“Taonga pūoro is more for the wairua and less for your ears”: Māori Perspectives and Experiences of Taonga Pūoro and its Potential as Rongoā.

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Abstract

Taonga pūoro (Māori singing treasures) historically held many functions in everyday Māori life. Colonisation had catastrophic consequences for these taonga (treasures), yet they have seen a continued renaissance for the past 40 years. A growing body of mātauranga (knowledge) exists in contemporary contexts suggesting taonga pūoro can provide a uniquely Māori approach to enhancing healing, hauora (a Māori philosophy of health), and wellbeing. The aim of this Kaupapa Māori rangahau (research) was to explore Māori perspectives and experiences of taonga pūoro and its potential as rongoā (Māori healing). 14 Māori participants contributed their whakaaro (thoughts) through semi-structured interviews and their kōrero (discourse) was analysed using a reflexive approach to thematic analysis. The findings show Māori use the explanatory framework of whakapapa (genealogical principle) to understand taonga pūoro. With this interconnected understanding they had profound healing experiences that were considered cathartic through the release of multi-layered mamae (pain). Most significantly, the healing influenced participants wairua (spirit), the foundational aspect of Māori hauora that may be difficult to attend to in non-Māori healing modalities. Continued processes of colonisation present barriers to taonga pūoro being used as rongoā. However, taonga pūoro was proposed to ultimately heal and overcome these challenges through reconnection to multiple layers of te ao Māori (the Māori world). This research contributes important mātauranga for Māori and mental health practitioners about the therapeutic value taonga pūoro may hold. Māori experienced significant hauora benefits from taonga pūoro in multiple domains, something that is pertinent at this point in history when Māori are experiencing heightened levels of psychological and social distress. This rangahau supports further exploration of the healing practices of tūpuna Māori (Māori ancestors) to assist in overcoming modern hauora challenges.

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Glossary

This glossary provides a list of the kupu Māori (Māori words) used in this thesis. Translations are offered in-text the first time the kupu (word) is used and any subsequent usage is not translated. In Kaupapa Māori Research, efforts to normalise and revitalise te reo Māori are vital and have guided the rationale to not continually provide translations throughout the thesis. This glossary is given with the acknowledgement that alternate translations and interpretations may exist for these kupu.

Aroha	Love, care
Atua	Original ancestor/God that presides over certain domains
Ātua	Plural of Atua
Awa	River
Awhi	Embrace
Hapū	Pregnant or subtribe
Hauora	Māori philosophy of health
Hineahuone	First woman
Hinemoana	Feminine Atua of the ocean
Hinemokemoke	An ocean deity
Hinengaro	Mind, thought
Hine Pū Te Hue	Atua of the gourds
Hinerauamoa	Wife of Tāne, deity of women
Hineraukatauri	Atua of flutes
Hine Te Iwaiwa	Deity of weaving
Hinewai	Deity who personifies light misty rain
Hongi	Pressing of noses
Hue	Gourd
Huna	Guardian of harakeke flax
Hui	Gathering
Iwi	Tribe
Kaimahi	Staff
Kaitiaki	Guardian

Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face to face
Kapa haka	A group based performing art form
Karakia	Incantations
Karanga	Call
Kauri	Tree found in the North Island
Kia tau	Be still, settled
Kiwa	Deity of the ocean
Koha	Offering, gift
Kōhatu	Stone
Koro	Grandfather
Korowai	Cloak
Kuia/Kui	Elder female
Kupu	Word
Kura	School
Mahi	Work
Mahi toi	Art
Māmā	Mother
Mamae	Pain
Mana	Prestige, authority
Mana motuhake	Autonomy
Manawa	Heart
Mana wāhine	A term that encompasses the mana that is inherent to women
Manu	Bird
Māoritanga	Māori culture
Marae	Meeting area of whānau, hapū or iwi
Mataora	Traditional Māori facial tattoo
Matariki	A star cluster signifying the Māori new year
Mātauranga	Knowledge
Mau rākau	Traditional weapon-based art form
Mauri	Life force
Mauri tau	Relaxed, deliberate
Me te hā	And the breath

