback and consultation process with Māori across Aotearoa. Although still in its infancy as a wellbeing framework, it certainly appears to be a positive step forward.

In Chapter Five, a document review of seven research or organisational reports was undertaken. This process revealed an undercurrent of values-based L + N research and reporting that reflected many community psychology themes, had a consistently sociomaterial basis, and was critical of a ‘one size fits all’ neoliberal approach to adult education. The document analysis found repeated themes and subthemes that applied across all research reports. The interview data offered similar themes and additional insights from researchers and organisational representatives. This enriched my document analysis, and gave further insight into both the development and use of the LSF and the Indigenous Approach document, along with the beliefs and values that underpin adult literacy research and reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand. Community psychology values were the most prominent theme; these were presented as subthemes and included collaboration, empowerment, holism,

a strength-based approach, diversity, relationships, biculturalism, an ecological approach, social justice, and human flourishing. These community psychology values were also reflected in the interview data, with each interviewee outlining a values-based approach that underpinned their work and led to holistic wellbeing outcomes for learners.

Neoliberalism and the impact of colonisation was another key theme, with the impacts of each apparent in adult L + N research and reporting. The damaging colonial education policy of assimilation was discussed in documents and interviews; one interviewee spoke of her personal experience of intergenerational damage caused by an education system that punished her Nan for speaking te reo Māori at school. It was also established that Aotearoa's neoliberal approach to policy-making has led to the implementation of policies that actively hinder learners from diverse backgrounds (Taupo, 2016). However, this impact can be countered by holistic, culturally appropriate approaches within programme delivery, such as those used by Literacy Aotearoa. Interviewees added their perspective on neoliberalism and the impact of western practices on L + N programmes and practices, with the consensus being that assessment tools such as the LNAAT do not offer a full picture of learner progress, and that the challenges that face marginalised learners need to be recognised and addressed to ensure a high level of engagement.

Findings from the document analysis and interviews indicated that authors recognised L + N as an important social practice, leading to wellbeing outcomes for learners. Māori wellbeing frameworks were another prominent theme throughout many of the documents. Potter et al. (2011) described outcomes for learners that aligned with elements of Māori wellbeing such as intergenerational learning, whanaungatanga, and whānau self-determination. Literacy Aotearoa's Annual Report (2018) presented strong Māori themes throughout; while Furness and Hunter (2019), and Hutchings et al. (2013) discussed the importance of creating bi-literate spaces that support Māori learners and their values.

Research Implications

When considering the research question: How, and to what extent, does adult literacy and numeracy research and organisational reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand align with the key components of the Living Standards Framework and related Māori-led documents, the answer is it doesn't, and it does. The findings of this research indicate that there are no real similarities or links between the LSF and L + N policies or programmes, and the LSF does

not influence L + N programme delivery; however, the holistic, sociomaterial approach used by L + N programme providers does share some similarities with the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework and He Ara Waiora.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the literature showed that Aotearoa New Zealand's low L + N skill levels (measured by the PIAAC survey) indicated gaps in education and knowledge. However, it is important to consider the limitations of a survey that was internationally developed, administered solely in English, and evaluated only the use of written text (Culligan et al., 2005; PIAAC Literacy Expert Group, 2009). This research explored a sociomaterial approach to L + N, which prioritises a social and material understanding of L + N that is important in Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural context. In Māori and Pacific culture, communication and literacy include illustrations, symbols, art forms such as carving or weaving, and the spoken word and art of storytelling (Hindle & Matthewman, 2017; Kruse Va'ai, 2015; Māori Adult Literacy Working Party, 2001). This research also supports Reder's (2020) findings that most adults with low scores on the PIAAC survey are still capable of performing basic tasks such as understanding short written sentences and common vocabulary items (Grotluschen et al., 2016, as cited in Reder, 2020); my findings (from interview data) suggest that employees with low L + N levels are resilient and able to adapt in their work environment so that they can function effectively despite not always understanding written or numerical instructions. Therefore, labelling people with low levels of literacy proficiency as 'illiterate' or 'deficient' is incorrect and may lead to harmful stereotypes and stigmatisation. The research findings also support a holistic model of L + N skills assessment (Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga), with interview participants questioning whether the currently used LNAAT is a suitable tool for capturing the complexities of L + N skills acquisition.

