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Takahi ngā takahanga o ngā tūpuna

‘Tramp the pathways of our ancestors’

Reconnecting whānau to cultural identity

A thesis

submitted in fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

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by

Taniwha



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Abstract

The rise of reconnecting to holistic approaches to health to improve wellbeing outcomes for Māori has become increasingly prominent in recent years. Such developments have highlighted the need to introduce traditional Māori concepts, values and practices within whānau, hapū and iwi as vehicles for promoting and improving Māori health. This research had two objectives. Firstly, it aimed to explore the process of reclaiming mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems) with my whānau who had limited access to te ao Māori (the Māori world). The second objective sought to explore the experiences of my whānau reconnecting with te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture). Using the Whiti Te Rā as a guide informed the design and structure of the wānanga (workshops). The Whiti Te Rā is a therapeutic model designed to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Māori by developing and enhancing a cultural identity. Central to this model are six Māori customary practices and values that provide pathways to wellbeing and flourishing mauri. These dimensions also have synergies with other models of health – Te Whare Tapa Whā, Te Wheke. Four tāne (men) from my whānau took part in this research. We used the Pūrākau Method to record, explore, and analyse the narratives that emerged following each wānanga. The key findings from this research included connection to history, whakapapa and wairua; connection to pepeha and cultural practices; connection to self as a Māori; connection through whanaungatanga; and connection to taiao (the environment). This study showed that Māori models of health and wellbeing are consistent in demonstrating their effectiveness in connecting Māori to their language and culture. Despite the impact of colonisation, reconnection to customary practices and values was meaningful and valuable to my whānau. Future research is needed to revitalise, regenerate and reclaim a thriving Māori identity.

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Positioning the Researcher

I was born and raised in Rotowaro, a predominantly Māori district of Rāhui Pōkeka, with a distinct yet all too common disconnect from my language, my culture, and my whakapapa (lineage). Despite there being many Māori, there was a significant cultural absence in our lives. In all essence, the only thing Māori about me at that time, was my name, Taniwha. Yet for years I despised it along with my parents for choosing such a name because it haunted me wherever I went. As the old adage goes, 'kids can be cruel', so it was no surprise that as a child I was teased, belittled and harassed because of my name. Adults can also be cruel so, from a child's view of the world I believed my name was a curse as it attracted a lot of negative attention. Unfortunately, the knowledge associated with the tikanga (meaning) and whakapapa (history) of my name was not shared with me until later in life. Had I been raised with the beautiful narrative about my naming ritual, such knowledge would have buffered against the childhood torments in the playground, the classroom, the interschool sports days and even at home. Sadly, those experiences were internalised as I developed a distant and somewhat negative relationship with my younger self. Since then I have done a lot of soul-searching and have come to terms with those torments which I have filed in my kete mātau ā-wheako (basket of lived experiences).

I realised years ago that the culturally-deficit and colonised environment of my childhood gave birth to my then dislike for things Māori. The community and era I was born into involved alcohol and drug use, leather-wearing motorbike gangs with their 'sheilas' in toe, parties with strangers all around while children babysat other children and, violent and dysfunctional behaviour. Therefore, my worldview of what I thought it meant to be Māori was influenced by what I was exposed to, what I saw, what I heard, and what I experienced. My childhood was denied a climate where being Māori was considered positive. Instead, I was raised in a colonised world that perpetuated the stereotypically negative views of how Māori are portrayed in the media. At that time, I totally bought into that view.

I was not privileged to have te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture) as part of my upbringing. My grandparents and great-grandparents spoke te reo Māori

(the Māori language), but only to each other. They never shared that knowledge with us, nor did they inspire us to learn. However, given the history of colonial conquest and oppression of Māori and Indigenous Peoples worldwide, I can make an educated guess that abandoning their language and culture in favour of embracing te ao Pākehā (the Pākehā world) was a form of survival in the face of adversity. As a result, my upbringing was largely without interest in things Māori. This lack of interest rippled throughout my whānau as no one took up the mantle to learn. At the age of twelve, when I was enrolling to Huntly College my mother said “I don’t care what options you choose so long as one of them is Māori. I want you to be my Māori-speaking son”. I replied “I don’t even like Maowrees. I want nothing to do with them”. My misguided yet seemingly innocent comment (at the time) reflected the degree of colonisation and cultural disconnect I had from te ao Māori (the Māori world). Quite a lot has changed since then. I completed college and took Māori through to 7th Form. I got a Bachelor’s degree in te reo Māori at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato and have spent years working in Māori health. I have also crossed paths with many motivating and inspiring Māori leaders who have developed and moulded my Māori mind to what it is today.

During the final year of my undergraduate’s degree in 2018, I was fortunate to have crossed paths with Tākuta Ēnoka Murphy, an influential kaiako (teacher) of te reo Māori (the Māori language) at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. We discussed ideas for postgraduate studies. I explained my desire for learning te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture) and further disclosed the alarmingly low number of Māori speakers within my family (2%) – the impetus of my desire. He asked why there were so few speakers. I could not answer. He suggested that be the topic for my dissertation in my honour’s year. This gave birth to my research ‘*Why does my whānau not speak te reo Māori?*’, looking at the psychological implications associated with language loss. However, at the Māori Psychologists Wānanga in 2019, Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith delivered a decolonisation workshop stating “*I don’t know why everyone goes on about this ‘language loss’. We didn’t lose it! It was stolen!*” (personal communication, 16 November, 2019). This dramatically shifted my perception from us as Māori being ‘responsible’ for the loss of our language, to us as Māori being ‘victimised’.

For years I internalised this blame. Partly due to the ignorance of the many non-Māori who would judge me for not knowing how to speak my own language, but largely because I truly believed my tūpuna (ancestors) were at fault for not teaching us. However, I later discovered how my schooling in Aotearoa contributed to my ignorance as it favoured international discourse of human suffering and negated to educate me about my own: the Waikato war and its relation to historical trauma, the history of oppression of indigenous peoples, colonisation as a continual process, or structural racism and the devastating impacts these all had, and continue to have on Māori. Learning this in my younger years would have curbed my negative worldview of what I thought it meant to be Māori helping me build a more positive and culturally affirming identity. Such was the impact of Linda's statement – although very brief, it was so inspiring and motivating. I felt empowered and determined to advance my pursuit of reclaiming and remembering our indigenous knowledge and heritage. More importantly, I started believing in myself, realising that I could pick up the mantle and share with my whānau the gift of 'knowing' – a main driver for this study.

Therefore, the natural trajectory for my master's degree was an extension of my dissertation. Unsure of the topic, I was adamant it would involve working with my whānau and reconnecting them in some way, shape or form to te ao Māori (the Māori world), such as their reo rangatira (language), their whenua (ancestral lands) and, their whakapapa (genealogy) in order to develop or enhance their mana Māori motuhake (self-determination). It was imperative I create a positive climate where te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture) could be celebrated as my intent was to plant the seed of desire to learn so they can experience and understand what it means to be Māori. In 2020, I was humbled by a scholarship awarded me via a Māori research project funded by 'A Better Start: E tipu e rea – National Science Challenges'. The project 'Raranga, raranga taku takapau: Hapū ora for tamariki' was co-lead by my supervisor Tākuta Waikaremoana Waitoki. My research evolved under this umbrella project and aligned with their overarching theme of hapū ora (wellness during pregnancy). This gave birth to my research – Tāne Ora (men's health), where I consider the impacts reconnecting mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge) with tāne who have lived majority of their lives separated from their language and culture.

Thesis Outline

Chapter One provides a critical review of the literature discussing events specific to Rāhui Pōkeka that contributed to my whānau being disconnected from te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture). It also discusses the impacts of colonisation and how our whānau are resilient despite generations of oppression. The health model used during the wānanga are also critiqued for their applicability to the research.

Chapter two provides a discussion of the practical approaches taken in gathering and analysing my whānau narratives. Kaupapa Māori Methodologies and decolonisation are also discussed as they form the basis of the present research. Information regarding the transcribing and translating of my whānau narratives with the pūrākau method is also discussed.

Chapter Three identifies and presents the results of my whānau narratives as individual case studies. Key themes emerging from the results were identified: connection to history, whakapapa, and wairua; connection to pepeha and cultural practices; connection through whanaungatanga; connection to self as a Māori; and connection to taiao (the environment). Results from the Whiti Te Rā pre- and post-assessments are also discussed and provides a visual account of the impacts the wānanga have had on each of my whānau.

Chapter Four provides conclusions to the present study outlining the impacts of exposing tāne to cultural Māori concepts, values and practices as vehicles for promoting and improving Māori wellbeing. Māori cultural concepts such as whanaungatanga (creating and maintaining relationships), a secure cultural identity and, mauri ora (wellbeing) were explored. Implications to the present study inclusive of ideas for future studies are also discussed.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Positioning the Researcher	iv
Thesis Outline	vii
Table of Contents	viii
List of Figures	xi
List of Tables	xii
Literature Review	1
From Rāhui Pōkeka to Huntly	1
Denied to Flourish – Personal accounts of discrimination	2
Historical Trauma	6
Structural Racism	7
A view of Māori health inequity	7
Te Ao Māori – Understanding Hauora Māori	9
Whānau Ora	12
Tāne Ora	13
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	13
Kaupapa Māori Principles	14
Wānanga – Spaces of learning	15
Mauri Ora - The metrics of flourishing	15
Māori Health Models	16
Te Wheke	17
Te Whare Tapa Whā	18
Te Pae Mahutonga	18
Paiheretia	19
Meihana Model	19
Whiti Te Rā	20
Study Overview	23
Method	23
Study Design	24

Kaupapa Māori Methodology	24
Māori Data Sovereignty	25
Participants and Recruitment.....	26
Ethical Practice	27
Wānanga Approach.....	27
Analysis.....	31
Findings	32
Whiti Te Rā	32
Daymon	33
Daymon’s connection to history, whakapapa and wairua	33
Bandootz	38
Bandootz connection to pepeha and cultural practices.....	39
Knox.....	43
Knox’s connection to self as a Māori.....	43
Te Riini.....	47
Te Riini’s personal reflections	48
Views about Tāne Ora	49
Discussion.....	50
Overview	51
Connection to history, whakapapa and wairua.....	51
Connection to pepeha and cultural practices	52
Connection through whanaungatanga.....	53
Connection to self as a Māori.....	54
Connection to taiao.....	54
Conclusions	55
Limitations.....	57
References.....	58
Appendices.....	76
Appendix 1: Information Sheet	76
Appendix 2: Consent Form.....	78
Appendix 3: Ethical Approval	79
Appendix 4: Programme Outline.....	80

Appendix 5: He Papa Kupu – Glossary of Māori terms	81
Appendix 6: Whiti Te Rā Pre- and Post-Assessment Results – All domains	84
Appendix 7: Diagram outlining the whakapapa of my research	85

List of Figures

Figure 1 My Grandmother at Rotowaro Primary School 1931 (Row 3, 2 nd from right)...	4
Figure 2 Pā Harakeke Model (Source: Renee Renata).....	12
Figure 3 Whiti Te Rā Interactive Guide.....	22
Figure 4 Daymon’s Pre- and Post-Assessment Forms.....	35
Figure 5 View-shaft Depicting Battle Scene of British Troops Invading Rangiriri.....	36
Figure 6 Aerial View of Rangiriri with the Waikato River in the Background.....	38
Figure 7 Bandootz’s Pre- and Post-Assessment Forms.....	41
Figure 8 Whānau Reciting Pepeha on Taupiri by our Whānau Plot.....	42
Figure 9 Cleaning Whānau Headstones After Pepeha Delivery.....	42
Figure 10 Knox’s Pre- and Post-Assessment Forms.....	46
Figure 11 Rangiriri Pā Scene.....	47
Figure 12 Te Riini’s Pre- and Post-Assessment Forms.....	49

List of Tables

Table 1 Daymon’s Whiti Te Rā Assessment Results.....	37
Table 2 Bandoorz’s Whiti Te Rā Assessment Results.....	41
Table 3 Knox’s Whiti Te Rā Assessment Results.....	46
Table 4 Te Riini’s Whiti Te Rā Assessment Results.....	48

Literature Review

From Rāhui Pōkeka to Huntly

Rāhui Pōkeka is a small town in the lower Waikato River basin approximately 90km south of Auckland and 30km north of Hamilton. The town's name originated from two prominent lakes in the region, Waahi and Hakanoa, which were abundant with tuna (eels). To conserve the tuna, rāhui (temporary bans) were often put on the lakes to secure food sources (Edwards, 2020; Harrison, 2005). By upholding the principles of kaitiakitanga (guardianship), a rāhui (ban) was carried out by a tohunga (expert) which involved reciting karakia (prayers) and placing flax-tied pou (posts) in the ground at the lake's edge. These pou (posts) served as visible markers that the rāhui (ban) was in effect. It is said the name Rāhui Pōkeka originated from this customary practice as the tohunga (expert) removed flax from his pōkeka (a rough cape made of undressed flax leaves) to tie to the pou (posts). Loosely translated, Rāhui Pōkeka means "the sacred flax stick marking the protective season for eels" (Edwards, 2020, p. 79).

It is important to note that despite living our growing years there, this narrative of Rāhui Pōkeka was never taught to us. This lack of knowledge indicates the cultural disconnect within our whānau and the colonised environment we were raised in. Such narratives are important for my whānau because of our whakapapa (lineage) connections to Rāhui Pōkeka. According to Oliveira (2009), place names symbolise the spiritual relationship we have with our environment as they provide us with a link to our past. Each time a place name is used, we are in fact quoting our tūpuna (ancestors) thus keeping their memory alive. Additionally, place names provide us with a glimpse of what life was like for our tūpuna (ancestors) – their lifestyle, customs and traditions, and what the whenua (landscape) may have looked like during that time (Basso, 1996, as cited in Oliveira, 2009).

Historically, the Waikato region was highly sought after due to its landscape and natural resources, such as the Waikato River which was teeming with life and served as the main highway of its time – transporting people and goods (Walker, 1990; Edwards,

2020). For this reason, British settlers desired this land and with an increasing number of Pākehā migrating to Aotearoa in the 19th century, demand for Māori land grew. Conflict arose when Waikato resisted the sale of more land. Motivated by desire and powered by greed, the British Imperial Troops waged war against Waikato between 1863 and 1864. After the war, Pākehā were quick to capitalise on their illegal conquest and turn Rāhui Pōkeka into a coal mining town, thus creating their source of income and livelihood. The first step was to erase its history by changing its name from Rāhui Pōkeka to Huntly (Edwards, 2020). In doing so, they used “naming as a mechanism to claim our whenua [land] and erase our position as tangata whenua [people of the land]” (Seed-Pihama, 2017, p. 96) including our whakapapa (history) embedded in the whenua and taiao (environment; Hamley et al., 2022). The land wars, the confiscation and theft of Māori land, loss of income and livelihood, the displacement, homelessness and houselessness of Māori coupled with the colonising practices of the Pākehā added to the levels of trauma experienced amongst my tūpuna (Pihama & Smith, 2023). For my whānau, the impacts of this trauma still affects us today – 160 years later.

Denied to Flourish – Personal accounts of discrimination

The following narratives are personal accounts of discrimination experienced by my whānau at various times. They localise experiences of colonisation within our whānau and offer insight into how being Māori has at times, been challenging. Synonymous with Indigenous People’s worldwide, Māori who are disconnected from their language and culture have origins steeped in colonial invasion and oppression. Rotowaro, for example, was a small rural coal mining town of Huntly where my whānau settled and raised three generations. In the 1930s, my paternal grandmother was a student at Rotowaro Primary School – then a predominantly Pākehā school. Being one of four Māori out of approximately 100 students, she was the only Māori female and was six years old when she was first physically punished for speaking Māori. This narrative is very common, and it is something my whānau are aware of. However, they are less likely to be aware of the intergenerational impact this had and continues to have on us as descendants. For instance, the psychological impact of corporal punishment can affect a child’s identity, confidence, engagement with others,

and future engagement with te reo Māori (the Māori language; HI Mama Productions, 2023). Being physically punished at a young age for speaking the only language she knew would have left a psychological and emotional wound or trauma in my grandmother (Wirihana & Smith, 2019). Duran (2019) refers to this trauma as a soul wound or "an injury without blood" (p. 10). If left unresolved, this trauma can be passed down through generations, resulting in historical trauma and historical trauma responses such as substance abuse, alcoholism, and maladaptive behaviours (Wirihana & Smith, 2019; Solomon et al., 1988; Brave Heart, 1998).