Mihi	Acknowledge
Mirimiri	Māori massage
Moana	Ocean
Moe	Sleep
Moko kauae	Traditional Māori female chin tattoo
Mokopuna	Grandchildren
Mōteatea	Traditional chanted waiata
Ngahere	Forest
Noa	Māori philosophical concept that denotes an element of normalcy, free of restriction
Oranga	Health, livelihood
Oriori	Traditional lullaby
Oro	Sound, resonance
Pānui	Advertisement
Pāoro	Goddess of echoes
Papa kāinga	Ancestral home
Papatūānuku	Primordial earth mother
Parawhenuamea	Deity of earth waters
Pēpi	Baby
Poi	A ball or weight attached to a tether and used as an art form
Pou	post/dimension
Pounamu	Greenstone
Poutini	Kaitiaki of pounamu
Pōwhiri	Rituals of encounter
Puku	Abdomen
Pūrākau	Ancestral narrative
Rakahore	Deity that personifies rock
Rākau	Tree, wood
Rangahau	Research
Rangatahi	Youth
Rangatira	A person of high rank/esteem
Ranginui	Primordial sky father

Raru	Trouble, problem
Reo	Language, voice
Ritenga	Ritual
Rohe	Region
Romiromi	Māori massage
Rongoā Māori	Māori healing
Rongoā rākau	Traditional plant medicine
Rōpū	Group
Tā	Sir
Tamariki	Children
Tāne	Man, male
Tāne/Tānemahuta	Son of Rangi and Papa, Atua of the forest and its creatures
Tangaroa	Masculine Atua of the ocean
Tangata	Person
Tāngata	Plural of tangata
Tāngata whaiora	Service users
Tāngata whenua	People of the land
Tangihanga	Funeral
Taonga	Māori treasure
Tapu	A Māori philosophical concept denoting an element of restriction
Tautoko	Support
Tāwhirimātea	Masculine Atua of the winds
Te Ao	The realm of light
Te ao Māori	Māori world, Māori worldview
Te ao Mārama	The world of light
Te ao wairua	The wairua realm
Te Pō	The realm of darkness
Te reo	The Māori language
Te Taha Hinengaro	The mental/psychological dimension
Te Taha Tinana	The physical dimension
Te Taha Wairua	The spiritual dimension
Te Taha Whānau	The family/social dimension

Te taiao	The natural environment
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi
Te Waipounamu	The South Island
Te Whare Tapa Whā	The four-sided house
Teina	Younger sibling
Tēnā koe	Hello
Tika	The correct way
Tikanga Māori	Māori cultural practices, traditions, protocols
Tinana	Body
Tino rangatiratanga	Sovereignty
Tohorā	Whale
Tohorā nguru	Nose flute made from the tooth of a whale
Tōhunga	Traditional Māori healer
Tōtara	Tree found throughout Aotearoa
Tuakana	Elder sibling
Tūpuna	Ancestors
Tūtarakauika	Personification of whales
Utu	A concept informing the reciprocity of actions
Wai	Water
Waiata	Song, chant
Wairua	Spirit
Wairuatanga	Spirituality
Waka	Canoe
Waka ama	Outrigger canoeing
Wānanga	Forum
Whakaaro	Thought, opinion
Whakamana	Empowerment
Whakamānawa	Encouragement
Whakamoemiti	To express gratitude, praise, thanks
Whakapapa	Māori philosophical concept outlining the interconnection of all things, genealogy
Whakatangitangi	To play an instrument
Whakataukī	Proverbs

Whakawetewete	A ritual to resolve hurt, conflict, or transgressions between people
Whakawhanaungatanga	Process of building connections
Whānau	Family
Whanaunga	Relatives
Whanaungatanga	Kinship
Whare	House
Wharenui	House
Wheua	Bone
Whenua	Land

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Chapter One: Introduction

This rangahau explores Māori perspectives and experiences of *taonga pūoro* and its potential as *rongoā*. Taonga typically translates to tangible and intangible things that are valued and treasured in te ao Māori (Snowden et al., 2020). Pūoro can translate to music, sound, or to sing (Ryan, 2012). Consequently, this rangahau begins with understanding taonga pūoro as a collective kupu (word) for Māori singing treasures. In this study rongoā Māori refers to traditional Māori healing. Rongoā may often be perceived as rongoā rākau (traditional plant medicine), arguably the most tangible and well-known form of Māori healing (Mark et al., 2019). However, rongoā Māori encompasses a range of practices such as mirimiri (massage), karakia (incantations), and ritenga (rituals) to name a few (Mark et al., 2019; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011). Therefore, this study situates taonga pūoro as having potential as a form of rongoā Māori.