Despite the New Zealand Government's attempts to incorporate a wellbeing approach in some economic, social, and environmental policies (Little, 2019; Parliamentary Counsel Office, 2020), neoliberalism still trumps wellbeing in policymaking, and education policy is no exception (Berentson-Shaw, 2019; Murray & Loveless, 2021; Thompson, 2020; Waring, 2018). Despite challenges for L + N programme providers who must adhere to the requirements of neoliberal government policies and funding requirements (Furness et al., 2013; Furness & Hunter, 2019; Taupo, 2016), the findings of my document analysis indicate that a sociomaterial approach is favoured alongside holistic and culturally-based programme delivery. The interview data indicated that there is significant support for a values-based

approach that empowers learners to recognise their strengths and build relationships inside and outside the classroom. In support of a sociomaterial approach that acknowledges L + N skills acquisition can take many forms and provide social as well as economic benefits (Furness & Hunter, 2017), both the document analysis and interview data indicated that learners valued outcomes that empowered them to engage in whānau and wider community life, to help their tamariki, and to connect with Māori culture and language. This holistic approach to learning accommodates learners needs and interests, and supports them to develop the skills that have value in their lives rather than prioritising a prescribed curriculum that is designed to meet designated targets.

As mentioned previously, the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework discussion document (Te Puni Kōkiri & The Treasury, 2019) reflected many of the values and approaches used by L + N programme providers in Aotearoa New Zealand. Its te ao Māori approach to wellbeing was shared by programmes and tutors who recognised the importance of diversity in learners (Benseman & Sutton, 1999; Johnson et al., 2012; Literacy Aotearoa, 2013), and its holistic, strengths and values-based perspective shared much in common with the values that were found to underpin L + N research and reporting. These factors were found to be instrumental in ensuring positive outcomes for learners, who have often been marginalised and excluded from traditional education systems (Mete, 2013). However, despite these positive connections, it must be noted that the Indigenous Approach document was presented solely as a discussion document and has not been used to further influence the LSF. The introduction of the He Ara Waiora framework alongside the 2021 LSF does provide a promising update and is designed to reflect Māori cultural views and values in support of the wider LSF; as discussed in Chapter Three, the 2021 LSF and He Ara Waiora hope to address the recognised shortcomings of the 2018 LSF and better reflect cultural wellbeing, the drivers of wellbeing in Aotearoa, and the broader impacts of policy development and implementation.

In summary, this research has established that the 2018 LSF aimed to provide a holistic approach to wellbeing for all New Zealanders, but really offered economic and policy-relevant indicators of wellbeing that did not actively seek to understand wellbeing for marginalised groups. These shortcomings were highlighted by the Indigenous Approach document, which provided sound discussion on how wellbeing could be achieved for Māori and other marginalised groups, allowing Aotearoa as a nation to thrive. The updated 2021 LSF, and the accompanying He Ara Waiora te ao Māori framework, offer an improved

wellbeing approach that does address many of the issues that were recognised in the 2018 iteration, particularly . It is my hope that the continued recognition of wellbeing and its importance on influencing policy at government level will drive a review of adult education policy in the near future. Because it is still in its infancy, it remains to be seen whether the 2021 LSF is able to truly address the inequalities in wellbeing experienced by marginalised groups. It is also unknown whether the development of He Ara Waiora as a separate framework rather than being incorporated into the LSF will enable a genuine, Te Tiriti-based partnership between the Crown and Iwi. Currently, aside from a shared interest in wellbeing, the components of the LSF are not reflected in adult L + N research, reporting, or programming; the LSF is not (and has never been) actively engaged in adult L + N programmes and policies; and while there are possible strengths in engaging the LSF in the L + N education arena, the document analysis and interview data indicates that researchers and organisational representatives wish to see a truly different approach to the neoliberal approach that has dominated policymaking and funding requirements until now.