My grandmother disengaged from her language and culture perhaps as a way of protecting her children from the same abuse she endured or perhaps for being made to feel ashamed of her reo (language), her culture and her identity. Really, my grandmother was made to feel ashamed to be Māori. This correlates with my childhood which was denied a climate where being Māori was considered positive. The disempowerment associated with 'reo' trauma, may have created a strong sense of whakamā or shame in the next generation as they were unable to fulfill cultural roles (Nielson, 2020). This is true for my father who was embarrassed when kaumātua (elders) spoke Māori to him at his father's funeral. Unable to understand what they were saying or respond in Māori, my father spoke on behalf of the family to acknowledge everyone for their kind words. Speaking in English, he recalls feeling a deep sense of whakamā (shame) and pōuri (sorrow) for not knowing how to speak Māori. This motivated him to pursue te reo Māori and learn how to whaikōrero (formal speech). This was a major shift for my father because prior, he too had no interest in things Māori.

I need to be clear that I am in no way blaming my grandmother or any of my tūpuna (ancestors) for that matter, for our cultural disconnect. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, yes colonisation happened, yes it had significant impacts locally and globally and yes it continues to impact Māori and Indigenous People's worldwide. However, no one in my whānau has picked up the mantle to contextualise and personalise these impacts in terms of our current state of mauri ora (health and wellbeing). As a family, we have never discussed or explored our inability to speak Māori, to whaikōrero (formal speech), to karanga (ceremonial call), or why we have

significant gaps in cultural knowledge and understandings. Instead, we shrug our shoulders and say “*It was never taught to me*” without unpacking what that actually means. Without challenging that narrative and trying to understand ‘why’. This is an objective of my research – to encourage my whānau to look to our past, in order to understand our present as this type of meaning making is foundational to healing (Pihama & Smith, 2023).

Figure 1

My Grandmother at Rotowaro Primary School 1931 (Row 3, 2nd from right)



Another account involves the Rotowaro coal mines. During the 1980s, State Coal Enterprises (State Coal) who owned the mines, also owned the town's homes. They allowed Pākehā coal miners to buy homes but denied the same opportunity to Māori coal miners. Former Rotowaro resident Nancy Buckley recalls her experience:

I remember my dad asking and applying to buy the house that we lived in...quite a few Māori were not allowed to. But the thing is that in Rotowaro the Pākehā coal miners were given the option to buy houses from the State. They were allowed but the Māori weren't. My uncle was actually a deputy in the Rotowaro mine. He always wanted to own his own home, [State Coal] wouldn't allow it. Though just down the road the other Pākehā miners owned [their homes]. (Cook, 2006, p. 157)

Denying home ownership based on ethnicity is a form of racial discrimination that seeks to oppress and disadvantage minority groups while privileging the dominant colonisers. According to Houkamau et al. (2017), “Māori who identify as Māori only are less likely to own a home” (p. 64). Such discrimination perpetuates inequality and denied Māori residents of Rotowaro the chance to build wealth and stability through home ownership. Due to opencast coal mining in the 1980s, the Rotowaro township shut down, marking the only time when State Coal allowed Māori to buy a home – they just had to relocate it. In similar ways, Lake Puketirini in Huntly was also converted from an opencast mine to a lake which is used by the community, in particular Māori, for aquatic recreational activities such as waka ama.

One of my brothers was named Te Umuroa (the long earth oven) when he was born to reflect the narrative of his birth as he was well overdue – ‘overcooked’ according to my father. When enrolling him at Rotowaro Primary School in the 1980s – then a predominantly Māori school, his Pākehā teacher struggled to pronounce his name and suggested my parents change it. They changed his name to Kayne. My brother was aware of his name change, but not the context. Learning about his colonising naming ritual was a disheartening experience for him as he only found out from being a part of this research. He gave his permission to share his story stating, “it’s just real ratshit in a sense being stripped of my original name. It minimised my Māori name and swapped it with a Pākehā version” (personal communication, 23 August, 2023). Changing my brother’s name not only prioritised the needs of the teacher and her inability to pronounce five syllables, but it disregarded Māori cultural values by overturning our naming practices. There is no intent to disrespect the teacher in any way as she is a lovely woman who was also my teacher. However, my brother’s name change is predicated on a history that used renaming as a means of eradicating and assimilating Māori (Seed-Pihama, 2017). His name change may or may not have been an act of racism, but it definitely calls to question the ethics of such a request. Today, many Māori are reverting to their original Māori name or assuming Māori names in adulthood (Middleton, 2022) to connect with their culture and whakapapa (genealogy) which then asserts their identity as Māori (Seed-Pihama,

2017). Some go as far as abandoning their surname altogether as surnames are not a traditional Māori practice (Mahi Tahi Media, 2023).

Other accounts of discrimination include: being disrespected in the hospital where doctors and nurses are rude, impatient, uncaring and speak with a condescending tone; being followed in shops by staff or security; being pulled over by Police because we ‘fit the description’ of someone they want to apprehend; being ‘randomly selected’ for a security check at the airport – every time, until the dreads were cut, but ultimately, being made to feel less-than. Although the above narratives are densely packed with deficit-focussed examples of discrimination, it is important my whānau realise and understand that these experiences are not isolated, and that they are deliberate and purposeful. The above accounts were deeply impactful and challenging for my whānau, yet despite these experiences of discrimination and racism, my whānau choose not to fixate on them, rather they rise above such pettiness and continue to express their resilience and adaptability with humility.

Historical Trauma

Historical trauma encompasses the cumulative emotional and psychological injuries passed down through generations as a result of widespread group trauma (Brave Heart, 2003). For Māori, this includes, but is not limited to genocide (e.g., land wars), ethnocide (systemic destruction of way of life) and forced displacement (Pihama & Smith, 2023). Being landless and homeless created significant disruptions to their well-entrenched connection to the whenua and their longstanding land-based traditions (Moewaka-Barnes & McCreanor, 2019). From a spiritual perspective, the impact was just as devastating, because the loss of whenua meant a loss of spiritual sustenance (Pere, 2003). Such trauma has resulted in Māori as deep emotions of pōuri (sadness), mamae (grief) riri (anger), cultural erosion and the loss of cultural identity (Moewaka-Barnes & McCreanor, 2019). In response to historical trauma, Māori have asserted that “we have the solutions within us and within our own ways of being as Māori” (Pihama & Smith, 2023, p. 1) As a result, Māori proactively engaged in the revitalisation and regeneration of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems) and tikanga (Māori protocols) as they create spaces for healing from traumatic experiences

(Pihama & Smith, 2023). By using traditional knowledge and cultural practices such as waiata (music), enables the expression and release of deep emotions – an effective form of healing. Additionally, mōteatea (traditional chants) and whanaungatanga (maintaining relationships) have also been used to enhance and sustain wellbeing (Pihama & Smith, 2023; Wirihana & Smith, 2019).

Structural Racism

Structural racism refers to the interconnected nature of large institutions such as health, justice, education, media and how they perpetuate biased and discriminatory policies, practices, beliefs, and resource distribution among racialised groups (Ahmed et al., 2023). The media often portrays Māori in a negative light which marginalises Māori whilst legitimising Pākehā narratives as dominant. These portrayals can lead to internalised racism where individuals from marginalised groups internalise and accept racist beliefs about their own identity, leading to cultural shame (Cliffe-Tautari, 2024; Nairn et al., 2012). The health system is also implicated in perpetuating structural racism towards Māori as evidenced by discrimination, substandard care, limited referrals for specialised treatment, restricted access to medications and surgeries, early discharge from hospitals without follow-up support, and higher mortality rates from preventable diseases among Māori (Sheridan et al., 2024, Wilson et al., 2021; Rumball-Smith et al., 2013; Wilson & Barton, 2012). As a result, the barrage of racism experienced by Māori on multiple levels not only resides in them as a trauma (individually and collectively), but increases their likelihood of ill health (Harris et al., 2006). Using a kaupapa Māori lens to understand the impacts of racism on Māori is important for developing Māori approaches to trauma informed care (Pihama & Smith, 2023). Incorporating key cultural principles like tikanga and mātauranga Māori into treatment addresses the holistic values that underpins Māori wellbeing which promotes rangatiratanga or self-determination.

A view of Māori health inequity

To fully understand the health and wellbeing of Māori, it is important to consider the historical context of colonisation which significantly impacted Māori life and

continues to contribute to health disparities today (Sheridan et al., 2024; Pihama, 2001; Reid & Robson, 2006). In the 21st century, the state of Māori health is often viewed through a deficit narrative, attributing social issues solely to the individual. However, this overlooks the impact of colonisation and historical trauma and shifts blame away from the oppressors and the ongoing effects of post-European contact on Māori (Durie, 2003; Marmot, 2005; Rankine et al., 2011; Wilson & Baker, 2012). Colonisation, oppression, and racism in all its forms have been identified as the primary factors contributing to the health disparities experienced by Māori, which are significantly worse than those of non-Māori (Haggie, 2021; Reid & Robson, 2006).

Māori men represent an at-risk demographic that faces the most severe socio-economic and health challenges in Aotearoa (Rua, 2015). Māori, in general, are more likely to suffer from mental health disorders (Baxter et al., 2006), have lower education outcomes (Anderson et al., 2006) and higher poverty rates compared to non-Māori (McIntosh & Workman, 2017; Poata-Smith, 2013). Māori have higher incarceration rates accounting for over half (52.7%) the prisoner population (Department of Corrections, 2023) which has been increasing since the 21st century (Stanley & Mihaere, 2018; Tauri et al., 2005). Māori children are more likely to be exposed to trauma and abuse (Johnson, 2014), and completed suicide rates for Māori are higher than that of non-Māori (Sutcliffe et al., 2024; Aupouri-Mclean, 2013). The above statistics emphasises the urgent need for targeted interventions to address the systemic inequities contributing to Māori health disparities. Furthermore, it highlights the need to adopt a holistic approach that addresses the historical, social and cultural factors that contribute to these health disparities. A first step towards change might be for people to start defining Māori by their potential rather than their disadvantage (Durie, personal communication, 11 August 2020).

Kura Kaupapa Māori, for instance, supports students to realise their potential as they learn in an environment that celebrates and nurtures being Māori. Imbued in their structure are cultural components deemed crucial in the education of Māori children such as whānau, mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems), te reo (Māori language), tikanga (Māori protocols) and self-development (Forbes, 2024). According to the Minister of Education Erica Stanford, the literacy rates of Kura Kaupapa Māori

students exceed those of Māori in mainstream schools. This resulted in the implementation of the structured literacy approach in all New Zealand schools – something Kura Kaupapa Māori have been doing for years (Paewai, 2024). There has also been an increase in Māori attending universities achieving higher levels of education. Enrolment for Māori doctoral students, for example, showed a significant increase of 53% since 2012 (Te Pōkai Tara, 2024).

Kapa haka (cultural group) also plays a pivotal role in promoting the potential of Māori. When considering the impacts of colonisation, Dr Kiri Tamihere-Waititi stated at its very core was the severing and erosion of connection to the Māori world therefore, re-establishing those connections would allow for healing to occur (M9 Aotearoa, 2023). Such is the healing power of kapa kaka as it provides a space for connecting to whenua, atua (deities), whakapapa (genealogy), and language. Dr Kiri further asserts that kapa haka is a doorway to oranga (health) as it creates healthy pathways for expression where emotions can be processed (M9 Aotearoa, 2023).

With regards to waka ama (outrigger canoe), it is a sport grounded in the principles of tikanga Māori (Māori protocols) through the use of karakia (prayer), waiata (song) and te reo Māori (Reweti & Severinsen, 2022). In addition to the physical benefits, paddlers report whanaungatanga (creating and maintaining relationships), manaakitanga (generosity and caring for others) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) as key contributors to their wellbeing. Environmental factors such as being outside with the birds, fish and the natural landscape have also contributed to the healing effects of waka ama. This in turn, encourages paddlers to become active kaitiaki or guardians in protecting their awa (Reweti & Severinsen, 2022).

Te Ao Māori – Understanding Hauora Māori

Māori wellbeing is based on a holistic worldview that values the interconnectedness between whānau, whakapapa (genealogy), whenua, and wairua (spirituality; Durie, 1998; Reweti et al., 2023; Wilson et al., 2021). Māori wellbeing is also linked to a secure connection to cultural heritage and identity (He Paiaka Tōtara, 2020). Central to this connection are shared values such as mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge) and tikanga (customary values). Mātauranga Māori refers to Māori

knowledge systems and reflects a deeper understanding of how we, as Māori, understand ourselves, the world, and all that exists within our world (Tūturu NZ, 2023). Tikanga refers to the norms, customs, or protocols that help guide and ensure things are done in the correct way (Mead, 2003). Tikanga is guided by the concepts of tapu (sacred or unsafe) and noa (unrestricted), where tapu refers to a state of sacredness and determines restrictions and behaviours that are prohibited, and noa represents the absence of restrictions (1News, 2022).

All these factors play a pivotal role in Māori familial relationships which extend beyond the nuclear family unit and include both immediate and extended whānau members. The health of the individual is dependent on the health of the collective (Wirihana & Smith, 2019). Furthermore, “individuals expect to be supported by the collective, but the collective also expects the support of its individuals” as proposed by Mead (2003, p. 28). This understanding creates an interdependent relationship between individuals and the collective reflecting a fundamental principle of te ao Māori (the Māori world).

Whānau involvement in organising and carrying out specific tasks during the death of a whānau, for example, demonstrates this interdependent relationship. During the initial stage of the tangihanga (funeral), a lot of preparatory work is required – a person to remain with the tūpāpaku (deceased) while they are being processed, someone to announce the death, people to prepare the funeral venue, organising food, arranging speakers and kaikaranga (female caller), and organising a group to bring the deceased on to the venue (Mead, 2003). Working in collaboration exemplifies the deep respect, generosity, and care within te ao Māori (the Māori world) highlighting the essential nature of manaaki - the outward expression of respect and care for others. The expression of manaaki also rekindles, nurtures and maintains whānau relationships which according to Cameron et al., (2013), is an essential component to tikanga.

Whenua also plays a pivotal role in the health and wellbeing of Māori as they consider themselves tangata whenua or people of the land, and have a spiritual and cultural connection to it (Rameka, 2018; Reweti et al., 2023). When introducing

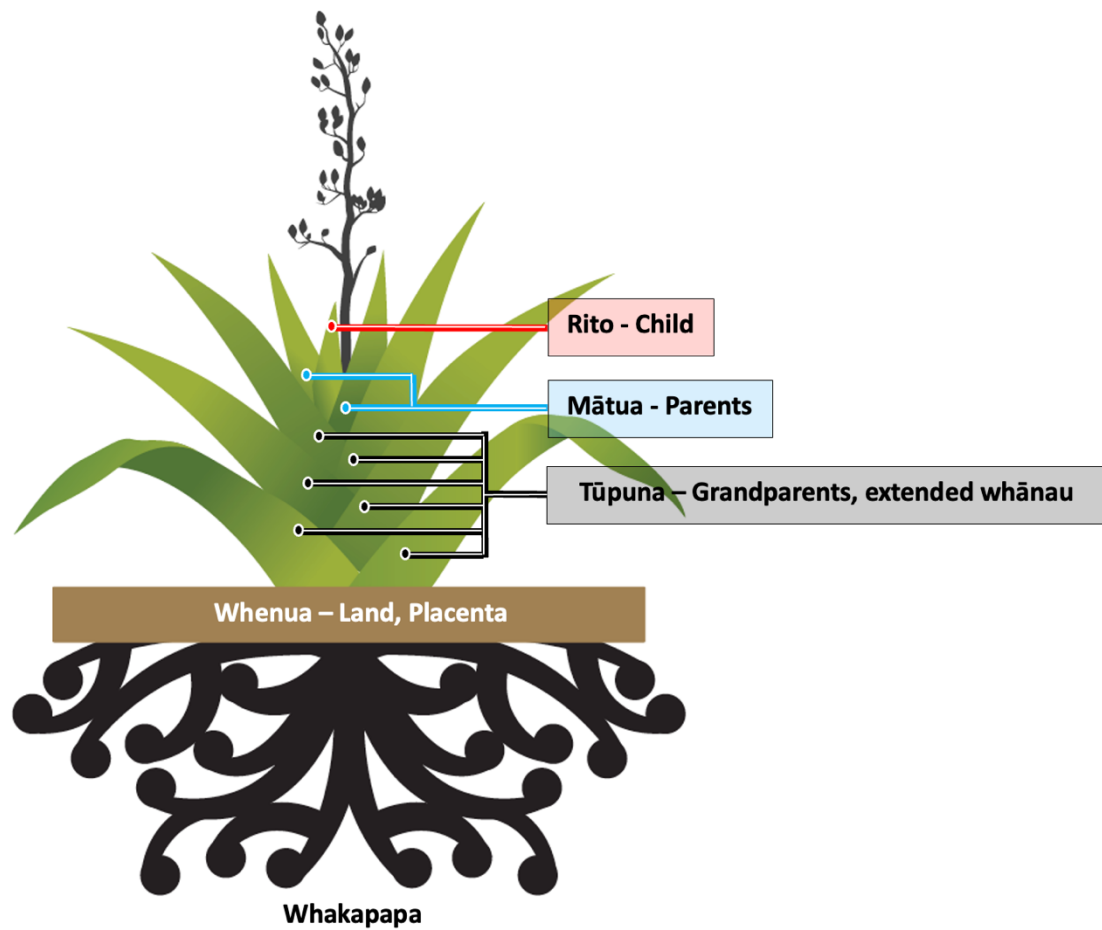
themselves by way of pepeha (tribal saying), Māori first define their identity by their tribal mountains and rivers, eventually ending with their name (Moeke-Pickering, 1996). In a Pākehā context, people are paramount therefore, they often begin introductions with their name. However, in te ao Māori (the Māori world), the natural environment existed before people, so to acknowledge that order of whakapapa (ancestry), Māori begin introductions with their mountains and rivers (Mahi Tahī Media, 2023). Because of this, Māori believe the land does not belong to them, rather they belong to the land. A philosophy that views land as a “tangible expression of whakapapa” (Mark et al., 2022, p. 2). In terms of Māori cosmology, this ordering of whakapapa positions Māori as offspring of Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatūānuku (Earth Mother; Mark et al., 2022). Such creation narratives help Māori understand their world and their place in it. Māori also assume the role of kaitiaki (guardians) over the whenua and its resources, establishing a symbiotic relationship that provides mutual benefit and wellbeing (Mark et al., 2022). This connection to the land is integral to Māori identity and is considered a cultural determinant of health (Mark et al., 2022).