Historically, taonga pūoro are suggested to have played a role in the everyday life of tūpuna Māori (ancestors) with their function being seen in ritenga across their lifespan from conception to death (Beatson, 2003). Alongside their ceremonial uses they held a necessary role to communicate, share knowledge, entertain, forewarn, announce, and signify (Nunns & Thomas, 2014; Rollo, 2013; SOUNZ, 2020; Tamarapa & Tikao, 2017). While taonga pūoro are significantly categorised by these functions in the literature, they also functioned as a form of rongoā Māori (J. Kavanagh, personal communication, November, 2021). Most of the literature that describes their use as rongoā are related to physical healing (Tamarapa, 2015). However, oral, anecdotal, and experiential knowledge indicates taonga pūoro provides healing to other hauora (Māori philosophy of health) dimensions including the realms of wairua (spirit), hinengaro (mind), and tinana (body) (J. Kavanagh, personal communication, March, 2021).

The paucity of literature regarding taonga pūoro as rongoā can be considered an effect of colonisation. Colonisation attempted to reposition taonga pūoro as musical instruments and considered them "rudimentary" and "unevolved" (Best, 1925/2005). This mischaracterisation was likely influenced by the introduction of Christianity. Beatson (2003) suggested Christian missionaries feared the wairua element of taonga pūoro and their ability to connect with metaphysical realms. Arguably, for colonisation to be effective Māori knowledge systems needed to be undermined and replaced (Mikaere, 2013). Unfortunately, this led to the use of taonga pūoro becoming more scarcely used for its range of functions, including as rongoā (Komene, 2009).

While the initial events of colonisation started over 200 years ago, ongoing colonisation processes continue to harm tāngata whenua (people of the land). In the area of mental health, Māori are negatively overrepresented and experience disproportionate rates of mental distress (Browne et al., 2006; Ministry of Health, 2020). These rates are alarming and compounded by a lack of Māori engagement and utilisation of mental health services (Kingi, 2017) due to their lack of alignment with Māori values and beliefs about hauora (Backhouse-Smith, 2020; Pomare, 2015). Conversely, Māori who do engage with services are likely to receive inequitable treatment believed to be a consequence of structural discrimination (McLeod et al., 2017; Rolleston et al., 2020; Wharewera-Mika et al., 2016).

Durie (1999) and Kingi (2017) have argued for Māori solutions to overcome these issues and work towards mental health equity. At present, mainstream mental health services in Aotearoa have been founded on Western ideologies and conceptualisations of health (Love, 2003), creating significant barriers to incorporating rongoā Māori approaches into practice.

The practice of psychology in Aotearoa has seen developments towards a more genuine commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi), the nation's founding document that guarantees equitable hauora for Māori (Came et al., 2019). This is seen in the core competencies guidelines (New Zealand Psychologists Board, 2018); knowledge of Māori models of hauora (Durie, 1998); culturally adapted interventions (Bennett, 2009); practices by Indigenous Māori psychologists that draw from Māori worldviews and knowledges (Waitoki & Levy, 2016); processes of engagement, assessment, and formulation (Pitama et al., 2017); and the incorporation of karakia (Bennett, 2009; Taitimu, 2016), a form of rongoā Māori. Other forms of rongoā Māori are yet to be widely included in practice. Yet, Māori as tāngata whenua and as Tiriti (Treaty) partners have the right to self-determination for their own hauora and wellbeing (Reid & Robson, 2007), and this is pertinent to mental health. Taonga pūoro potentially have a role to play as a uniquely Māori form of healing that may assist not only a person's psychological health, but their overall wellbeing. Therefore, it is advantageous to explore this potential in a Kaupapa Māori Research project.

This rangahau takes a Kaupapa Māori approach to seek Māori perspectives and experiences of taonga pūoro and its potential as rongoā Māori. The following questions were constructed to seek this knowledge:

1. How do Māori understand taonga pūoro?
2. What are Māori experiences of taonga pūoro as rongoā?
3. How is taonga pūoro beneficial to hauora?