Research Limitations and Future Directions

As mentioned in Chapter Three, all of the documents were chosen for analysis because they were relevant to the research question and represented various approaches and perspectives on the LSF or L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand. When it came to selecting potential interview participants, I had to reflect on each document and decide which research best reflected the values and concepts that underpinned my research, and which authors or key personnel would add a vital perspective to my research. These choices enabled me to gain a wealth of insight into the underlying approaches, beliefs, and values of programmes and researchers; however, further interviews (particularly with a Treasury representative or someone involved in policy-making) would have added another valuable perspective. Another limitation, which I kept at the fore of my processes throughout this research project, are my own limitations as a Pākehā researcher. My previous research in a Kaupapa Māori context was alongside other Māori students who were able to guide the processes and share their knowledge; this solo project required a different approach. I have no personal experience of what it is like to be Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, and my approach to working respectfully in a Māori context was to continually consider my own culture, values,

and beliefs to ensure that they were not overshadowing the voices of Māori or other marginalised groups represented in this research.

A final limitation that is not unique to my research is the impact of COVID-19 in Aotearoa New Zealand. Fortunately interviews and supervisory meetings can be undertaken via Zoom; however, in the larger picture of the LSF and L + N programmes and research, it should be considered that the COVID response has (understandably) dominated government time and resources over the past two years. For that reason, I suggest that the potential of implementing the LSF into policy-making has been side-lined by current (unforeseen) priorities. I would further posit that understanding wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand is a different undertaking than it would have been in 2018 when the LSF was released to accompany the 2019 Wellbeing Budget.

The process of researching this thesis highlighted the fact that there is a wealth of important qualitative research in the field of adult L + N in Aotearoa New Zealand, driven by passionate, committed researchers and organisational personnel. It is also clear that the organisations and programmes that featured in this research value learners and their strengths, and strive to offer services that empower them for social, cultural, and economic benefit. The interviews enriched the document analysis, and were underpinned by the notion that values-based, holistic approaches to adult L + N education provide significant benefits for learners. The interviewees also raised some points that could be considered for further research. One interviewee had noticed that some learners can find the transition from the adult classroom back into the 'real world' challenging. Further research into this issue would be beneficial, with a particular focus on following learners after programme completion to understand how their improved L + N and social skills impact their everyday lives. This research would also provide data that could be useful for programme providers, enabling them to see the long-term impact of engaging in L + N education. Another interviewee discussed rapidly increasing technology levels, which mean higher levels of automation in employment (and daily life). These advances have the potential to significantly change the social and economic landscape; further research on this phenomenon could provide insight into the implications of such change and how L + N skills will need to adapt.

Because the LSF has undergone significant change in 2021, further research into its use would be beneficial, particularly in establishing whether its goals for wellbeing translate

into culturally-resonant wellbeing outcomes for New Zealanders, particularly Māori and other groups who were not sufficiently considered in the 2018 iteration.

Concluding Comments

This research project provided an opportunity to cast a critical eye over the Living Standards Framework and the underlying neolibreral approach that influences government and policy in Aotearoa New Zealand. What was discovered suggests that, despite the challenges of a neoliberal approach, adult literacy and numeracy programme providers and researchers in Aotearoa favour a holistic approach that counters neoliberalism and provides wellbeing outcomes for learners in the spirit of the following whakataukī: Whāia te mātauranga he oranga mō kotou – seek after learning for the sake of your wellbeing. The 2021 Living Standards Framework provides a welcome update and the hope of genuine, Aotearoa-specific wellbeing considerations in policy-making and governance; it remains to be seen whether this translates into changes in policy-making and programme delivery for the literacy and numeracy sector.

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Appendix A

Ethics Application Approval Letter

Te Wānanga o Ngā Kete | ***Division of Arts, Law, Psychology & Social Sciences***

The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
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Te Piringa – Faculty of Law
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THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Nicki Hockings

Jane Furness

Psychology

19 April 2021

Dear Nicki

Re: **FS2021-08: Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Aotearoa New Zealand: How does current research and organisational reporting align with the Living Standards Framework?**

Thank you for submitting an application to the ALPSS Human Research Ethics Committee. This is a well written, well thought through application and there appears to be appropriate supervision in place. On behalf of the Committee I am happy to approve this research project, as detailed in your submitted application.

Please update your participant information sheet, which currently states your permission comes from the HREC (Health). The correct body is this devolved committee: the ALPSS HREC. There is no need to resubmit your application after making this amendment.