The concept of whānau emphasises the deep value and importance placed on children, as depicted by the metaphor of pā harakeke (flax bush; see Figure 2). The rito (centre shoot) symbolises the child enveloped by two larger outer leaves representing the parents, forming a vital support system for the survival of the plant. The additional larger outer leaves symbolise the grandparents and extended whānau, functioning collectively to nurture and bolster the child's centrality in Māori society (Pihama & Lee-Morgan, 2022). The tradition of ‘whenua ki te whenua’, which involves the ceremonial return of a child's placenta to the earth, is a vital practice in te ao Māori (the Māori world; Mead, 2003; Simmonds, 2017; Reweti et al., 2023). This ceremony includes a karakia (prayer) that honors the placenta for its role in nurturing the child in utero, acknowledges the bond between mother and child, and recognises the significance of Papatūānuku (Earth Mother) in sustaining all life (Reweti et al., 2023). Furthermore, this ritual instills a cultural sense of belonging in the child and strengthens their ancestral connections to the whenua (Simmonds, 2017). Overall, Māori wellbeing is deeply influenced by their connections to cultural heritage and the interconnectedness

between whānau relationships, and the whenua which affects their health and sense of identity.

Figure 2

Pā Harakeke Model (Source: Renee Renata)



Whānau Ora

Whānau Ora refers to the holistic wellbeing of whānau. It is centred on the health and wellbeing of whānau in relation to the environment in which they live (Kidd et al., 2013). It emphasises the notion that each whānau determines their own distinctive approach to health in accordance with their values and goals, thus attributing diverse meanings to Whānau Ora. At a deeper level, Whānau Ora looks at the way in which whānau engages with each other in order to achieve mauri ora or

wellbeing. Such wellbeing includes making sustainable changes in people's lives that further promotes wellbeing through cultural connectedness so that whānau may become self-managing and self-determined (Durie et al., 2010).

Tāne Ora

Tāne ora is a relatively new term that refers to the health and wellbeing of Māori males and reflects their resilience and strength. According to the World Health Organization (2023), health is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (para. 1). For Māori, health is holistic emphasising an emotional, spiritual and cultural balance (Warbrick et al., 2020). While current literature often focuses on the negative statistics of Māori health compared to non-Māori standards (Reweti et al., 2023), early accounts of Pākehā impressions of Māori provide a different perspective. For instance, Abel Tasman described Māori as “strongly-built” people (Pember Reeves, 1899, p. 76, as cited in Moewaka-Barnes & McCreanor, 2019). This view was also supported by James Cook's detailed account:

The natives of this country are a strong, raw-boned, well made, Active People, rather above than under the common size, especially the Men; they are of a very dark brown colour, with ... very good features. ... They seem to enjoy a good state of Health, and many of them live to a good old Age (Wharton, 1893, as cited in Moewaka-Barnes & McCreanor, 2019, p. 20).

Salmond (1991) also highlighted that pre-European Māori were likely healthier than Europeans and lived similar or longer lives (as cited in Moewaka-Barnes & McCreanor, 2019). These historical accounts contrast the health and wellbeing of pre-European Māori compared to the current state and depicts Māori as physically strong and living healthy, flourishing lives – an overarching intent of Tāne Ora.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Considered to be the founding document of the colonial state of New Zealand, The Treaty of Waitangi (herein referred to as te Tiriti) is an agreement that formed the constitutional relationship between Māori and the British Crown (Kingi, 2007; Waitoki,

2012). The primary intent of te Tiriti was to enhance and safeguard the health and wellbeing of Māori and to dissuade other international interest in Aotearoa (Kingi, 2007; Waitoki, 2012). However, in the years following the signing of te Tiriti, it was obvious that Māori were suffering: they were virtually landless with no source of income, they were destitute, in poor health and facing extinction (Waitoki, 2012; Haggie, 2021). Such discrepancies were born out of the many breaches of te Tiriti as the government were supposed to ensure that Māori had the same rights and privileges as the British settlers, that they were healthy, and that they maintained their language, culture, lands and possessions (Haggie, 2021).

Māori resistance to colonisation has been well documented, and is extensive. Attempts to establish tino rangatiratanga or self-determination in all areas of Māori life is seen in the establishment (and then dis-establishment) of the Māori Health Authority (30 June 2024). Māori models of health and education are imperative to Māori wellbeing as they include holistic and cultural approaches to treatment that are central to Māori wellness (Pihama & Smith, 2023).

Kaupapa Māori Principles

Māori cultural values underpin the way in which Māori view and engage with the world and further inform the kaupapa Māori principles that are foundational to te ao Māori (the Māori world; Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013). The following principles informed and guided this research from inception to completion. Manaakitanga refers to the act of giving and caring for, ensuring people feel respected and included. Whanaungatanga is about family connections, relationships, creating a sense of belonging and identity. Rangatiratanga is about acting with best intentions and supporting people to develop their self-determination. Mana refers to one's authority and power but also with a sense of responsibility. Mauri is about the life force or vital essence and in terms of this research was about restoring balance and enhancing one's mauri. Kotahitanga means uniting for a common purpose. Finally, tikanga was about the right way of doing things and having the mental flexibility to roll with the changes.

Wānanga – Spaces of learning

As a verb, wānanga is an action that means to meet, to discuss, to deliberate, and to consider. As a noun, it means seminar, conference, tribal or philosophical knowledge, and tertiary institution that caters for Māori learning needs (Te Aka, 2024). With this in mind, wānanga could be interpreted as an institution where people meet to discuss, consider and deliberate tribal or philosophical knowledge relevant to Māori learning needs. Although quite a mouthful, it does bare some relevance to the well-researched interpretations. Mahuika and Mahuika (2020) for instance, reports that wānanga are commonly referred to as traditional houses of learning but, also states they are so much more than that. Simmonds (2014), for example, asserts wānanga as “a thought space, a series of discussions or meeting places” (p. 87), whereas Smith et al., (2019) describes wānanga as “a space/place that people attend to wānanga about a topic of focus” (p. 5). Wānanga topics ranged from specialised skills such as whakairo (carving), raranga (weaving), building or cultivation, to learning karakia (prayer), whakapapa (genealogy), or understanding the natural world (Mahuika & Mahuika, 2020). Wānanga often took place on the marae (formal courtyard) as they were spaces where Māori could just be Māori and express themselves in a culturally Māori way. Marae also provide safe spaces for teaching and learning Māori cultural practices thus enabling people to reconnect to their tūrangawaewae or a place for the feet to stand (Napan et al., 2020; Mead, 2003).

Mauri Ora - The metrics of flourishing

Mauri is the vital life force that intricately connects the spirit to the body (Love, 2004). This life force permeates all living things, including plants, rivers, and animals, each possessing a unique and dynamic energy or vitality (Pohatu, 2013; Reweti & Severinsen, 2022). Ora signifies a state of being well or alive (Te Aka, 2024). Thus, mauri ora encapsulates the comprehensive health and wellbeing of an individual, where their mauri is flourishing (Graham, 2021). According to Durie (2017), mauri ora is attained when an individual displays spiritual robustness, engagement with culture, emotional vitality, and the ability to foster sustainable and enriching relationships. Mauri is viewed as existing on a spectrum, reflecting varying states of wellbeing, from

weak to strong (McLachlan et al., 2021). People in healthy, mutually beneficial relationships, for example, embody a state of mauri ora, whereas those in disempowering relationships experience a lack of vitality, residing in a state of languish or mauri noho (Durie, 2001). Engagement with cultural beliefs and practices such as tikanga (protocols), whakapapa (genealogy), tapu (sacredness) and wairua (spirituality) aid in the restoration of mauri ora (wellbeing; McLachlan et al., 2021; Moeke-Maxwell et al., 2014; O'Hagan et al., 2012). Activities such as learning about your whakapapa (genealogy), visiting landmarks of cultural significance or strengthening whānau connections promote mauri ora (wellbeing; McLachlan et al., 2021; Love, 2004; Mark & Lyons, 2010; Whakaatere et al., 2011). As a central feature of Māori wellbeing, Māori models of wellbeing features across the past 40 years.

Māori Health Models

Historically, models of health in Aotearoa were established by governments that upheld dominant Eurocentric ideals (Hamley & La Grice, 2021; Haggie, 2021). This approach has shown little evidence of benefiting Māori and due to its narrow focus, has overlooked the importance of cultural inclusivity. This undermines the relevance of Māori knowledge and cultural practices in promoting wellbeing and perpetuating barriers to positive health outcomes for Māori (Hamley & La Grice, 2021). The lower standard of Māori health compared to non-Māori offers insight into the limitations and effectiveness or not, of Eurocentric models (Haggie, 2021). Models of health are designed to help healthcare providers understand how multiple factors interact to impact an individual's health and wellbeing (Magnusson, 2019; Haggie, 2021). These frameworks also aid in comprehending and applying knowledge related to the different factors that affect health (Smart, 2023), thereby informing and guiding service delivery.

Māori models of health like Te Wheke (Pere, 1984), Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1984), Te Pae Mahutonga (Durie, 1999), Paiheretia (Durie, 2003), and Meihana Model (Pitama et al., 2007) were developed based on the traditional knowledge and understandings that underpin a Māori worldview. Furthermore, they identified the correlation between cultural concepts and their impact on Māori health (McLachlan et

al., 2021). Wairuatanga (spirituality) is a fundamental component to the health and wellbeing of Māori (Valentine et al., 2017) and a key concept embedded in many Māori models of health. Wairuatanga (spirituality) is so pivotal for Māori that “without a spiritual awareness and a mauri (spirit and vitality), an individual cannot be healthy and is more prone to illness and misfortune” (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013, p. 278). The following section offers a review of these models providing a brief overview of the key values and cultural concepts embedded within.

Te Wheke

Using the analogy of an octopus, Te Wheke (Pere, 1984) provides a holistic approach to defining the health and wellbeing of whānau, hapū and iwi (individual, family, sub-tribe, tribe). The different body parts of the octopus represent the essential components necessary for a person’s wellbeing. The head represents te whānau (the family), and the eyes or waioara represent the total wellbeing for the whānau (family). Extending from the head are the tentacles that represent the eight different dimensions of Māori being – wairuatanga (spirituality), hinengaro (the mind), taha tinana (physical wellbeing), whanaungatanga (extended family), mauri (life force in people and objects), mana ake (unique identity of individuals and family), hā a koro mā, a kui mā (breath of life from forbearers), and whatumanawa (the open and health expression of emotion). The suckers of each tentacle symbolise the many facets of the dimensions and each dimension has specific needs that are required to sustain the whole. All dimensions are interrelated, and need to be understood in relation to each other and together as a whole (Pere, 2003). Te Wheke highlights the interconnectedness between the health of the whānau, hapū and iwi as being inseparable. As such, the model can be used for individuals or groups. Te Wheke is used extensively in training and education programmes, particularly in the health, mental health, and education sectors including forensics and, social services and training (Love, 2004; Hawaikirangi, 2021).

Te Whare Tapa Whā

Using the analogy of a four sided whare (meeting house), Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1984) symbolises a holistic approach to understanding Māori health. The whare represents the health of an individual with each of the four walls representing a dimension of health essential to sustaining a person's wellbeing (Haggie, 2021). Te Taha Hinengaro focuses on psychological health; Te Taha Wairua represents a person's spiritual health; Te Taha Tinana relates to the body and a person's physical health, and Te Taha Whānau identifies the importance of familial relationships to one's health. If one of the walls is damaged or misaligned, the resulting impact may compromise a person's health and wellbeing. In order to achieve overall wellbeing, all four walls or dimensions must align and be in balance with each other. If, for example, a fractured relationship occurred, then rebuilding or repairing that relationship could be a solution to restoring balance. Te Whare Tapa Whā has been in use for 40 years, as such, it is firmly embedded in Māori health policy and used extensively throughout the health sector (Pitama et al., 2007) including addictions (McLachlan et al., 2017). It also guides assessment and treatment enabling whānau to identify areas of health they regard as challenges, strengths or goals (McLachlan et al., 2017).

Te Pae Mahutonga

Te Pae Mahutonga (Durie, 1999) is a kaupapa Māori Public Health framework designed to enhance the delivery of health promotion services. Created as a response to Māori cultural deprivation and based on the Southern Cross constellation, Te Pae Mahutonga guides health practitioners to expand their range of assessment, to improve the quality of care and reduce Māori inequities to health (Durie, 1999). Te Pae Mahutonga highlights the essential components of health promotion relevant for Māori health – Mauri Ora (access to te ao Māori), Waiora (environmental protection), Toiora (healthy lifestyles), Te Oranga (participation), Ngā Manukura (leadership), and Te Mana Whakahaere (autonomy; McNeill, 2009). Te Pae Mahutonga affirms that health promotion is about creating environments where people can realise their potential (Durie, 1999).

Paiheretia

Paiheretia (Durie, 2003), also known as relational therapy, is a Māori-centred approach to counselling that addresses insecurities related to identity. Such insecurities can lead to poor mental health and are the result of an insecure identity and having unfruitful relationships (Durie, 2003; Wilson & Appel, 2013). Therefore, the aims of Paiheretia are to develop a secure cultural identity, establish healthy relationships with whānau and society, and attain reciprocity in social and physical environments (McLachlan et al., 2017; Durie, 2003). Mainstream modalities tend to favour treatment that develops personal skills (e.g., anger management) or controls emotional/behavioural issues (e.g., cognitive-behaviour therapy). However, such modalities have led to client dissatisfaction as they overlook the value and benefits of culture. Integrating Māori cultural concepts into counselling and treatment fosters good mental health (Durie, 2003). This is achieved by exploring and engaging in wider reciprocal relationships such as with communities, land and wairua (Wilson & Appel, 2013). Furthermore, Māori cultural concepts emphasise the importance of maintaining a balance between the four fields of experience – spiritual, mental, physical and social (Durie, 2003).

Meihana Model

Western modalities of assessment and treatment prioritise the individual and tend not to include cultural values and beliefs into therapy. The Meihana model is a framework that combines clinical and cultural competencies in the assessment, intervention and monitoring process of Māori accessing mental health services (Pitama et al., 2007). It builds on the earlier work of Te Whare Tapa Whā (i.e., the four cornerstones of health) with the inclusion of two additional elements – taiao (physical environments), and ratonga hauora (access to quality health services; Pitama et al., 2007). The Meihana model is comprised of four elements: 1) The Waka Hourua (double-hulled canoe) speaks to the importance of the client/whānau relationship and its relevance to presenting issues; 2) Ngā Hau e Whā (four winds) identifies historical and current societal issues that may impact the client i.e., racism, colonisation, migration, and marginalisation; 3) Ngā Roma Moana (four ocean currents) seeks to

understand the impacts of cultural values on the client i.e., tikanga (Māori cultural principles), āhua (personalised indicators), whānau (relationships), and whenua (spiritual connection to whānau/land); and 4) Whakatere (navigation) summarises the relevant information gained in the assessment which then informs formulation, diagnosis and treatment (Pitama et al., 2017). By focusing on elements central to Māori wellbeing, the Meihana Model aims to improve health gains and create successful outcomes for Māori in mental health services.

In summary, the models reviewed shared similar holistic cultural values deemed critical for improving Māori wellbeing, namely the four pillars – whānau, hinengaro (mental health), tinana (physical body) and, wairua (spirituality). Less common was environment and identity however, they remain important values and concepts relevant for enhancing wellbeing. A central component of the models is the interconnectedness of Māori perceptions of health which collectively, the cultural values provide a foundation for the development of culture and cultural identity (McIntosh et al., 2021). The models also highlight Māori wellbeing as relating to their connection to, and dependence on the whenua and its environments (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013). Similarities across models were dependent on the model's priority as some focused on wellness while others focused on health promotion or access to services. Over the years, advances in Māori health have been attributed to tino rangatiratanga (Māori self-determination) and Māori leadership (Te One & Clifford, 2021). The model used in this research was Whiti Te Rā as outlined in the following section.