Chapter one has introduced and provided a rationale for the study and an overview of the chapters to follow. *Chapter two* provides a comprehensive literature review encompassing

sociohistorical background, the contemporary state of Māori mental health, traditional Māori healing practices, and discussion of taonga pūoro. The final section of the literature review examines the potential of taonga pūoro as rongoā through the framework of Te Whare Tapa Whā (the four-sided house). *Chapter three* details the methodology of this rangahau providing an overview of Kaupapa Māori Research, ethics, and the research process. It ends with describing reflexive thematic analysis, the method used to analyse the data. *Chapter four* shares the seven themes constructed through analysis. *Chapter five* provides a discussion and interpretation of the findings in relation to existing literature. This chapter concludes with the strengths, limitations, future recommendations, and clinical practice implications that come from this rangahau. Following this is a concluding statement about the research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The Beginning

> According to Te Rangikāheke, a scholar of Te Arawa (North Island iwi) descent, in the beginning the world existed in an unending night. Ranginui or Rangi, the primordial sky father, and Papatūānuku or Papa, the primordial earth mother, were locked closely in embrace for protection against the coldness of the universe. Rangi and Papa's children were restricted between their parents' embrace, huddled together in the darkness between earth and sky. The children longed for night and day and spent a long time debating the correct tikanga (Māori cultural practices, traditions, protocols) to follow in order to separate their parents. A brother, Tū-mata-uenga, suggested killing them. Another brother Tānemahuta (also known as Tāne) proposed separating them, allowing Papatūānuku to exist beneath them as a mother, and their father to live above as a stranger. All the siblings except Tāwhirimātea agreed on this and Tāne's brothers each took turns trying to separate the parents and failing. Tāne eventually succeeded in pushing their parents apart, allowing light to flood into the cosmos (Reilly, 2018).

Multiple versions of Māori creation narratives exist between iwi (tribes) and hapū (subtribes), although Marsden (2003) advised these narratives tend to hold common themes. Perhaps the most well-known creation pūrākau (ancestral narrative) is the one shared above by Te Rangikāheke who recorded his written version in 1849 (Reilly, 2018). Māori creation narratives are essential to te ao Māori (the Māori world). They provide mātauranga (knowledge) that underpins Māori values and belief systems allowing a framework to govern practices and norms (Phillips et al., 2016). A fundamental aspect from these cosmological narratives is the interwoven nature of the universe. This is conceptualised in the genealogical

principle of *whakapapa*. Whakapapa provides order to the world by establishing the interconnectivity between the creation of the universe and all that resides within it as deriving from common ancestors (Hikuroa, 2017).

Māori tūpuna (ancestors), guided by their complex knowledge of the cosmos and te taiao (the natural world), navigated and voyaged to Aotearoa across the vast Pacific Ocean (Harris et al., 2013). Upon arrival they were greeted by an abundant land and environment that had remained isolated for the preceding eighty million years following the separation of Gondwanaland (Salmond, 1991). Many waka (canoes) made the arduous expedition to Aotearoa and the descendants of these journeys make up various iwi around the country.

The culture of our tūpuna was one defined by kinship, expressed via their relationships with the spiritual world, physical world, and other people (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011). The values at the heart of pre-colonial Māori culture and society informed *tikanga* (Māori cultural practices, traditions, and protocols). Duncan and Rewi (2018) proposed six primary concepts that underpin tikanga: mana (prestige, authority), mauri (life force), tapu (sacred), noa (balanced, free of restriction), wairua (spirit, soul) and utu (a concept informing the reciprocity of actions). Tikanga, notably tapu and noa, informed the "sophisticated system of public health" that Māori society utilised prior to European contact (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p. 212). Therefore, traditional Māori healing operated within the wider philosophical contexts of tapu and noa.