Please contact this Committee again if your proposed research changes significantly, or if new ethical issues arise. We wish you all the best with your research. Thank you for engaging with the process of ethical review.

Kind regards,

Nathan Cooper, Chair
Division of Arts, Law, Psychology & Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix B

Example of Analysis Process

Hutchings et al., 2013

Meaning unit	Condensed meaning unit	Main-category	Sub-category
"Since British and colonial settlement Māori have found inventive ways to foster their educational wellbeing through cultural, political, social and economic means" (p.1)	Despite the challenges of colonisation, Māori have found ways to thrive.	Community Psychology values Colonisation	Strength-based approach
"The processes and practices of colonisation have not only determined what literacies will be valued, taught and practiced, but have also imposed how literacy is to be defined and understood". (p.5)	Māori have been subjected to education based on colonial ideas.	Colonialism	
Literacy as "the ability to decode and encode in written and spoken English" (p.5)	Narrow definition of literacy that reflects Western dominance.	Colonisation Neoliberalism	
"What is proposed instead for success with Māori adult literacy learners, is the use of a Kaupapa Māori-based definition of literacy that widens the scope of what is understood as literacy to include te reo Māori and those literacy practices which give expression to Māori worldviews. Such a definition enables Māori adult learners to access the learning of forms and uses of literacy that are relevant and meaningful to them. Research in the field of Māori adult literacy has shown that when adult literacy programme…"	A Kaupapa Māori framework and definition of literacy will include te reo Māori and Māori practices that incorporate Māori worldviews. Previous research has shown that when literacy education has meaning to Māori participants and their whānau, hapu, and iwi, Māori are committed and successful learners.	Community Psychology values Māori frameworks Sociomaterialism	Collaboration Biculturalism Empowerment Strength-based Whiti te rā Kāupapa Māori

Appendix C

Introductory Email

Tēnā koe [name]

My name is Nicki Hockings, I am a postgraduate student at the University of Waikato, currently enrolled in the Master of Applied Psychology (Community). I am conducting research contributing to the MBIE-funded literacy and numeracy project 'The expression, experience and transcendence of low skills in Aotearoa New Zealand' being undertaken by AUT in collaboration with the University of Waikato, the OECD and Portland State University. I am exploring how the Living Standards Framework aligns with outcomes valued by adult literacy and numeracy learners described in New Zealand research and organisational reports. My supervisor is Dr Jane Furness, University of Waikato, who is a member of the project research team.

I am contacting you because I have included your research report [name of report] in my analysis. One of the main aims of my research is explore the values that underpin adult literacy and numeracy research and reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand. Your perspective as an adult literacy and numeracy researcher would be very beneficial in helping my understanding of adult literacy and numeracy programmes, outcomes, and how these relate to broad wellbeing outcomes that are experienced by learners. Specifically, it would be helpful to discuss with you:

- The intention, purpose, and outcomes of your research; including the beliefs, values and theories that shaped your processes.
- Your insights on the value learners placed on the reported outcomes.
- Your knowledge (if any) of the Living Standards Framework and Te Puni Kōkiri's Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework; specifically, how they may apply to adult literacy and numeracy education programmes and research.

The interview would be conducted via Zoom and take no more than 45 minutes. I am hoping to conduct interviews between 1 - 14 November (2021).

If you are willing and available to participate, please reply to this email with any specific dates or times that suit you and I will confirm an interview. I have attached an information sheet with further details of my research and the interview process. Alternatively, if you are unable to commit to a full interview but would be willing to answer a few abridged questions (or answer a couple of questions via email), I would be happy to facilitate that.

Nāku noa, nā

Nicki Hockings

Appendix D

Information Sheet

School of Psychology

THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Interview Participant Information Sheet

Title of project: Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Aotearoa New Zealand: How does current research and organisational reporting align with the Living Standards Framework?

Approval Statement

This research project has been approved by the ALPSS Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato as ALPSS HREC. Any questions or concerns about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email humanethics@waikato.ac.nz, postal address, Human Research Ethics Committee (Health), University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.

An Invitation

Tēnā koe my name is Nicki Hockings and I would like to invite you to participate in this research as part of the requirements for my Master of Applied Psychology (Community) at the University of Waikato.