Whiti Te Rā

The Whiti Te Rā (the Whiti; McLachlan et al., 2021) is a therapeutic model designed to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Māori by developing and enhancing a cultural identity (Graham, 2021). Central to this model are six Māori concepts representing the six dimensions of Māori cultural identity that have been shown in previous Māori models of health to be pivotal to wellbeing. For example: Te Whare Tapa Whā, Te Wheke. Whiti Te Rā was developed following a systematic

literature review of pathways to wellbeing for Māori. Six key indicators were identified as pivotal to accessing a flourishing mauri or life essence.

1. Ngā Ara Reo – Māori language
2. Ngā Ara Taiao – Connection with the environment
3. Ngā Ara Wairua – Māori spiritual beliefs and practices
4. Ngā Ara Mahi-a-Toi – Expressive art forms
5. Ngā Ara Take Pū Whānau – Māori relational values
6. Ngā Ara Whakapapa – Intergenerational relationships

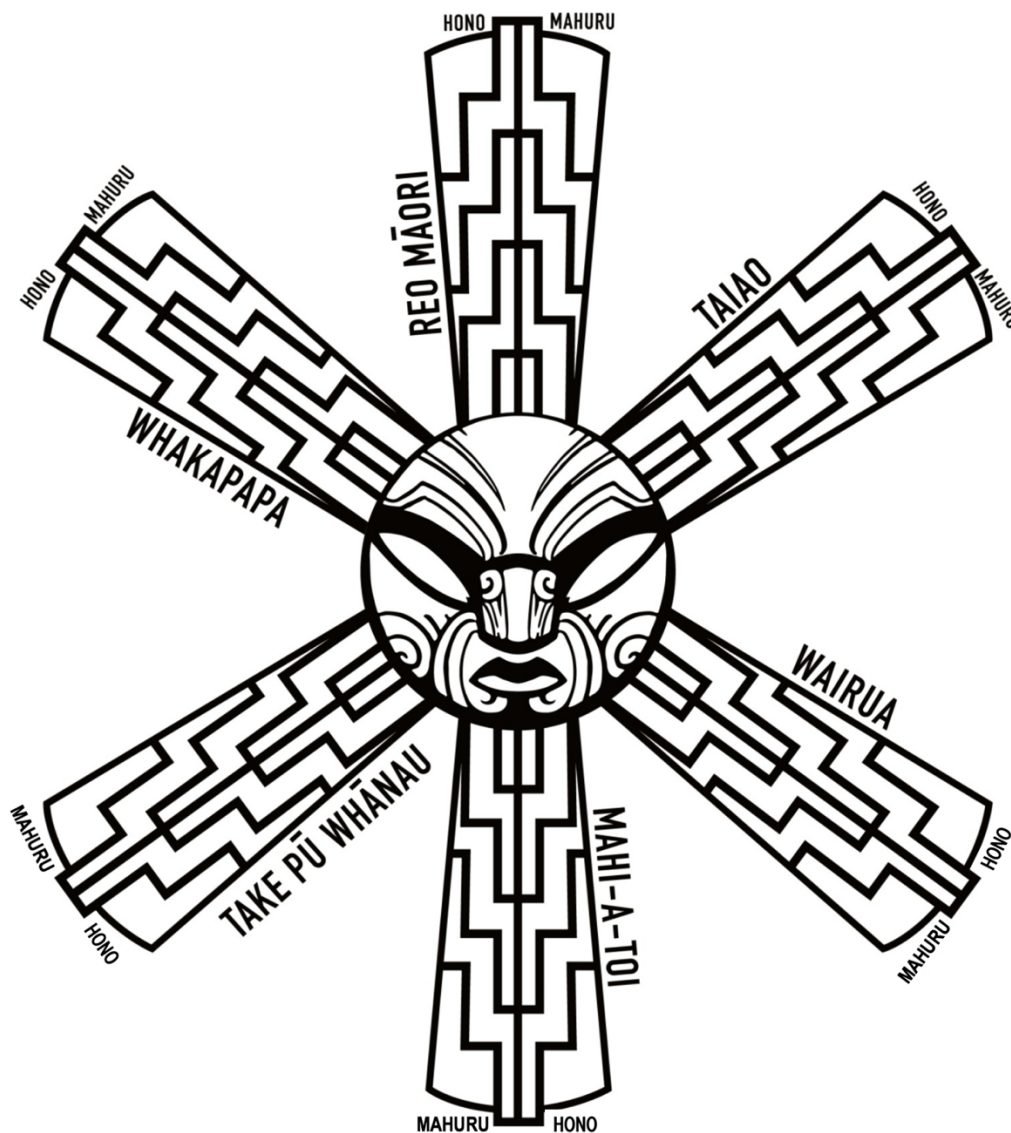
The Māori language is a vehicle for transmitting cultural values and beliefs (Pihama, 2001) therefore, is strongly linked to identity (Te Huia, 2015; Houkamau & Sibley, 2010) which then influences wellbeing (Muriwai et al., 2015). Research also states that having a good connection to the environment, including the land and its elements, is integral to traditional Māori values (McLachlan et al., 2021; Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013). By connecting to the environment, people can explore and embrace their role as tangata whenua (people of the land), because land is a source of spiritual connectedness and identity (Mark et al., 2022). Wairua has also been strongly linked to identity (Rameka, 2016; Houkamau & Sibley, 2010) in particular, when engaging in karakia (incantations; Rameka, 2016). The concept of Ngā Ara Mahi-a-Toi, as mentioned in a previous section, states that kapa haka not only provides a healthy pathway for expression, but it also provides a connection to our whakapapa (genealogy), reo (language), whenua, whānau and identity (M9 Aotearoa, 2023). Ngā Ara Take Pū Whānau is about providing a platform for whānau to reconnect with and engage in mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems; McLachlan et al., 2021).

Lastly, whakapapa is a core Māori value that is strongly connected to identity and wellbeing (Houkamau & Sibley, 2010) as it connects whānau, hapū and iwi, including traditional spaces and places (McCormack, 2014). Collectively these contribute to a strong sense of belonging (McLachlan et al., 2021). By strengthening these ara or cultural pathways to wellbeing, McLachlan et al., (2021) state that it enables one's mauri to flourish. Using Tama Nui Te Rā or the sun as a metaphor for wellbeing (see Figure 3), each ray has five poutama extending outward from the sun's face. They are

divided in two sections down the centre – one side represents a person’s hono or active participation with that dimension, and the other side represents mahuru or knowledge and comfort with that dimension. Increases in hono (active participation) and mahuru (comfort and knowledge) reflect an increase in a person’s mauri thus enabling them to shine bright. This thesis has situated the research with my whānau in the Whiti model, using each pathway as a connection to mauri as a vital source of wellbeing.

Figure 3

Whiti Te Rā Interactive Guide



Study Overview

In the present day, Māori are actively engaged in reclaiming their language and culture through mediums such as Te Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori, Wharekura, Māori Universities, Māori Radio, and Māori Television (Te Huia, 2015; Olsen-Reader & Higgins, 2012). While this has had a positive effect on the revival of te ao Māori, my whānau have had limited access to mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge). The lives they lead demands and consumes much of their time which is a major obstacle preventing them from actively engaging their language and culture. Therefore, the objectives of this research are twofold. Firstly, it aims to explore the process of reclaiming mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge) within my whānau, who currently have limited knowledge and access to te ao Māori (the Māori world). Secondly, it seeks to explore the experiences of my whānau reconnecting with te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture).

Method

This chapter describes the processes used to conduct this research with my whānau who wanted to reconnect with and reclaim their language and culture. I describe kaupapa Māori methodologies as it informs, guides and underpins my research. I explore Māori Data Sovereignty and its importance when researching Māori. I also explore the applicability of Māori health model Whiti Te Rā and its effectiveness to promote health and wellbeing. The process of participant recruitment is also detailed.

My research forms part of a larger study 'Raranga, raranga taku takapau: Hapū ora for tamariki' funded by 'A Better Start (ABS) – E tipu e rea' from the National Science Challenges Fund. Three interlinked kaupapa Māori research projects delivered in different sites (see Appendix 7) derived from this study and aimed to address the inequities in maternal health services for Māori by using mātauranga Māori and cultural practices to empower Māori whānau. My research falls under the project 'Ngā wai ora o Rāhui Pōkeka: Hapū ora in Huntly'. Both this research and the ABS study received ethical approval from the University of Waikato (see Appendix 3).

Study Design

The focus of my research was to explore the experiences of reconnecting my whānau with Māori language and culture. Having had minimal contact with te ao Māori (the Māori world), my whānau have, through no fault of their own, lived majority of their lives separated from their language and culture. The research is centred on kaupapa Māori solutions for intergenerational trauma and healing. Data collection methods included in-depth interviews (structured and semi-structured) conducted by the researcher, and hard copy pre- and post-assessments given to participants at the first and last wānanga as described below.

Kaupapa Māori Methodology

Embedded in, and guided by tikanga (Māori cultural values), kaupapa Māori methodology is research that is designed by Māori, for Māori throughout every phase of the research, including inception and design. Kaupapa Māori methodology ensures researchers treat the knowledge they gain with respect and cultural integrity (Warbrick et al., 2020). Central to kaupapa Māori methodology is the idea of decolonisation (Smith, 2012). If the primary objective of colonisation was to dispossess indigenous peoples from their lands, language, and culture (Hamley & La Grice, 2021), then decolonisation must involve the types of education that re-connects Indigenous Peoples to their land, language and cultural practices (Wildcat et al., 2014). Decolonisation is about understanding colonisation in its entirety, being critically self-reflective and mindful of any subconscious colonial views or beliefs, thus eliminating “the weeds of colonisation” (Elkington et al., 2020, para. 45). This then makes room for embracing mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge) whereby Māori seek to liberate themselves from the oppression of colonisation. Pūrākau is an established kaupapa Māori method to explore, record, analyse, and document. Pūrākau is a traditional method of Māori narrative that encompasses philosophical thought, epistemological constructs, cultural codes, and worldviews deemed crucial to Māori identity (Lee, 2009). They enable Māori to reclaim and retell traditional stories that have otherwise been reduced to mere fables or anecdotes (Lee, 2009). Therefore,

engaging in pūrākau is a form of decolonisation. Pūrākau was utilised in this research to hear, record, understand and share the narratives of my whānau.

On a personal level, at the heart of kaupapa Māori methodology is a willingness to improve and advance the health and wellbeing of our people. For generations Māori have been fighting for equality and have battled to keep our language and culture alive in a world that persistently seeks to oppress and homogenise us (Hamley & La Grice, 2021; Rameka & Paul-Burke, 2015). As a researcher, my interest lies in supporting my whānau to ‘hoki ki te ūkaipō’ (return to our origins) and to realise their potential as Māori, as tāne, and as fathers or father figures.

Māori Data Sovereignty

Forming part of the colonial relationship between Māori and Pākehā, researchers have for generations, collected data about Māori. However, Tahu Kukutai asserts, Māori were excluded from the process of data collection and interpretation as the intent was to prioritise the agenda and needs of others (Te Kāhui Raraunga, 2020). This resulted in “truths” about Māori that produced “evidence” used to inform policies and interventions in the health sector (Andersen & Kukutai, 2016; Walter & Anderson, 2013). Interventions, that have historically underserved Māori health gains (Hamley & La Grice, 2021; Wilson et al., 2021). In response to this, Māori Data Sovereignty was developed to enable Māori and Indigenous Peoples the right to control, own, possess, access and collect data that is about us, data collected from us, data collected by us, and data collected from the environments we connect to (Lilley et al., 2024; Cormack & Kukutai, 2022; Te Kāhui Raraunga, 2020; Te Mana Raraunga, 2018).

According to Kirikowhai Mikaere, Māori are data warriors who have been recording, collecting, collating, and storing data for generations through whakairo (carvings), tukutuku (lattice-work), waiata (chants/songs), mōteatea (traditional chant/lament), oriori (lullaby) and karanga (ceremonial call; Te Kāhui Raraunga, 2020). Kirikowhai further asserts the importance of having a cultural lens when designing, using, or disseminating data because “our values are the lens through which we see the world” (Te Kāhui Raraunga, 2020, 10:05mins). Issues arise when different values

collect, design, process and disseminate Māori data as that then becomes the lens and the truth that is perpetuated (Te Kāhui Raraunga, 2020).

This information was vital to understanding and contextualising Māori Data Sovereignty within my research, as it informed the way in which data was collected, processed, interpreted and disseminated. It enabled me to appreciate the data gifted me from my whānau as a taonga (treasure). Therefore, the responsibility was mine to protect and respect that data by telling their story in a way that is informative, enlightening, and mana-enhancing. Māori Data Sovereignty also enables me to consider my tūpuna (ancestors) and to respect their untold stories of relinquishing te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture) by asserting that at the heart of their decisions was the determination to protect themselves and each other in order to survive.

Participants and Recruitment

A total of ten whānau were invited to take part in this research (see Appendix 1). Seven agreed however, prior to commencement three withdrew for personal reasons leaving the remaining four to be interviewed for this research. To align with the overarching project of 'Ngā wai ora o Rāhui Pōkeka: Hapū ora in Huntly', those who had whakapapa (genealogical) connections to Rāhui Pōkeka were invited to attend. All my whānau identified as Māori, and each has whakapapa (genealogical) connections to Rāhui Pōkeka through their iwi, Waikato. All but one has children (two have two children each, while one has three). All but one was in an intimate heterosexual relationship at the time of the research. The age range was between 40-47 years with a mean age of 43.25. One resided in Rāhui Pōkeka while the rest were located in Kirikiriroa, Rotorua and Tauranga Moana. All live with more than one person and are in full-time employment.

In observing Māori protocols, participant recruitment was conducted face-to-face. This is an important practice in te ao Māori (the Māori world) because as Māori researchers we are obligated to the tapu (sacredness) of the information gathered. Meeting face-to-face displays respect and trust thus, enabling those being recruited to

use all their senses when deciding whether or not to be involved in the research (Pipi et al., 2004). Two of my whānau were recruited face to face. However, due to time restraints and geographical location, the remaining two were recruited over the phone. All who were recruited are related to me and to each other. The first, Daymon is my cousin while the remaining three Bandootz, Knox and Te Riini are my brothers.

Ethical Practice

This research 'Takahi ngā takahanga o ngā tūpuna' explores the impact of the attainment of mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge) on tāne (males) from Rāhui Pōkeka as fathers or father figures. By signing the Consent Form (see Appendix 2) they all agreed to being recorded. According to Pihama (2016), Māori experiences of research in the past are seen as the object and theorised about. Therefore, it was important the mana of my whānau was protected by seeking consent, sharing the transcripts and, allowing them to add, remove or update information. This thesis is written using mana-enhancing language. Furthermore, the research was granted Human Ethics approval from the University of Waikato and has ethical approval under the Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations: HREC (Health) 2020#91 (see Appendix 3).

Wānanga Approach

The objective of this research was to support my whānau to reconnect with mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge) by inviting them to attend three one-day wānanga delivered between March and June 2023. The wānanga were held at our ancestral marae (formal gathering place), Kaitumutumu located at Rākaumangamanga (a section of the Waikato river near the Huntly Power Station). Kaitumutumu is affiliated to the iwi (tribe) of Waikato and the principal hapū (sub tribe) of Ngāti Whaawhaakia. It also has whakapapa (ancestral) links to Taupiri mountain, the Waikato River and the Tainui canoe. According to whakapapa kōrero (historical narratives), Kaitumutumu got its name from cows eating the bark of the willow trees along the river (kai = to eat or consume, tumutumu = stump of a tree). The original wharenuī (large meeting house) was facing the river but was later repositioned during

renovations to face north – a belief that all marae (formal courtyards) face north to accommodate the journey Māori make in death to Te Rerengā Wairua (the leaping place of spirits at Cape Reinga) when departing this world (Baglow, 2013). Such narratives were not known to my whānau and was shared by our Aunty during the mihi whakatau (formal greeting). Including kaumātua is vital to kaupapa Māori approaches, because without her presence in the welcome, the knowledge would have remained unknown.

Kaitumutumu Marae played an integral role in the research as marae provide a safe environment for people to learn and practice Māori customs and traditions, as well as enable people to express themselves culturally (Addis et al., 2011). Grounded in te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and customs), marae are public ceremonial meeting-grounds that connect Māori with their culture, their whenua (ancestral land) and te taiao (the environment). They also serve as a constant source of cultural security where Māori can assert their sense of identity (Addis et al., 2011; Lee-Morgan et al., 2017). As an embodiment of our tūpuna (ancestors), the wharenui is crucial to reconnecting my whānau to their ancestral connections.