Sociohistorical Background

Māori tūpuna were the original tāngata whenua of Aotearoa and it took several hundred years until others arrived on its shores. Māori had initial contact with Europeans in the 1600s, and

again in 1769 when Captain James Cook made landfall (Anderson et al., 2015). Initial foreign colonists were made up of traders, whalers, and sealers who respected Māori control and forged a reciprocal relationship based on economic advantage (Orange, 2021). For example, Orange (2021) proposed Māori supplied land, food, water, and labour to the Europeans in exchange for European-made items such as tools, nails, and hooks. The nature of relations between Māori and settlers shifted following the arrival of Christian missionaries in 1814. Although missionaries contributed agricultural technologies and assisted Māori to create a written version of te reo (the language), they also brought Christian and Victorian views of morality, some of which were at odds with Māori beliefs, values, and mātauranga, and sought to impose these on the tāngata whenua (Cram, 2009).

A formal relationship between tāngata whenua and the Crown was established in the constitutional document He Wakaputanga o te Rangatiraranga o Nu Tirene in 1835 (O'Malley, 2017). Broadly, this declaration asserted the independence of Nu Tirene (Aotearoa) and was signed by rangatira (person of high rank/esteem) from various iwi and hapū throughout Aotearoa. This group would hold sovereignty, authority, and power of the land and in return provide friendship and protection towards British subjects and deem King William IV the parent and protector from all attempts upon the States independence (O'Malley, 2017). Growing numbers of British settlers, concerns around the colonising efforts of the New Zealand Company, and potential threats to trade led to the Crown seeking the establishment of a British Government in Aotearoa by way of a Treaty five years later (Orange, 2021). Orange (2021) argued Māori of the time were concerned about the increasing "land-jobbing" (p. 195) of settlers which may have contributed to their motivation to sign a treaty. Te Tiriti o Waitangi was signed in 1840 between Māori rangatira and the British Crown and is widely considered the nation's founding document today (Mutu, 2018).

Broadly, te Tiriti articles reveal three overarching objectives: the cessation of Māori sovereignty, the Crown's control of land matters, and equality in law and order for tāngata whenua and settlers (Waitangi Tribunal, 2016).

Despite the Crown's self-interested concerns over unmanaged colonisation prior to te Tiriti, managed and "legal" colonisation continued to be detrimental for Māori. Mutu (2019) argued British immigrants were emboldened by the Doctrine of Discovery to usurp Māori at every turn. The Doctrine of Discovery is a framework suggesting when Christian Europeans "discovered" lands, they automatically gained property rights and sovereignty despite the lands already being occupied by Indigenous peoples (Miller & Ruru, 2008). Led by this notion, Mikaere (2013) explained early British colonisers viewed Māori collectivism as "beastly communism" (p. 129); our mātauranga, tikanga, and reo (language) as inferior; our gender balance as flawed; and our spirituality as heathen. Processes to break down, destroy, and replace these distinctly Māori characteristics were executed (Mutu, 2018). On one hand, these processes had a destabilising effect on Māori in a multitude of ways including the dispossession, theft, and removal of land, language, knowledge, and traditions. Conversely, a constant Māori resistance to colonising efforts has been present to varying degrees across history that offered protection to aspects of Māoritanga (Māori culture) (Harris, 2015).

Colonisation has deep roots throughout global history and is a commonality shared by many Indigenous groups. Following initial settler contact, Indigenous peoples typically saw their populations devastated by the dramatic influence of foreign diseases, weapons, and warfare (United Nations, 2018). Indigenous knowledges and ways of being were also devastated through their systematic suppression, removal, and outlawing, creating immense and compounded disadvantages (Mutu, 2018). Indigenous peoples that have experienced

colonisation tend to have shorter life expectancies than non-Indigenous (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2020; Ministry of Health, 2018; Tjepkema et al., 2019). This may intensify grief as Indigenous elders are often the bearers of critical group knowledge (Hokowhitu et al., 2020). When the knowledge of elders is diminished or subjugated through assimilation processes, such as the suppression of reo, tikanga and mātauranga in education settings, it cannot be passed down. This significantly impairs the ability for traditional knowledges practices to flourish.

Alongside reduced life expectancies Indigenous peoples are considerably burdened by disproportionate rates of physical and mental illness (Gracey & King, 2009; Mitchell et al., 2019), suicide (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020; Herne et al., 2014; Lawson-Te Aho & Liu, 2010), addictions (Weatherall et al., 2020), and find themselves socially and economically disadvantaged and marginalised (Mitrou et al., 2014).