Purpose of this research

This study aims to contribute to a larger literacy and numeracy research project: 'The expression, experience and transcendence of low skills in Aotearoa New Zealand'. This large-scale project spans 5 years (2019-2024) and is a collaboration between researchers from the Auckland University of Technology, University of Waikato, OECD, and Portland State University. The research uses a mixed-method approach and aims to:

- Build a detailed population-wide picture of those with low Literacy and Numeracy skills,
- Analyse these individual's life-course pathways and the effectiveness of interventions, specifically in respect to economic and social outcomes,
- Forecast future changes in population skill level,

- Develop an understanding of the barriers and enablers that build resilience to risk, along with a pathway to transcend low skills (New Zealand Work Research Institute, 2020).

My contribution to this project will focus on utilising a community psychology perspective to analyse previous research alongside the LSF and will seek to:

- Draw a connection between the LSF, L + N learning opportunities, and previously reported learner outcomes,

- Consider the strengths and weaknesses of actively engaging the LSF in adult L + N programmes and policies,

- Identify ways in which the LSF is being updated to reflect Māori cultural views and values, and whether these are also reflected in L + N research and organisational reporting.

Specifically, my thesis project aims to answer the question: How, and to what extent, does adult literacy and numeracy research and organisational reporting undertaken in Aotearoa New Zealand reflect the key components (including aims and values) of The Treasury's Living Standards Framework (LSF) and Te Puni Kōkiri and the Treasury's indigenous approach to the LSF?

I will seek to answer the research question through a document-based content analysis of selected research and organisational reports in relation to the aims and components of the Living Standards Framework. Interviews will augment this document analysis, and your insights will enrich my data and allow further exploration and understanding of the documents and their contents.

Participant requirements

I would like to invite you to participate as you have been involved in researching or writing a report that is relevant for my research/ are involved in an organisation that is relevant for my research (delete section as appropriate). I would require a Zoom interview/kōrero with you; the topic of discussion will be your thoughts and professional experiences of the Living Standards Framework and/or the Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework, and how you feel these frameworks apply and are reflected in Literacy and Numeracy approaches in Aotearoa New Zealand. This conversation will be recorded via video and audio, and will take approximately 45 minutes.

Participant rights

At the beginning of the interview, I will go through a consent form, which you will then sign and email to me if you would like to participate. Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to stop the interview at any time. I will send you a transcript of your interview to review, and you are welcome to amend, add to, or delete any part of it. After I send you your transcript, you have two weeks to make any changes, or withdraw completely from the research. I can also send you a summary of the final thesis upon request.

Confidentiality

The issue of confidentiality will be addressed for each individual participant. Due to your status and the nature of your role you may be somewhat recognisable in the context of my research reporting. To provide a layer of protection, all participants will be referred to in the research report by the role they hold, for example 'author', 'board member', or 'senior analyst'. Additionally, you can use the copy of your interview transcript to make any changes or withdraw any information that you consider inappropriate for use or that might identify you too readily.

Information storage

All information pertaining to your participation in this research will only be accessible to myself and my supervisor. Your transcriptions and recordings will be stored securely in a password protected computer and all paper documentation will be stored in a locked cabinet at the University of Waikato. All transcriptions, recordings and documents will be kept for 5 years and then appropriately destroyed as per the University of Waikato regulations.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns regarding participation in this research, please contact me or my supervisor Dr Jane Furness.

Nicki Hockings: nickihockings@gmail.com

Dr Jane Furness: jane.furness@waikato.ac.nz

If you would like further information about the 'The expression, experience and transcendence of low skills in Aotearoa New Zealand' research project, please reference:

New Zealand Work Research Institute. (2020). *Low literacy & numeracy research: The expression, experience and transcendence of low skills in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Low Literacy & Numeracy Research - New Zealand Work Research Institute - AUT

Appendix E

Interview Participant Consent Form (Electronically Fillable)

Ψ School of Psychology

THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Participant Consent Form

Name of person interviewed: Click or tap here to enter text.

I have received a copy of the Information Sheet describing the research project. Any questions that I have, relating to the research, have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions about the research at any time, and that I can withdraw my participation at any time up to two weeks after being sent my interview transcript.

During the interview, I understand that I can decline to answer any question; I can stop the interview at any time; and I can ask to have the recording device turned off at any time.