In addition to myself and my four whānau, also present at our wānanga were two of my nephews and a niece. The marae booking officer (Aunty) was also present, therefore, as an expression of manaaki (respect, hospitality) and cultural inclusivity, she was invited to join the mihi whakatau (speech of greeting) and share some whakapapa kōrero (historical narratives) about Kaitumutumu which was very informative. Karakia were used throughout the entire wānanga – at the beginning and close of each wānanga, and before kai. My whānau were given a drink bottle each and stationary (blank exercise book, pencil case with pens, pencil, rubber, and markers) to take notes and record their learnings. They were also given petrol vouchers as a koha for their contribution to this research.

Wānanga Tuatahi: (25 March 2023) Due to the already established connection my whānau have to Kaitumutumu Marae, I opened the wānanga with a karakia (prayer) and a mihi whakatau (speech of greeting) forgoing a pōwhiri (official welcome). I introduced myself by way of pepeha (tribal saying) and encouraged my

whānau to do the same. For those less confident, a pepeha (tribal saying) template was visible for them to use as a guide. I discussed the outline of the programme and they were each given small information booklets containing karakia used throughout the wānanga. They were later given an audio copy of the primary researcher reciting all karakia so they could familiarise themselves with the words and the tempo of each karakia. My whānau were encouraged to learn the karakia as they would be used throughout the wānanga.

We discussed the Te Whare Tapa Whā model and its application to Māori health. I also used the Whiti Te Rā as an interactive guide for my whānau to connect or re-connect with traditional and cultural pathways to wellbeing (McLachlan et al., 2021). Using the sun as a metaphor for health, my whānau indicated their level of hono (engagement) and māhuru (knowledge/comfort) with each of the six domains of wellbeing by colouring in the poutama (ascension lines). Lines closer to the sun's face indicate low levels of hono and māhuru, whilst lines further away from the sun's face indicate higher levels, which is also a metaphor for shining bright (McLachlan et al., 2021). By completing the Whiti Te Rā pre-assessment form this provided valuable information about which cultural pathways interested my whānau the most. The knowledge gained from the post-assessment form was used for planning pathways to further learning beyond the completion of this research. My whānau completed the assessment form by rating their level of confidence and level of engagement with each of the six wellbeing pathways. After lunch we explored their understanding of what Tāne Ora (men's wellness) means to them. We ended the day by briefly revisiting pepeha in preparation for the second wānanga.

Wānanga Tuarua: (29 April 2023) We met at our sister's place in Kirikiriroa where my whānau could leave their cars as we travelled together using a hired van. We began with a karakia before travelling to Kaitumutumu Marae in Rāhui Pōkeka where we debriefed the previous wānanga and discussed karakia – their uses and which karakia my whānau already know. We also discussed pepeha (tribal sayings) – what they know, why we use them, in which spaces or places they are used, and to check they can recite their pepeha. As a means of culturally reconnecting my whānau to the whenua as well as forming part of the land-based healing component of the wānanga we

visited Rangiriri – the birthplace of the 1863 Waikato War. Daymon was aware of the historical landmark whilst others were less familiar, but all knew a war had occurred there. They were each given an information booklet outlining the Waikato War and the development of the Kiingitanga – Māori King Movement.

We finished the wānanga at Taupiri Maunga where participants were taught about the history of Taupiri and Māori burial practices pre-European contact. They were each given a harakeke putiputi (woven flax flower) for them to koha (gift) to their whānau after delivering their pepeha. This exercise positioned the participants on their maunga (sacred mountain), by their awa (river) in front of their tūpuna (ancestors) as a way of connecting with their whakapapa (history), their whenua, their cultural identity. After successfully delivering their pepeha, they gave the urupā (burial ground) a tidy up (materials provided – bucket, bottle of water, cloth, brush), visited whānau and discovered recent whānau who had passed without their knowledge. We closed with a karakia.

Wānanga Tuatoru: (3 June 2023) We began the session with a karakia followed by a debrief of the previous wānanga. We then discussed the Tainui waka (canoe), its journey to Aotearoa, the different iwi (tribes) associated with Tainui waka and its resting place. Throughout the discussion my whānau shared snippets of what they knew. We then discussed the Maramataka (Māori lunar calendar) which highlights the connection between the cycles of the moon and our wellbeing. This traditional knowledge enabled our tūpuna (ancestors) to plan their year based on the readings of the stars (R. Solomon, personal communication, 22 November, 2022). My whānau were each given a copy of the Maramataka for their own personal use and directed to places for further information. They were also informed about Hina which is a free online app that provides an interactive approach to learning about the phases of the moon in Māori, but also to know the best times for performing life's tasks such as planting and fishing. We also discussed the free Māori meditation app called 'Āio' that teaches people about Orokoroa which is a state of wellbeing. After morning tea we discussed Mauri Ora Tai Pari which looks at how our wellbeing changes like the tides of the ocean and the different states of wellbeing – mauri noho (being inactive), mauri tau (being settled), and mauri oho (being alert; He Paiaka Tōtara, 2020). We completed

the Whiti Te Rā post-assessment and discussed future directions. We also discussed Te Tira Hoe o Waikato which is a four-day historical journey along the Waikato River beginning at Tongariro and ending at Port Waikato (Waikato Raupatu River Trust, 2013). Participants paddle the distance in waka and stop at various marae along the river. This is a historical journey for tribal members of Waikato. My whānau were keen to be a part of this which is something we will pursue in the future. We closed with a karakia (prayer; see below).

HE KARAKIA WHAKAKAPINGA

E tau nei ki runga i a tātou katoa te wairua o ngā mātua tūpuna
Nā rātou i whakatakoto te ara hei hīkoinga mā tātou ngā uri
I whakatōkia ō tātou ngākau ki ngā tikanga hei arataki i a tātou
Kia ngākau nui ki te hāpai i ā tātou mahi katoa
I roto i te pono, i te tika, i te māramatanga,
Me te aroha anō o tētahi ki tētahi.
Āpiti te whakaaro ki te hunga māuiui,
Ki te hunga e tāmia ana e te pōuritanga
Kia piki te ora, kia piki te kaha, kia piki te māramatanga,
Koiarā e Rongo, whakairihia ake ki runga
Turuturu ō whiti whakamaua kia tīna
Tīna
Hui e, tāiki e!

Analysis

A combination of structured and semi-structured interviews were used to gather narratives from my whānau in addition to the pre- and post-assessment for the Whiti Te Rā. Also included in the data collection were phone, email and text communications. My whānau were interviewed at every wānanga and after each wānanga I transcribed their interviews and read them multiple times to familiarise myself with their narratives. This allowed me to view their pūrākau systematically and individually.

Pre- and post-assessments were obtained using the Whiti Te Rā which is composed of six themes or ara (dimensions) representing pathways considered to influence Māori flourishing and a secure cultural identity: Ngā Ara Reo (Māori language), Ngā Ara Taiao (environmental connection), Ngā Ara Wairua (Māori spiritual beliefs and practices), Ngā Ara Mahi-a-toi (expressive art forms), Ngā Ara Take Pū Whānau (relational values), and Ngā Ara Whakapapa (intergenerational relationships). Using the sun as a metaphor for health, each of the six ihi (rays) represents one of the dimensions. Each ihi is divided in two – one side is labelled hono reflecting a person’s engagement with that ihi, and the other side is labelled mahuru reflecting a person’s level of comfort with the knowledge associated with that ihi. There are five poutama (ascension lines) on each side of the ihi (i.e., hono and mahuru) that allows individuals to assess and explore their own level of engagement (hono) and level of knowledge/comfort (mahuru) and to set goals for further development. The greater their engagement and comfort with knowledge, the brighter the ihi or sun’s rays shine, which then strengthens the person’s cultural wellbeing (McLachlan et al., 2021). My whānau were given a hard copy of the same Whiti Te Rā assessment at two separate time periods for self-assessment. What time points these occur at is dependent on the study. Within the context of this study, the self-report assessments were administered before the intervention and after the intervention i.e., Wānanga 1 and Wānanga 3.

Findings

Whiti Te Rā

The findings of the present study explored the experiences of re-connecting my whānau with mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge). Having lived majority of their lives separated from their language and culture, they were invited to attend three one-day wānanga and immerse themselves in a range of topics relating to te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture). The Whiti Te Rā pre- and post-assessment was used to monitor change in my whānau between wānanga 1 and 3. Finally, results regarding their views about Tāne Ora (men’s health) and their role as fathers or father figures is recorded collectively.

Daymon

Daymon is a 40 year old tāne (male) and the eldest of five children. He was raised in Kirikiriroa by his parents who did not know how to speak Māori. His paternal grandparents and maternal grandmother spoke Māori however, Daymon was raised with English. He was taught Māori language and culture throughout his primary and secondary schooling where he performed in Kapa Haka (Māori cultural performance). As an adult, Daymon is interested in learning Māori as well as mirimiri (Māori massage) and rongoā Māori (Māori medicine). He has two daughters (twins) and would like them to learn about Māori language and culture should they decide. Daymon travelled from Tauranga Moana to Rāhui Pōkeka for each wānanga which is approximately a 3 hour round trip. Despite his busy lifestyle with work and family commitments, coupled with the fact that weekends are used to recuperate and spend time with family, he remained dedicated to attending these wānanga and organised his weekends to accommodate for that. Some wānanga fell on weekends when he had his daughters, but he made it work for all concerned. At times Daymon would be exhausted from a demanding week at work but stated the wānanga were so relaxing that they enabled him to “recharge [his] batteries”. He also enjoyed the whanaungatanga (socialising) as it was an opportunity to reconnect with whānau. As it stands, the only time he gets to see his whānau is at tangihanga (funerals) which he stated is not a good excuse to reconnect.

Daymon’s connection to history, whakapapa and wairua

A core component of this research involved visiting landmarks of cultural and historical significance, in particular those pertaining to Waikato. We began our excursion with Rangiriri, a small rural community located about 20km north of Rāhui Pōkeka. It is also the birthplace of the 1863 Waikato War – one of the most significant battles of the New Zealand wars. Rangiriri is officially recognised as a waahi tūpuna (ancestral site; Boffa Miskell, 2024) where monuments have been erected to educate people about the British invasion against Waikato thus preserving the knowledge of the war that ensued. According to O’Malley (2021), such waahi tūpuna (ancestral sites) are important for Aotearoa as they prevent historical amnesia.

For Māori, averting historical amnesia is done through the names we give our whenua as it “inscribes and prescribes our whakapapa relationship with them” (Seed-Pihama, 2017, p. 96). The lake to the east of Rangiriri, for example, is named “Kopuera: Those Who Were Shot” (Radio New Zealand [RNZ], 2021, 24:14) as a tribute to the women and children killed by the British troops for escaping the Waikato War. Trapped in the swampy terrain on the lakes edge, the women and children were shot from above – their bodies landing in the lake, hence the name – Kopuera. Naming our whenua in this way reflects the deeply personal and intimate relationship Māori have with their environment (Seed-Pihama, 2017). Therefore, from a kaupapa Māori perspective, it is not about averting historical amnesia, rather preserving whakapapa kōrero (historical narratives).

One of the objectives of this research was to ensure my whānau understood the cultural significance of Rangiriri and to connect them with the historical narratives, whakapapa (ancestry), and whenua. By happenstance, Daymon had just the week before watched a documentary online about the Waikato Wars stating:

Seeing it in person changes the experience of just watching it online. In person you appreciate it more. You get that grounding feeling from actually being out here. You see the bigger picture of the war that took place and you can feel the wairua of what happened to our people here. It really pulls at the old heart strings. So when I watch that documentary again, I’ll have a personal experience of it now.

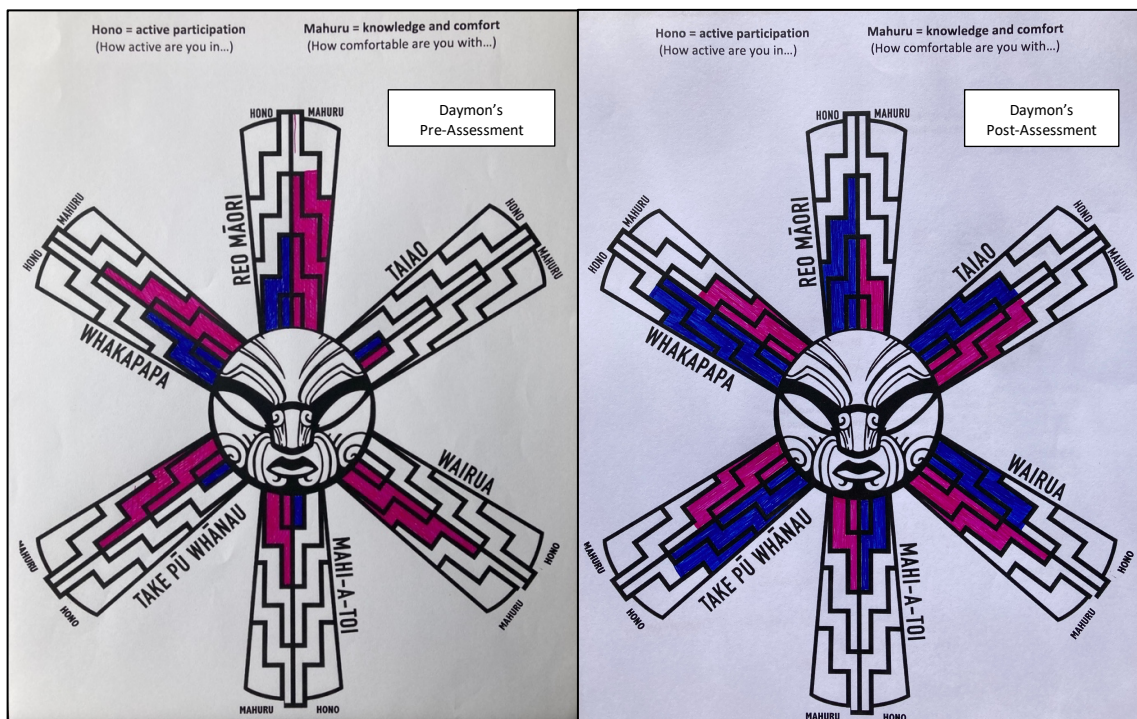
Daymon has driven through Rangiriri without fully knowing its history. He had to physically set foot on the whenua in order to connect with this history. This is land-based pedagogy where the whenua itself becomes the teacher (Cruz, 2020). This is a fundamental difference compared to watching a digital version online. Being there in person offers a more in-depth, hands-on experience as you are able to use your senses such as sight, sound, smell and touch. You not only connect with the whenua physically, but visually as well – remnants of the trenches carved in the earth, the oversized tewhatewha (long wooden axe-like weapon) depicting the original size of the trenches, the Waikato river to the West, Lake Kopuera to the East, and the whakairo

(carvings) decorating the sacred site all provide a deeper experience of the land that can only be fully appreciated in person.

In learning about Rangiriri through whakapapa kōrero (historical narratives), Daymon was able to position himself in relation to this whenua. Through his Waikato ancestry he was able to make a whakapapa (genealogical) connection to the whenua on a personal level because what happened at Rangiriri during the Waikato War happened to his tūpuna (ancestors). Realising his tūpuna (ancestors) fought not only for their own lives but the lives of their future generations was a humbling experience for Daymon. Such impacts are reflected in his post-hono results for Ngā Ara Wairua (Māori spiritual beliefs and practices) and Ngā Ara Take Pū Whānau (Māori relational values) which showed significant increases of 2.5 points respectively (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Daymon's Pre- and Post-Assessment Forms



What we are talking about here are changes in Daymon's mauri (life force) which Durie (2001) posits is "evident by the vitality, integrity and energy within a person and

the establishment of positive relationships in the wider environment” (p. 61). For Daymon, physically connecting with Rangiriri in person and through whakapapa kōrero (historical narratives) had a positive impact on him in a way that “pulled at the old heart strings”. Physically standing at Rangiriri enabled Daymon to visualise the magnitude of the war and with the aid of monuments and view-shafts (see Figure 5), was able to immerse himself fully in the experience. He appreciated the cultural value of this waahi tūpuna (ancestral site) and its relevance to him as a Māori and as a descendent of Waikato.

Figure 5

View-shaft Depicting Battle Scene of British Troops Invading Rangiriri



From a kaupapa Māori perspective, such experiences are restoring Daymon’s mauri ora (wellbeing) which involves immersing oneself in cultural beliefs and practices such as tikanga (protocols), wairua (spirituality) and whakapapa (genealogy; Moeke-Maxwell et al., 2014; O’Hagan et al., 2012). Increasing mauri ora (wellbeing) can be achieved through activities where people learn whakapapa kōrero (historical narratives) about their iwi (tribe) and hapū (subtribe) or by visiting landmarks of cultural significance (Love, 2004; Mark & Lyons, 2010; O’Hagan et al., 2012).