Looking locally, the disparities between Māori and non-Māori mental health have been increasing since the 1970s following the period of urbanisation (Gassin, 2019). Kingi (2017) highlighted the dramatic increase of Māori mental health inpatient admissions with Māori being infrequent users of psychiatric facilities prior to 1975. However, over the course of the next ten year the rates of Māori mental health admissions were two to three times more than non-Māori. Various factors have played a role in this upward trend. Beagehole and Beagehole (1946) made an early proposal that colonisation could have devastating effects through the destruction of the psychological security that comes from the traditional iwi, hapū, and whānau units. Kingi (2017) reinforced this by suggesting urbanisation led to cultural alienation and isolation from traditional protective aspects of te ao Māori including cultural practices, knowledges, language, and whenua (land). The vestiges of colonisation are

exacerbated by trauma, grief, and loss, limiting Indigenous peoples' ability to participate in the societies they now find themselves within (Dale et al., 2019).

Colonisation altered the Māori health trajectory. In the early 1800s Māori health was described positively and suggested a physically robust and resilient people (Kingi, 2017). However, by the late 1800s questions were raised whether Māori would see the turn of the century due to population decline following the introduction of infectious diseases that settlers with previous exposure were more resilient too (Newman, 1882, as cited in Kingi, 2017). This trend of health inequity has continued since the 1800s and is reflected in health disparities today (Baxter, 2008; Rolleston et al., 2020).

In recent years Te Rau Hinengaro: The New Zealand Mental Health Survey was seminal to advancing understandings of the modern state of affairs for Māori mental health (Browne et al., 2006). The survey confirmed what many suspected, that Māori continued to experience disproportionately high rates of mental illness. 2595 Māori participated in the survey with findings suggesting 50.7% experienced mental illness within their lifetime and 29.5% in the preceding year (Baxter et al., 2006). More recent statistics propose Māori mental health has indeed worsened since Te Rau Hinengaro. From 2006 to 2020 the rate of Māori experiencing psychological distress in the prior 4 weeks increased from 10.9% to 13.6%, and Māori with diagnoses of a mood or anxiety disorder swelled from 11.9% to 22.5% (Ministry of Health, 2020).

Several theories for the high prevalence rates exist, varying from obvious assumptions to the more subtle and insidious. Both Rolleston et al. (2020) and Williams et al. (2018) proposed the elevated statistics are due to structural discrimination. When mental health services are

not culturally appropriate, a barrier to engagement and utilisation emerges. Māori engagement with mental health services is soberingly low with a mere 32.5% of Māori participants in Te Rau Hinengaro who experienced mental illness in the preceding year accessing mental health services (Kingi, 2017). The 32.5% of Māori tāngata whaiora who did engage with services are likely to have experienced inequitable treatment (Rolleston et al., 2020).

Various studies support the argument that Māori experience differential treatment in Aotearoa's mental health systems. For instance, McLeod et al. (2017) found Māori admitted to mental health inpatient units are 39% more likely than non-Māori to experience seclusion while Wharewera-Mika et al. (2016) concluded Māori perceptions of seclusion were more punitive. One unnamed DHB (District Health Board) in Shalev's (2020) recent report on seclusion and restraint for the New Zealand Human Rights Commission revealed restraints were used 358 times between September 2019 and February 2020 with Māori making up 42% of this figure however, Māori only make up 16% of the population in Aotearoa. Other statistics from 2019 show Māori were 3.8 times more likely to be subject to a community treatment order and 3.6 times more likely to be subject to an inpatient treatment order than non-Māori (Ministry of Health, 2021). Approximately half of all Māori tāngata whaiora were 25 years or younger and 79% under community treatment orders were living in Aotearoa's most deprived socioeconomic areas (Ministry of Health, 2021). Many Māori need not look at the statistics to intimately know these disparities in their whānau, hapū and iwi.