When I sign this consent form I will retain ownership of my interview, but I give consent for the researcher to use the interview for the purposes of the research outlined in the Information Sheet.

I understand that there is a question in the following form pertaining to whether I wish my identity to remain confidential in the presentation of the research findings.

Please complete the following checklist. Tick the appropriate box for each point.	YES	NO
1. I have been provided with an information sheet that I have read (or has been read to me) and I understand this information	☐	☐
2. I have been given sufficient time to make a decision about whether or not I would like to participate in this research	☐	☐
3. I understand that taking part in this research is voluntary and I may withdraw within two weeks of being sent my transcribed interview	☐	☐
4. I understand that I have the right to decline to answer any questions and/or withdraw my participation at any stage of the interview	☐	☐

5. I know who to contact if I have any questions about the research	☐	☐
6. I understand that my interview data will be used in a thesis report	☐	☐
7. I understand that the interview will be both zoom and audio recorded, with notes taken as necessary	☐	☐
8. I understand that the information provided in this interview will be kept confidential, however due to my position I may be somewhat recognisable in the research report. I am happy to be identified by my role or professional position in the final research report. If I respond 'No' to this question, a stricter layer of protection will be applied and any information that could possibly identify me personally or professionally will not be used in the final research report.	☐	☐

Pseudonym assigned to this participant (if required):

I would like to receive a summary of the final report via email: Yes ☐

No ☐

Declaration by participant

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time up to two weeks after receiving my interview transcript. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the Human Research Ethics Committee (Health) via email: humanethics@waikato.ac.nz

Participant: Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Contact details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Researcher: Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Contact details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Appendix F

Interview Questions

Research Authors/Literacy Aotearoa

Finding out underpinning beliefs and values/Important impacts & outcomes for learners:

- What led to the research and what were you hoping to achieve with it?
- What were the beliefs, values or theories about people and literacy and numeracy that shaped the research?
- In what ways did these beliefs, values or theories shape the research? (e.g. choices in methods)
- What do you think were the most important outcomes and impacts on learners you found in your research/you reported on in your annual report? Why were these outcomes important in your/your organisation's view?

Literacy Aotearoa Annual Report only:

- Are there other impacts or outcomes on learners that you would like to report on that you are not invited to report on in the annual review? If so, what are they and why are they important?
- I noticed a lot of te reo Māori and holistic headings and themes throughout your annual report. Why are these elements so important in your/your organisation's view?

Living Standards Framework/Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework:

- Are you familiar with the Living Standards Framework? – to be ascertained in correspondence prior to the interview.
- Are you familiar with Te Puni Kōkiri's Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework? – to be ascertained in correspondence prior to the interview

- When the LSF was initially released in 2018, and then used to inform the 2019 Wellbeing Budget, it was heralded as a holistic approach that would be implemented in all facets of policy-making. Have you noticed this influence in approaches and policies for adult literacy and numeracy or in the larger context of adult education?

- What is your opinion on the development and content of the living standards framework? Is it 'fit for purpose' for an Aotearoa New Zealand context? Why?
- What is your understanding of why the 'Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework' was published as a discussion document by the Treasury?
  Follow on:
- Why do you believe this was important?
- What do you think are the most important facets of the indigenous approach document? Why?

Te Puni Kōkiri

Initial questions to ascertain interviewee's knowledge and involvement with the LSF/ILSF:

- What is your role within Te Puni Kōkiri?
- Were you in that role when the LSF/ILSF was initially released?

- In your understanding, what was Treasury's / TPK's intentions for the LSF/ILSF in Aotearoa? Do these align with any particular values or theories that Treasury holds/works to?
- I noticed in the ILSF there was mention of the 'maturity' required for the NZ Government to implement a true wellbeing approach that would benefit Māori as well as non-Māori. What is your view of this maturity and whether it is currently being shown in the way the LSF is being used?
- This year, the He Ara Wairoa Māori wellbeing model was released alongside the LSF; this is quite different to what was recommended in the Indigenous Approach Document. In your view, why did the Treasury decide to implement this framework specifically?
- What is your understanding of how this framework is to be used?
- Is the updated 2021 version of the LSF doing enough to address the issues that were identified in the ILSF? Why/why not?