Daymon was never taught about Rangiriri and watching it online did not compare to being there in person as he stated earlier “...you can feel the wairua of what happened to our people here”. Increases were also noted in Ngā Ara Taiao (connection with the environment) and Ngā Ara Whakapapa (intergenerational relationships) with 1.5 points respectively. Such responses indicate a flourishing mauri (life force) for Daymon which can be attributed to learning about, experiencing and establishing a connection to Rangiriri and/or the wānanga as a whole. His intention to attend was firstly to support my studies, but also because he was genuinely interested in learning more about te ao Māori (the Māori world). In the beginning he felt he knew a lot, but the more he learnt the more he realised he was “a little bit more optimistic” in his pre-assessment responses, hence the decrease in his post-results (see Table 1). Daymon really enjoyed being a part of this kaupapa (research) stating:

We’ve all picked up a little bit of something along the way. We’ve actually retained some of it when you listen to the little comments made here and there. We have all gained something out of it, quite a lot really. And I don’t think that’s the end. I think a few of us will go home and do a bit more and we’ll hold onto this which will be a big part of us now.

What Daymon is demonstrating here is change talk as he believes his journey of reconnecting to te ao Māori (the Māori world) at these wānanga is only the beginning. He has intentions of continuing and furthering his journey beyond this research which are indications of a flourishing mauri. According to Britt et al., (2014), “any movement a whānau makes towards oranga is a step of success” (p. 10).

Table 1

Daymon’s Whiti Te Rā Assessment Results

WHITI TE RĀ: Daymon						
Ngā Ara	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Reo Māori	2	3	+1	3.5	2	-1.5
Taiao	1	2.5	+1.5	1	2.5	+1.5

Wairua	0	2.5	+2.5	3	3	No change
Mahi-ā-toi	1	2	+1	2	2	No change
Take pū whānau	1	3.5	+2.5	3	2.5	-0.5
Whakapapa	2	3.5	+1.5	3	2.5	-0.5

Figure 6

Aerial View of Rangiriri with the Waikato River in the Background



Bandootz

Bandootz is a 42 year old tāne (male) and the fifth eldest of six children. He lives in Rāhui Pōkeka and has wanted to learn about things Māori for years. During his primary and college years, Bandootz was involved in Māori language and culture. At Huntly College he took part in kapa haka (Māori cultural performance) and was the lead guitarist for their group. He took Māori as a subject but stated it was uneventful for him as “I didn’t really learn anything at college. Nothing really stuck”. As an adult, Bandootz has made previous attempts to embrace and learn about te ao Māori (the Māori world) as he attended a Mau Rākau wānanga (Māori weaponry workshop) in

Rotorua about 10 years ago. He really enjoyed it and learnt a lot but stated it did not lead to anything further. He tried to learn Māori online a few years ago, but self-directed learning does not suit his learning style. In addition, the physical and mental demands of his fulltime employment coupled with the daily commute (90min round trip) leaves Bandootz very time-poor. As such, he struggles to find the energy or time for anything else as his weekends are dedicated to resting and relaxing. However, attending this research was a family affair, he lived nearby, he was familiar with everyone, he was in a safe space for learning and was surrounded by people he could learn with as opposed to the silo of self-directed learning. Bandootz is interested in learning about Māori instruments such as the pūtātara (conch shell) and the kōauau (flute). A personal goal of his is to learn to speak Māori so he can have a kōrero (conversation) with his kaumātua (elders) and learn as much from them before they separate from this earth.

Bandootz connection to pepeha and cultural practices

In addition to Rangiriri, the other landmark of cultural significance we visited was Taupiri mountain in Taupiri – a small rural community located about 8km south of Rāhui Pōkeka. Taupiri mountain (herein referred to as Taupiri) is a sacred urupā (burial ground) to the people of Waikato-Tainui and the final resting place of many of my whānau. As a means of engaging with customary practices, my whānau delivered their pepeha (tribal saying) on our maunga surrounded by whānau – ‘passed’ and present. Pepeha is a structured and ritualistic way of introducing oneself to others in Māori, mainly in formal settings and when meeting people for the first time (Boulton et al., 2021; O’Toole, 2020). My whānau were informed at the first wānanga to prepare for delivering their pepeha at the second wānanga. Bandootz asked if it was possible to deliver both sides of your pepeha at the same time (i.e., mother’s and father’s line) as he was keen to learn this. His delivery was flawless. He later stated:

I learnt a lot about the correct ways to do a pepeha. And to learn how to do both sides at the same time, I’ve never done that before. I’ve learnt a lot and I want to learn more. It excites me. I really enjoyed it. I loved it.

Wellbeing for Māori is linked to a secure connection to cultural heritage and cultural identity (Durie, 2003; Hollands et al., 2015). Providing a space for Bandootz to culturally express himself on Taupiri enabled him to enhance his connection to his culture and whenua. Bandootz is not only connecting physically, spiritually and culturally to the environment, but he is also enhancing his understanding of self-identity (Brougham & Harr, 2013). His pepeha positions Bandootz as a descendant of Waikato, a descendant of Tūwharetoa i te Aupouri, and a descendant of Ngāti Pūkenga. This impacts directly on his mauri as noted in his sense of personal achievement. He has never delivered both sides of his pepeha before but it motivated him to expand his comfort zones and embrace new learnings. He stated he practiced his pepeha as often as he could – in the car on the way to and from work, during smoko, and at home. Such commitment and determination is reflected in his post-results for Ngā Ara Whakapapa (intergenerational relationships) with an increase of 2 points (see Table 2). Finishing our excursion at 5:00pm we returned to our sister's where my whānau stayed until after midnight sharing all they had learned with her. She later informed me:

I could hear the wairua [passion] in their kōrero and how excited they were about all they had learnt. They were sharing their knowledge with me, they were laughing and testing each other to see how much they remembered. They clearly they learnt a lot. Man, I was learning heaps too. It was really cool to see them so happy.

What my sister's comment is highlighting is the ongoing impact or benefit these wānanga have had on my whānau. The shared knowledge they have about te ao Māori (the Māori world) has created a bond and ignited a passion that can sustain their learning beyond the time-bound limitations of this research. It is noteworthy to mention this was only the second wānanga further highlighting their responsiveness to the learnings. My whānau have been hungry for learning and reconnecting to te ao Māori, perhaps all they needed was a little awahi (support) to show them the way. The passion expressed by my whānau also had a positive impact on my sister who stated she learnt a lot and is keen to learn more and join future wānanga.

Table 2

Bandootz’s Whiti te Rā Assessment Results

WHITI TE RĀ RESULTS: Bandootz						
Ngā Ara	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Reo Māori	1	1	No change	1	1	No change
Taiao	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Wairua	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Mahi-ā-toi	2	2	No change	2	2	No change
Take pū whānau	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Whakapapa	1	3	+2	1	3	+2

Figure 7

Bandootz’s Pre- and Post-Assessment Forms

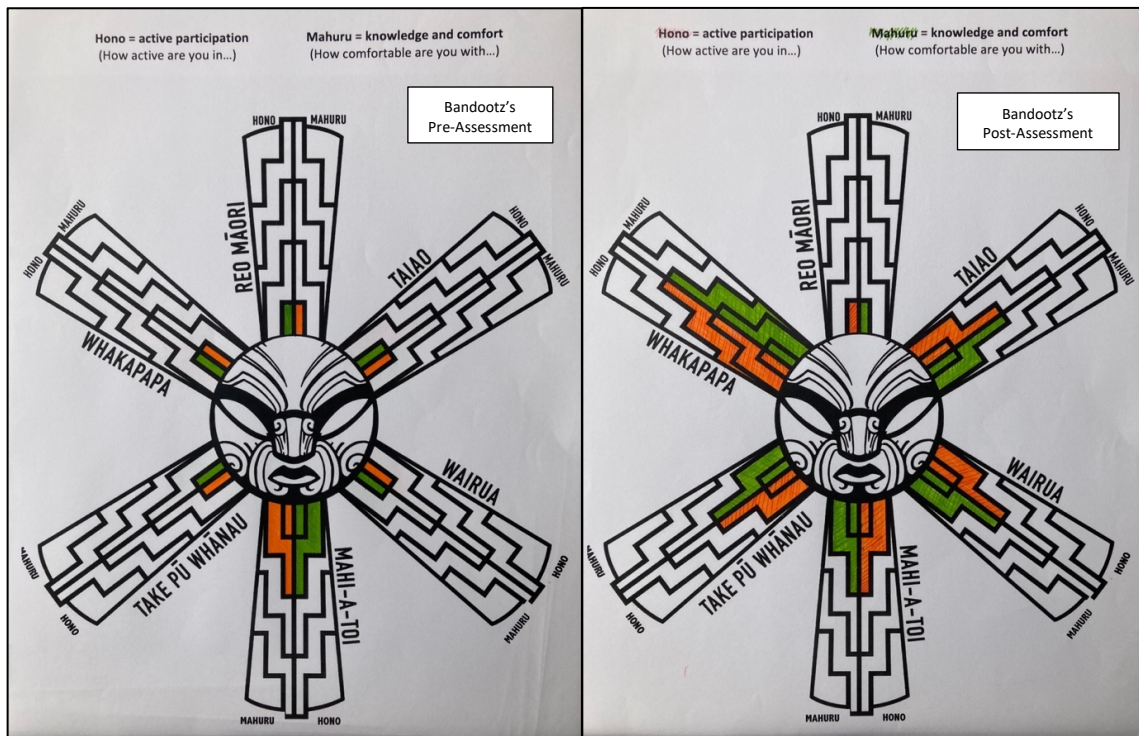


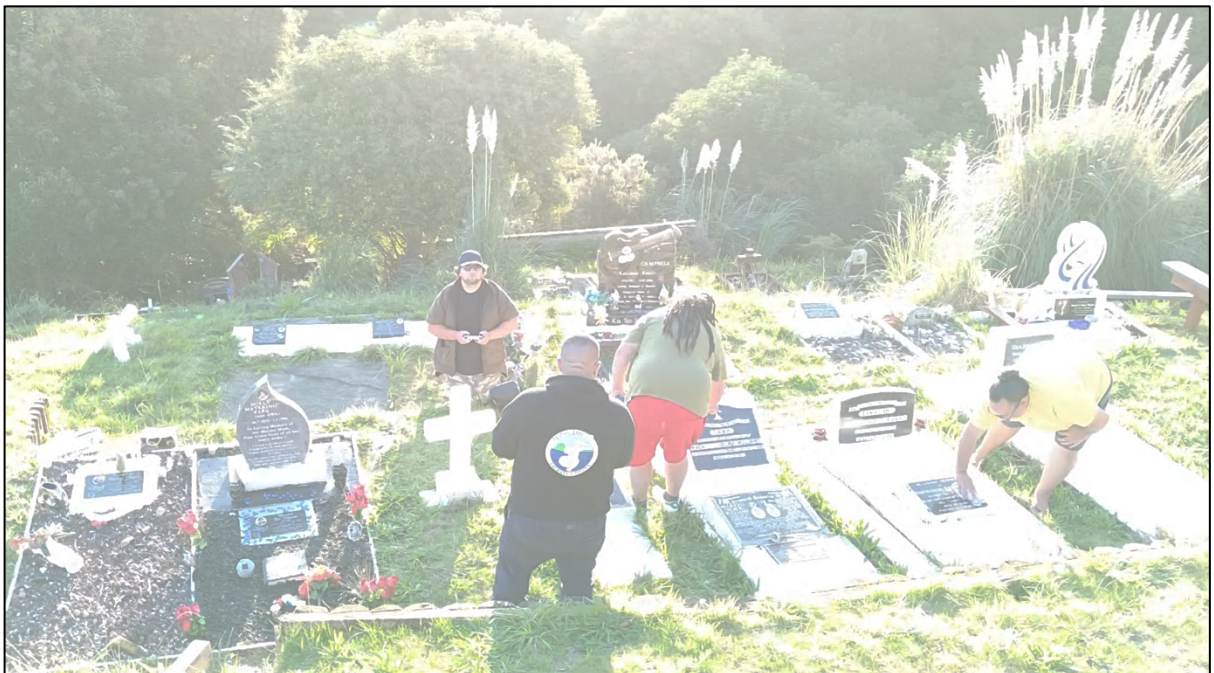
Figure 8

Whānau Reciting Pepeha on Taupiri by our Whānau Plot



Figure 9

Cleaning Whānau Headstones After Pepeha Delivery



Knox

Knox is a 44 year old tāne (male) and has had little to do with Māori language and culture stating minimal exposure at primary school. He had no interest in things Māori at Huntly College and has lived most of his life separated from te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture). As an adult, Knox is not involved with Māori language or culture, yet despite this, he has a fascination for Māori art and is interested in learning about tā moko (Māori tattoos) and whakairo (Māori carvings). He has two children. Knox travelled from Rotorua to Rāhui Pōkeka for every wānanga which is approximately a 4 hour round-trip from his rural residence. He brought his 15 year old son to every wānanga and his 13 year old daughter to the last. Due to the physical demands of Knox's employment, he is physically and mentally exhausted by the end of the work-week. As such, weekends are precious to him as he reenergises himself and spends time with his whānau. The wānanga for this research were held during the weekends yet despite this, Knox was happy to support. In order to attend each wānanga he needed to borrow a friend's car as his own vehicle was not road-worthy. Ka wani kē! (Neat alright!)

Knox's connection to self as a Māori

When invited to be a part of this research, Knox's initial response appeared hesitant or somewhat reserved. However, he relaxed a little once he found out who else was attending, at which point he agreed to take part. It was not until the first wānanga that his reservations became known as he shared with the group:

I haven't had anything to do with Māori. It was never taught to us by Nan or Granddad. Even our parents didn't teach us, but they didn't know either. I don't have any friends, work mates or anyone around me that can speak it so I feel like I'm not a real Māori.

Knox's reflection conveys an element of mamae (sorrow, pain, hurt, wound) brought about by a detachment or disconnection he feels from his culture and language which to him are markers for measuring his identity as a Māori. Without a connection to te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture) this challenges his

view about his identity leaving him to feel like he is ‘not a real Māori’. He continued to share a memory of how not being able to speak Māori was embarrassing for him:

I experienced a time when a group of us went to a marae and there was no one in our group who could speak [whaikōrero – to make a formal speech in Māori]. When they [the tangata whenua – hosts] asked us if anyone would like to say anything, no one did. That was a very awkward moment right there.

Such experiences inadvertently affirm Knox’s own perception of self, further asserting his current belief that he is not a real Māori. Such beliefs are unfruitful and detrimental to his mental health and wellbeing. Therefore, one of the main drivers of these wānanga, in addition to reconnecting my whānau to te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture), was to ensure they understood that such beliefs have origins deeply rooted in the long-term impacts of colonisation and intergenerational trauma. By the end of the wānanga Knox stated:

Going back to the first wānanga when I was less of a Māori or I didn’t feel Māori enough for not having a strong connection to my own culture, now bro, feeling way more harty Māori bro – straight up.

Such comments are indicative of a shift in Knox’s Taha Hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing) as he really connected with the wānanga in a way that has had a positive impact on his self-confidence. This is what Durie (2001) refers to as a flourishing mauri (life force). Knox was really engaged in the kaupapa (research) as he regularly asked questions, demonstrating inquisitiveness and a yearning for clarity and knowledge. When we discussed the whakapapa kōrero (historical narratives) of the Waikato war, it was during these moments when Knox asked no questions at all, rather he stood with a peaceful state of composure deep in thought. What I know of my brother is that in his silence he was listening, contemplating, thinking, processing, learning.

By attending these wānanga Knox was taking steps to defining and reclaiming his own identity which Parker (2000) states is a process involving “searching, learning and unlearning” (as cited in Rameka & Paul-Burke, 2015, p. 265). For my whānau, this was

done by unmasking identities that do not belong to them. Identities that include negative attitudes about self that are then internalised. Identities that have developed and evolved as a direct result of colonial oppression which also interrupted the intergenerational transfer of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge; Rameka & Paul-Burke, 2015).

For Knox, the unlearning was about enabling him to see the world through different eyes by removing the colonial veil that for so long has distorted his vision. Knox's Whiti Te Rā results are testament to his progress as he showed significant changes across Ngā Ara Wairua (Māori spiritual beliefs and practices), Ngā Ara Take Pū Whānau (Māori relational values), and Ngā Ara Whakapapa (intergenerational relationships; see Table 3 and Figure 10). These wānanga enabled Knox, and all my whānau to see their potential as tangata whenua (people of the land), as Māori males, and as leaders within their own whānau (families). When sharing his final thoughts about the wānanga as a whole Knox stated:

When you are around people who can speak it [Māori] and if you don't know it then everything is foreign. So you don't feel like you are a part of being a Māori. I came to these wānanga cos I didn't know anything and I wanted to feel more like a Māori. I want to learn more about where we come from (both sides) and learn about our ancestors. It was wikid what we learnt. I never knew any of that stuff. Learning about the old ways of our ancestors and how the Lake Kopuera got its name and how our marae got its name. Learning this stuff really helps with getting that confidence and to know who we are – straight up.

Knox's reflection highlights his progression from a state of mauri noho (languishing) where he felt disconnected from his language and culture, to a state of mauri oho (activated) where he wants to learn more (Durie, 2001; Reweti et al., 2023). These wānanga provided my whānau with an opportunity to actively participate in te ao Māori (the Māori world) thus creating pathways to realising, developing and/or enhancing their potential. Knox's desire to further his journey with whakapapa (genealogy) and te ao Māori (the Māori world) has been 'activated' as he is beginning to feel more connected and more confident.

Table 3

Knox's Whiti Te Rā Assessment Results

WHITI TE RĀ RESULTS: Knox						
Ngā Ara	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Reo Māori	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Taiao	1	2	+1	1	3	+2
Wairua	1	4	+3	1	4	+3
Mahi-ā-toi	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Take pū whānau	1	3	+2	1	3	+2
Whakapapa	1	3	+2	1	3	+2

Figure 10

Knox's Pre- and Post-Assessment Forms

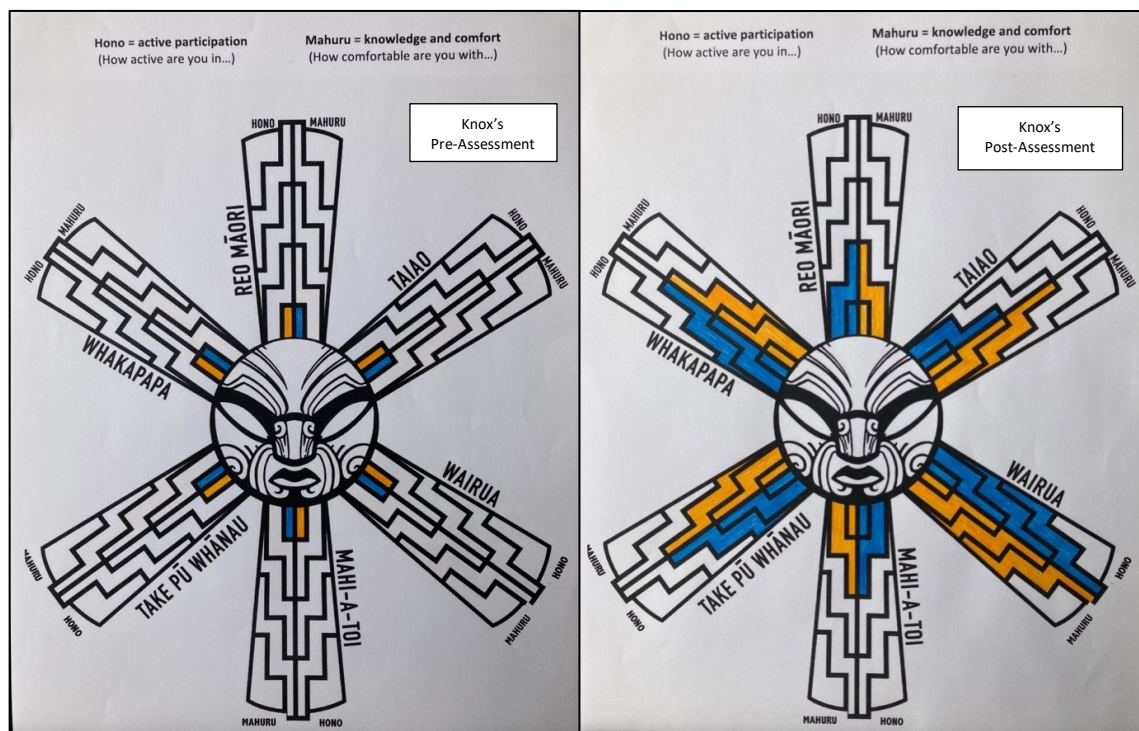


Figure 11

Rangiriri Pā Scene



Note. East view of trenches with tewhatewha depicting original size and depth of trenches with Lake Kopuera in the background

Te Riini

Te Riini is a 47 year old tāne (male) who has had little to do with Māori language and culture having had minimal exposure at primary school and even less at college. As an adult he is interested in learning how to whaikōrero (formal speech) as he no longer wants to wait in the carpark to join another roopu (group) going on to the marae (formal courtyard). Instead, he wants to be able to represent himself and his whānau by having the knowledge and confidence to stand and speak in Māori. Te Riini travelled from Kirikiriroa to Rāhui Pōkeka for each wānanga which is approximately a 90min round trip. He too works long and hard every week and by the weekend is exhausted. However, he made himself available for this kaupapa (research). He has three children and his 10 year old son came to every wānanga including the last, despite being māuiui (unwell). Determined, he attended in spite of his parents disapproval as he wanted to

support the kaupapa (research) to the very end – even if that meant being huddled in a blanket and sleeping the entire time. Ka mau te wehi! (Fantastic!)

Te Riini’s personal reflections

Te Riini stated throughout his life he has had limited cultural involvement with things Māori. At Rotowaro Primary School he remembers being taught a Māori waiata (song) with rolled up newspaper – E Papa Waiari, and has wanted to learn more about Māori ever since. Despite attempting to learn Māori at Huntly College, he found it difficult and struggled to remember what was being taught. After college, he was taught a whaikōrero (formal speech) by our father who was also making attempts to reconnect with his language and culture. My brother was comfortable using this whaikōrero but it was later changed (by our father) to also include an apology for being a learner. Te Riini felt uncomfortable with this change stating that it was not an appropriate format to use in formal settings such as marae (formal courtyards). He stopped using whaikōrero (formal speeches) and stopped learning about things Māori altogether. Years later, he accepted the invite to attend these wānanga.

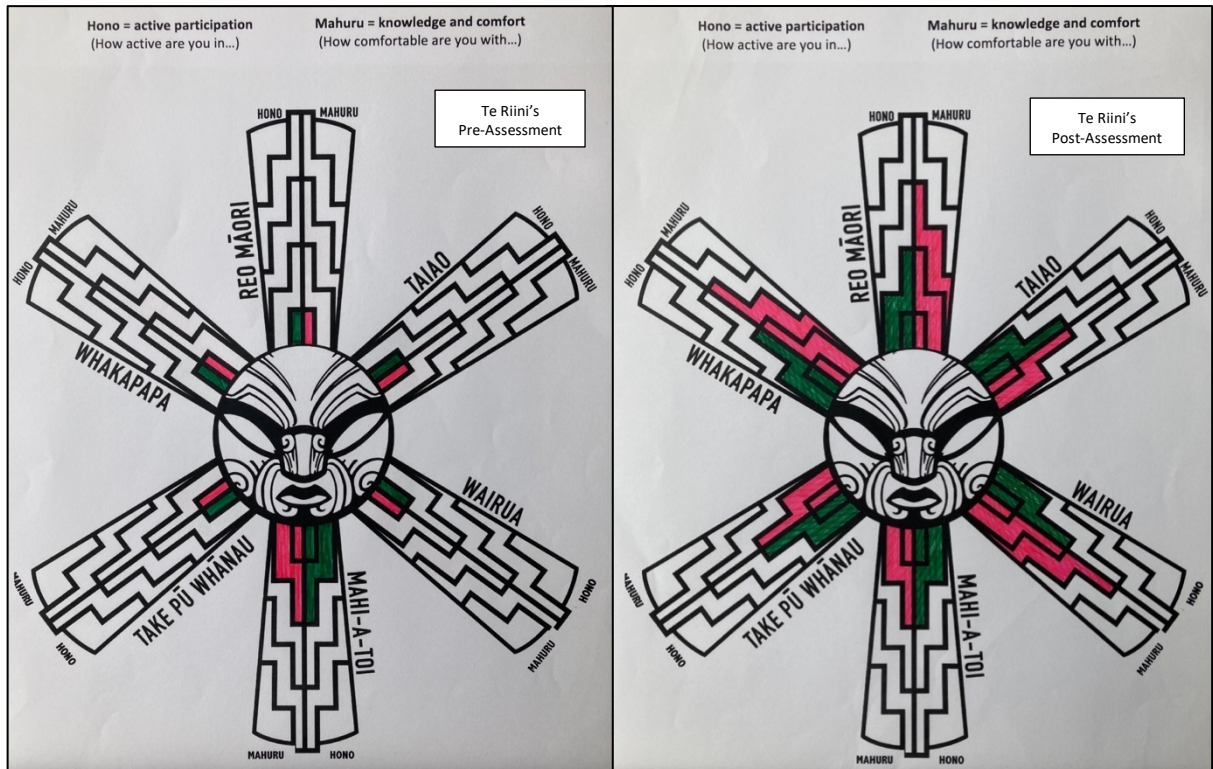
Table 4

Te Riini’s Whiti Te Rā Assessment Results

WHITI TE RĀ RESULTS: Te Riini						
Ngā Ara	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Reo Māori	1	2	+1	1	3	+2
Taiao	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Wairua	1	2	+1	1	3	+2
Mahi-ā-toi	2	2	No change	2	2	No change
Take pū whānau	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Whakapapa	1	2	+1	1	3	+2

Figure 12

Te Riini's Pre- and Post-Assessment Forms



Views about Tāne Ora

I asked my whānau a series of questions pertaining to their views and understandings about Tāne Ora. Responses centred around the physical and psychological aspects of wellbeing as they viewed Tāne Ora as *“being physically fit, visually fit, mentally fit”*, and *“mentally strong”* which they referred to as being *“confident in what you’re doing”* and that *“you’re taking care of yourself and everything around you”*.

To maintain their health and wellbeing they valued *“exercise, eating healthy, going to the gym”*, but more importantly they valued family health as a key component to their own health – *“You’re taking care of your family, just guiding everyone in that right direction. Making sure that you’re looking after your kids”, “Try and take care of the kids as best I can. To get up and get to work so I can make sure*

they have a roof over their head and providing for them...making sure they're alright".

This is a Māori cultural value where the health of an individual is dependent on the health of the collective.

Te Riini gave a specific example of what Tāne Ora meant to him. When asked about the factors that impacted his wellbeing, he referred to a situation that he felt unable to control.

Normally things that are out of your control. Certain things that people are going through that you can't help them out. That really affects me because I feel sad and helpless. Like, when my son was getting bullied at school, I put him in Karate and stuff like that. Because I just want to go and do things the wrong way. I told him to punch the other kid in the head. I tell him the wrong answers. But my partner's response is to just inform the teacher, but what's that going to do. It doesn't get results. So, I'm really worried about my son, and it's my job as a father to look after him, but I don't know what to do.

As a father, his helplessness to intervene and protect his son impacted on Te Riini's mental health, causing him to worry. It also impacted his confidence as a father. He was unsure about how to handle this situation diplomatically and was cautious about not making poor decisions. He was really concerned about the safety and wellbeing of his son which was stressful. He also did not have confidence in the school's ability to intervene and protect his son, so he registered him in self-defence classes.

The following section considers the views and experiences of my whānau as active participants in this research and discusses the key findings of how engaging with their language, culture and land-based activities impacted their lives.

Discussion

The rise of reconnecting to holistic approaches to health to improve wellbeing outcomes for Māori has become increasingly prominent in recent years. Such developments have highlighted the need to introduce traditional Māori concepts, values and practices within whānau, hapū and iwi as vehicles for promoting and

improving Māori health. For instance, Māori cultural concepts such as whanaungatanga (creating and maintaining relationships), a secure cultural identity and mauri ora (wellbeing) are central to Māori health and worthy of further exploration. The present study is informed by, and contributes to this broad development in the discipline of holistic approaches to improving Māori health outcomes. Four tāne participated in three one-day marae-based wānanga that focused on reconnecting them to traditional Māori knowledge and practices. The primary aim was to explore how reconnecting to traditional Māori knowledge and practices would impact these tāne.

Overview

This research had two objectives. Firstly, it aimed to explore the process of reclaiming mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems) with my whānau who currently have limited access to te ao Māori (the Māori world). Using the Whiti Te Rā as a guide informed the design and structure of the wānanga. Each of the six ara or pathways of Whiti Te Rā represented the topics to be explored. The second objective sought to explore the experiences of my whānau reconnecting with te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture). This was done by completing the Whiti Te Rā pre- and post-assessments thus monitoring any changes between the first and last wānanga. Additionally, structured and semi-structured interviews provided a forum for my whānau to share their views and understandings about Tāne Ora and their role as fathers or father figures. The key findings from this research included connection to history, whakapapa and wairua; connection to pepeha and cultural practices; connection to self as a Māori; connection through whanaungatanga; and connection to taiao.

Connection to history, whakapapa and wairua

Rangiriri Pā is a historical landmark that has cultural significance for the people of Waikato-Tainui. For this reason, it was imperative my whānau engage with and establish a connection to the whakapapa kōrero (history) of Rangiriri Pā as it was foundational to understanding our current disconnect from our language and culture.

According to O'Malley (2021), the legacy of the New Zealand Land Wars continues to impact Māori today through the creation of the Native Land Court (which was responsible for stealing Māori land), and the Native Schools Act (which was responsible for stealing Māori language). Imparting this knowledge through whakapapa kōrero (historical narratives) enabled my whānau to understand and appreciate the cultural significance of Rangiriri Pā. Daymon stated that being there in person gave him that “grounding feeling” as he could “feel the wairua of what happened to our people [t]here”. In terms of land-based healing, it occurs on land that is spiritually honoured and respected (Redvers, 2020). Rangiriri Pā is rich with history and as such is considered a place that is spiritually honoured and respected, therefore is viewed as “an active partner in the healing process” (Hanson, 2012, p. 2). By connecting with Rangiriri Pā we are connecting to the history, whakapapa and wairua of not only a moment in time, but a defining moment in our lives as descendants of Waikato.

Connection to pepeha and cultural practices

When Bandootz delivered his pepeha, he was enhancing his understanding of self-identity (Brougham & Harr, 2013). By reciting his pepeha he is reciting a sequence of traditional time markers of who he is, where he comes from and where he exists today. Such cultural understandings are a key component to identity and a sense of belonging which is connected to one's health and wellbeing (Cunningham et al., 2023). In addition, pepeha enabled my whānau to describe how they position themselves within this world as a Māori, as tangata whenua (indigenous) and as descendants of Waikato. Therefore, delivering their pepeha on Taupiri was a creative way of deepening their understanding of the interconnectedness between pepeha, whakapapa, whenua, identity and a sense of belonging. Often Māori lack the environment that supports cultural expression, but it is crucial for the development of a cultural identity (Durie, 2001). From a kaupapa Māori worldview, belonging and identity are interconnected within a holistic framework that positions identity as part of a larger picture of existence (Boulton et al., 2021), “as the self is made meaningful through the web of interpersonal connections between whakapapa ties” (Te Huia, 2015, p. 19).

Connection through whanaungatanga

Another key finding was the concept of whanaungatanga which is referred to as an emotional glue that keeps whānau connected (Ritchie, 1992; Hamley et al, 2022). At the core of whanaungatanga is the ability to nurture and maintain relationships that are founded on shared obligations and understandings (Berryman et al., 2017). To be clear, coming to these wānanga was not an obligation, however, their hectic lives and geographical location made attending these wānanga difficult for most. Therefore, the deciding factor to agree to these wānanga was their aroha and manaaki for me and my research. These cultural values, including whanaungatanga, are what Love (2004) refers to as being fundamental to developing wellbeing for the individual and the whānau.

By uniting for a common purpose, attending these wānanga enabled my whānau to re-connect with each other as they very seldom do. Rekindling and reaffirming those familial connections by way of whanaungatanga was important and impacted positively on their mauri as noted in their engagements with each other. They were happy, they laughed, they told jokes, and shared the latest updates including any hurdles they may be experiencing, thus highlighting the reciprocal nature of relationships. These outward expressions of whanaungatanga occurred throughout the entire wānanga, including during workshops, when having a kai, doing the dishes, cleaning the marae and even through the gesture of sharing a ride. Due to the hectic and demanding lifestyles they each lead, reconnecting with each other is sporadic. Therefore, attending these wānanga facilitated their re-connection with each other, which they truly valued. One whānau commented that the wānanga enabled him to “recharge my batteries”, which according to McLachlan et al., (2021) is representative of a flourishing mauri. These examples of whanaungatanga all highlight the importance and value of relationships within a Māori world and the role they play in fostering a sense of belonging with social groups such as whānau (Greaves et al., 2021). Finally, in addition to whanaungatanga, other cultural concepts such as wairuatanga (spiritual connectedness), whakapapa (lineage), kotahitanga (unity), manaakitanga (hospitality),

and rangatiratanga (sovereignty) all contribute to the health and wellbeing of Māori (Le Grice et al., 2017; Carlson et al., 2016; O'Carroll, 2013; McNatty & Roa, 2002).

Connection to self as a Māori

Research suggests that engaging in traditional spaces, such as marae, has correlations with wellbeing and cultural identity (Lee-Morgan, 2017). Marae connect people to the major tenets of tikanga such as customs, values and beliefs and they also provide spaces where Māori can develop, enhance and maintain their culture and cultural identity (Lee-Morgan et al., 2017). Therefore, our marae played a key role in providing that traditional space for my whānau to engage in and learn about te ao Māori (the Māori world). As previously mentioned, learning the history of how our marae was named had a positive impact on my whānau. Knox stated that “learning that stuff really helps with getting that confidence to know who we are”. What he is talking about here is how knowledge of whakapapa contributes to the development and formation of his cultural identity. In addition to te reo Māori, whakapapa is considered a marker for cultural identity (Lawson-Te Aho; 2010; Durie, 2001). Having lived most of his life disconnected from his language and culture created a void in his cultural identity as he believed he was not a real Māori. By connecting te ao Māori through these wānanga and actively engaging in the activities enabled Knox to slowly fill that void and begin his journey to reconnecting to self as a Māori. In addition, the knowledge gained through learning about the history of our marae evoked in Knox a connection that did not exist before. Seed-Pihama (2017) affirms that “names are a symbol of a deeply personal relationship with ngā atua and with our taiao” (p. 98). As such, learning about whakapapa kōrero is enhancing Knox's connection to his marae which in turn, is contributing to his sense of belonging. These wānanga have had a positive impact on Knox's mental wellbeing as he stated he is “feeling more like a Māori”.

Connection to taiao

Land is a fundamental source of “cultural, spiritual, emotional, physical and social wellbeing” (Mark et al., 2022, p.2). It also provides a foundation for the

development and expression of cultural identity. Through shared narratives such as whakapapa (genealogy), one is able to express their interconnectedness between land and people (Boulton et al., 2021). Engaging with the environment also affirms the interconnectedness between whenua, culture and cultural identity. As such, engagement with the environment has a beneficial impact on mauri as McLachlan et al., (2021) argue that by enhancing mauri, whānau are more likely to engage in wellbeing pathways which has a positive impact on mauri in a reciprocal manner. Engaging with Rangiriri Pā provided my whānau with a different perspective of that space. Te Riini commented that he has a greater appreciation for Rangiriri now because “that lake is not just a lake – it’s Lake Kopuera” and it tells a story about our ancestors. This heightened level of understanding has resulted from what Valentine et al., (2017) refers to as a spiritual connection to the whenua. A connection that was made possible by being there in person as it enabled my whānau to walk in the trenches, take in the sights, and physically connect with the whakairo (carvings) and monuments that tell the story of Rangiriri Pā. Te Riini further stated that connecting with Rangiriri gave him more knowledge about our history so when he identifies himself as a descendant from Tainui, he has a greater appreciation of what that means. What is happening here is a realisation that he not only connects to the whenua by way of whakapapa (lineage), but he is also connected to people past, present and future (Rameka, 2018).

Conclusions

The above narratives offer some insight into the individual and collective experiences of my whānau engaging in these wānanga. They have been exposed to learnings and understandings that have evoked in them deep feelings of aroha and wairua. Engaging in these land-based wānanga was a whānau-centred approach to reconnecting my whānau with their whakapapa, culture and cultural practices. They have shared their stories with me and I have analysed those stories in a way that is both mana- and mauri-enhancing. We now have new narratives within our whānau that views being Māori as positive. This new pūrākau has laid the foundation for a connected whānau which is a step towards realising and embracing our potential to

contribute to ourselves and our mokopuna. Attending these wānanga provided my whānau with the opportunity and space to explore and re-connect with their language and culture thus enabling them to develop and/or enhance their cultural identity by 'Tramping the pathways of our tūpuna – Takahi ngā takahanga o ngā tūpuna'.

Limitations

There were a number of limitations within this research. To begin, recruitment proved difficult as majority of my whānau declined the offer to be a part of this research citing personal reasons. As such, I acknowledge that the sample size is modest. Hosting the wānanga at a marae has its risks as tangihanga (funerals) will always take precedence. Double-bookings are also common therefore wānanga dates were changed a couple of times to allow for these changes. COVID-19 also impacted one of my participants, and due to the modest sample size, it was imperative all whānau were in attendance. This resulted in more date changes. In terms of data, more structured interviews may have been more beneficial as opposed to semi-structured interviews. Finally, the content of the wānanga was dense. Despite being well-intentioned, it may have been overwhelming for my whānau considering the length of the research. In saying that, my whānau felt that the wānanga were beneficial for them and kept wanting to come back for more.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Information Sheet

Information Sheet

“Takahi ngā takahanga o ngā tūpuna” *Tramp the pathways of our ancestors*, by Taniwha

Principal Investigators

Taniwha, University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton. Phone: 027 456 789, Email: ttw5@students.waikato.ac.nz

About the research

Kia ora e te whanaunga. Ko Taniwha tēnei. I am undertaking a Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology (Clinical) at the University of Waikato in Kirikiriroa. I am currently doing a research project considering the role of tāne ora (men’s health) in relation to hapū ora (whānau wellbeing). ‘*Takahi ngā takahanga o ngā tūpuna*’ is part of a larger study, ‘*Raranga, raranga taku takapau: Hapū ora for tamariki*’ which is funded under the ‘*A Better Start – E Tipu Rea*’ theme of the National Science Challenges Fund and has ethical approval. I invite you to contribute your experiences to understanding tāne ora. I am particularly interested in learning what you think tāne ora is for you, what needs to happen within the whānau if one needs to improve tāne ora, and how this contributes to hapū ora.

What you are being asked to do

You are invited to 3 one-day whānau wānanga (like a focus group) which will be held at Kaitumutumu Marae, Huntly. Whānau will come together to share their views, opinions, and/or experiences about tāne ora and what it means to each of you. There will also be a component of sharing mātauranga Māori (Māori cultural knowledge). The wānanga is casual, with time for open discussion and sharing of personal opinions and views. We will use a pūrākau method which involves sharing stories and offering insights into each other’s journeys as tāne Māori. We will also invite you to take part in whānau voice which involves taking photos of how you view tāne ora and wellbeing. All digital images will be confidential and only used with your permission. I plan to interview up to 10 people for this project and intend on having open-ended wānanga and conversations. Your identity and name will be anonymised. No information about you will be disclosed to other parties.

Details of importance

1. Participation is voluntary.
2. Each wānanga will take about 8 hours with breaks between.
3. I hope to record the interview, with your permission.
4. You don’t have to answer all the questions and you can ask me questions.
5. You can leave the kōrero at any time.
6. You can withdraw your information any time after the wānanga, and up to 2 weeks after receiving a transcript by contacting me via email, letter or phone. It is not possible to withdraw after publication.
7. Recordings will be stored in a secured laptop that is password protected with biometric access control.
8. Identifying information will be anonymised.
9. You can access and edit your personal information at any time.
10. We expect to keep the findings for at least 5 years after the findings are published (within 3 years).
11. The risk of harm in participating is minimal. I have support from my supervisor to make sure I am acting safely at all times.

12. This research project will be supervised by Dr Waikaremoana Waitoki (07 856 2889, moana.waitoki@waikato.ac.nz).

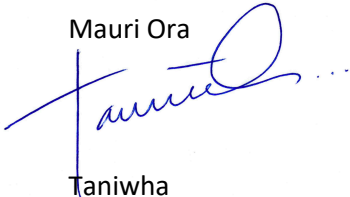
I will provide kai and a koha in appreciation of your time and knowledge. I would like to invite you to help co-design this research project, and to be involved at every stage of the research process so that I can be assured of conducting research that will reflect and hopefully best meet your needs and the needs of your whānau. The research results will be published as part of my master's thesis. You will also receive a summary of the wānanga results, and an electronic copy of the thesis when it is finished.

Will you have to sign anything

If you agree to participate in the research project, you will need to sign a consent form acknowledging that you have been informed about (a) the research project, (b) what you are being asked to do, (c) what will happen to the information, and (d) your right to withdraw (up to 2 weeks after receiving a transcript).

If you wish to be a part of this research project, please let me know at your earliest convenience via email or phone. I look forward to sharing our whānau knowledge and contributing to the health and wellbeing of our whānau.

Mauri Ora



Taniwha
University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton
Phone: 027 456 789
Email: ttw5@students.waikato.ac.nz

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email ethics@waikato.ac.nz, postal address, School of Psychology, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Te Kura Kete Aronui, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.

Appendix 2: Consent Form

Consent Form

Research Project: *“Takahi ngā takahanga o ngā tūpuna” (Tramp the pathways of our ancestors)*

Please complete the following checklist. Tick (✓) the appropriate box for each point.	YES	NO
1. I have read the participant Information Sheet (or it has been read to me) and I understand it.		
2. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether or not to participate in this study.		
3. I am satisfied with the answers I have been given regarding the study and I have a copy of this consent form and information sheet.		
4. I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.		
5. I have the right to decline to participate in any part of the research activity.		
6. I know who to contact if I have any questions about the study in general.		
7. I understand that the information supplied by me could be used in future academic publications.		
8. I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material, which could identify me personally, will be used in any reports on this study.		
9. I wish to receive a copy of the findings.		
10. I wish to view the summary report of my interview.		
11. I have the right to access and correct any personal information about me.		
12. I have been informed about the duration and security of data storage.		

Declaration by participant:

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact Dr Waikaremoana Waitoki in the first instance (07 856 2889, moana.waitoki@waikato.ac.nz), or the convenor of the Human Research Ethics Committee (Associate Professor Nathan Cooper, 07 838 4463, nathan.cooper@waikato.ac.nz).

Participant's name (Please print):

Signature:

Date:

Declaration by member of research team:

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project to the participant, and have answered the participant's questions about it. I believe that the participant understands the study and has given informed consent to participate.

Researcher's name (Please print):

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 3: Ethical Approval

The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Gate 1, Knighton Road
Hamilton, New Zealand

Human Research Ethics Committee
Roger Moltzen
Telephone: +64021658119
Email: humanethics@waikato.ac.nz



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

26 January 2021

Taniwha
School of Psychology
DALPS
By email: ttw5@students.waikato.ac.nz

Dear Taniwha

HREC(Health)2020#91 : “Takahi ngā takahanga o ngā tūpana” (Tramp the pathways of our ancestors)

Thank you for your clear responses to the Committee’s feedback.

We are now pleased to provide formal approval for your project.

Please contact the committee by email (humanethics@waikato.ac.nz) if you wish to make changes to your project as it unfolds, quoting your application number with your future correspondence. Any minor changes or additions to the approved research activities can be handled outside the monthly application cycle.

We wish you all the best with your research.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RM', with a horizontal line underneath.

Emeritus Professor Roger Moltzen MNZM
Chairperson
University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix 4: Programme Outline

Wānanga Tuatahi

- Mihi whakatau (introductions), karakia, whanaungatanga
- The kaupapa/tikanga of these wānanga – what to expect
- Consent Forms and Information Sheet
- Explanation of Te Whare Tapa Whā and Whiti Te Rā pre- and post-assessments
- Kapū tī
- What is Tāne Ora – he aha ō koutou whakaaro
- Wā kai
- Pepeha exercise
- Dissertation presentation – *“Why does my whānau not speak te reo Māori?”*
- Mahi kāinga, agenda for Wānanga Tuarua – whakakapi hui

Wānanga Tuarua

- Karakia, mihi mihi, debrief and reflections of Wānanga Tuatahi
- Revisit Te Whare Tapa Whā
- Understanding karakia
 - What karakia do you know
 - The purpose of karakia
- In-depth kōrero about pepeha
 - Your understandings about pepeha
 - The purpose of doing pepeha
 - Situations where pepeha are delivered – pepeha practice
- Wā kai
- Haerenga – Excursions
 - Rangiriri Pā
 - Waikato Wars
 - Kingitanga movement
 - Taupiri maunga
 - History of Taupiri maunga and burial practices pre-European contact
 - Deliver pepeha
 - Whakapai urupā

Wānanga Tuatoru

- Karakia, mihi mihi, debrief and reflections of Wānanga Tuarua
- Review Te Whare Tapa Whā, Whiti Te Rā
- Wānanga about Tainui Waka – what do you know
- Maramataka – Māori Lunar Calendar
- Mauri Ora Tai Pari
- Complete post-assessments for Whiti Te Rā
- Debrief of all topics covered – questions
- Future directions – where to from here, what you can do on your own
- Whakakapi hui

Appendix 5: He Papa Kupu – Glossary of Māori terms

Kupu Māori	English Intent
Atua	Deities
Hapū	Sub-tribe
Hoki ki te ūkaipō	Return to our origins
Iwi	Tribe
Ka wani kē	Neat alright
Kaiako	Teacher
Kaitiaki	Guardian
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship
Kapa Haka	Cultural group
Karakia	Prayer, incantation
Karanga/Kaikaranga	Ceremonial call/Female caller
Kaumātua	Elders
Kaupapa	Research
Kete mātau ā-wheako	Basket of lived experiences
Kōauau	Flute
Kura Kaupapa Māori	Language Immersion School
Mamae	Grief
Mana Māori Motuhake	Self-determination
Manaaki/Manaakitanga	Respect, hospitality/Generosity and caring for others
Māoritanga	Māori culture
Marae	Ceremonial courtyard
Maramataka	Māori lunar calendar
Mātauranga Māori	Māori cultural knowledge
Mau rākau	Māori martial arts
Maunga	Mountain
Mauri	Life force, vital essence
Mauri noho	Languish, being inactive
Mauri oho	Being alert
Mauri ora	Health and wellbeing
Mihi Whakatau	Formal greeting
Mōteatea	Traditional chants
Ora/Oranga	To be alive/Health
Oriorio	Lullaby
Pā	Fortified village
Pā harakeke	Flax bush
Pākehā	New Zealander of European descent

Kupu Māori	English Intent
Papatūānuku	Earth Mother
Pepeha	Tribal saying
Pōkeka	A rough cape made of undressed flax leaves)
Pou	Post
Pōuri	Sorrow
Pūrākau	Stories
Pūtātara	Conch shell
Rāhui	Temporary prohibition, ban
Rāhui Pōkeka	Huntly
Ranginui	Sky Father
Raranga	Flax weaving
Reo	Language
Riri	Anger
Rito	Centre shoot
Tā moko	Māori tattoo
Taiao	Environment
Tainui waka	Tainui canoe
Tāne Ora	Men's health
Tangata whenua	People of the land
Tangihanga	Funeral
Taonga	Treasure
Tapu	Sacred
Te ao Māori	The Māori world
Te Kohanga Reo	Māori Language Preschool
Te reo Māori	The Māori language
Te reo me ōna tikanga	Māori language and culture
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato	The University of Waikato
Tewhatewha	Long wooden axe-like weapon
Tikanga	Māori principles that inform practice
Tino Rangatiratanga	Self-determination
Toa	Warrior, bold, courage
Tohunga	An expert
Tukutuku	Lattice-work
Tuna	Eel
Tūpāpaku	Deceased
Tupuna/Tūpuna	Ancestor/Ancestors
Uri	Descendant

Kupu Māori	English Intent
Urupā	Burial ground
Waiata	Song, music
Wairua	Spirituality, spirit
Waka	Canoe
Waka Ama	Outrigger canoe
Wānanga	Workshop, discuss, deliberate, consider
Whaikōrero	Formal speech
Whakairo	Carving
Whakamā	Shame
Whakapapa	History, genealogy, lineage
Whakapapa kōrero	Historical narratives
Whanaungatanga	Creating and maintaining relationships
Wharekura	Immersion High School
Wharenuī	Meeting house
Whenua	Land, landscape
Whenua ki te whenua	Ceremonial return of placenta to the earth

Appendix 6: Whiti Te Rā Pre- and Post-Assessment Results – All domains

Ngā Ara Reo Māori						
Participant	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Daymon	2	3	+1	3.5	2	-1.5
Bandootz	1	1	N/C	1	1	N/C
Knox	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Te Riini	1	2	+1	1	3	+2
Ngā Ara Taiao						
Participant	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Daymon	1	2.5	+1.5	1	2.5	+1.5
Bandootz	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Knox	1	2	+1	1	3	+2
Te Riini	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Ngā Ara Wairua						
Participant	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Daymon	0	2.5	+2.5	3	3	N/C
Bandootz	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Knox	1	4	+3	1	4	+3
Te Riini	1	2	+1	1	3	+2
Ngā Ara Mahi-ā-Toi						
Participant	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Daymon	1	2	+1	2	2	N/C
Bandootz	2	2	N/C	2	2	N/C
Knox	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Te Riini	2	2	N/C	2	2	N/C
Ngā Ara Take Pū Whānau						
Participant	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Daymon	1	3.5	+2.5	3	2.5	-0.5
Bandootz	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Knox	1	3	+2	1	3	+2
Te Riini	1	2	+1	1	2	+1
Ngā Ara Whakapapa						
Participant	Pre-Hono	Post-Hono	Results	Pre-Mahuru	Post-Mahuru	Results
Daymon	2	3.5	+1.5	3	2.5	-0.5
Bandootz	1	3	+2	1	3	+2
Knox	1	3	+2	1	3	+2
Te Riini	1	2	+1	1	3	+2

Appendix 7: Diagram outlining the whakapapa of my research