Gassin's (2019) report for the Waitangi Tribunal (WAI 2575 – the Health Services and Outcomes Kaupapa Inquiry) identified numerous service-related contributing factors including limited availability of services for tāngata with mild to moderate mental health

issues; accessibility to services; cost; Māori economic status; the fragmented nature of current health systems; geographical position and disparities in urban/rural mental health service access; transport and telecommunications; stigma, fear of coercion, punishment, or losing their children; and health literacy. Findings from He Ara Oranga: Report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction (New Zealand Government, 2018) show that many Māori believe the current mental health services, policies, and strategies lack a genuine Tiriti partnership between the Crown and Māori. Thus, Māori experience mental health services that reflect a colonised worldview and result in a lack of respect for cultural identity and reinforce trauma. Consequently, as with most mental health issues there is arguably a complex interplay of contributing factors as to the concerning Māori mental health statistics.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi has an important role to play in overcoming these inequities. However, two written versions of this document exist, one in Māori and one in English. Differences in these texts has led to variations in understanding of its meaning. To overcome this, it is frequently the principles the document embodies that are referred to as opposed to the literal words (Waitangi Tribunal, 2001). The most common articulation of these principles is the "three p's" – partnership, participation, and protection (Kingi, 2006). Despite the proliferation of the three p's in various pieces of health legislation (for example, the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and He Korowai Oranga 2002), the recent Waitangi Tribunal Hauora Report (WAI 2575, 2019) highlighted these documents insufficiently reflect, and inadequately give effect to, te Tiriti and its genuine principles. Consequently, the report recommended the Crown's outdated articulation of te Tiriti principles as the three p's needed to be reformed. The Hauora Report recommended the following be considered as Tiriti principles within Aotearoa's primary health care systems going forward (pp. 163-164):

- *Guaranteed tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination) – allowing Māori mana motuhake (autonomy) and self-determination in all aspects of the primary health care systems design, delivery and monitoring.
- *Equity* – a genuine commitment by the Crown to achieving equitable health and outcomes for Māori.
- *Active protection* – ensuring the Crown acts to its fullest ability to achieve health outcome equity for Māori.
- *Options* – a requirement of the Crown to adequately provide for and resource Kaupapa Māori primary health services. Moreover, the Crown is required to ensure these services are delivered in a culturally appropriate way which supports and recognises the expression of hauora Māori care models.
- *Partnership* – the Crown and Māori are required to work in partnership. This should be reflected in the design, delivery, monitoring, and governance of primary health services. Furthermore, Māori are required to be co-designers, alongside the Crown, of the primary health system for Māori.

Other recommendations of the Hauora Report (Waitangi Tribunal, 2019) have already informed legislation through the enaction of the new independent Māori Health Authority. The principles articulated above will arguably set a new precedent for the Crown's obligations to Māori in relation to te Tiriti and hauora and assist in ameliorating the devastation colonisation has had for Māori mental health.

Te Whare Tapa Whā

The statistics suggest Māori aspirations for hauora post-colonisation have been positioned below non-Māori interests to entrench preventable health and social inequities. Moewaka-Barnes and McCreanor (2019) distinguish this as a "relational pathway" (p. 22) where settler populations have flourished through the denigration of Māori wellbeing. Aotearoa's national health systems and practices were founded on Western biomedical models of health that have largely benefitted Pākehā New Zealanders (Reid & Robson, 2007). These approaches are centred on the belief of universality yet, the one-size-fits-all approach to health is lacking efficacy for Māori. Durie (1999) and Kingi (2017) encourage exploration of innovative and uniquely Māori solutions to achieve health equality, equity, and to meet the obligations of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

When contemplating potential strategies to enhance Māori mental wellbeing it is essential to appreciate our unique conceptualisations of *hauora*. Hauora is a holistic philosophy of health and wellbeing deriving from Mātauranga Māori (Te One & Clifford, 2021). Moewaka Barnes and McCreanor (2019) suggest it is a "dynamic and unified system" (p. 28) that is underpinned by Māori beliefs about interconnectedness. Many Māori have long understood the interconnected nature of hauora although, it was not until the 1980s that models expressing this philosophy emerged in national discourse. Arguably the most recognised conceptualisation is Tā (Sir) Mason Durie's (1998) *Te Whare Tapa Whā* (the four-sided house). Te Whare Tapa Whā is a contemporary model encompassing four dimensions: *Te Taha Tinana* (the physical dimension), *Te Taha Whānau* (the family/social dimension), *Te Taha Hinengaro* (the psychological/mental dimension), and *Te Taha Wairua* (the spiritual dimension). The four dimensions represent walls of a whare (house) and when the four walls are functioning well the whare is strong. Subsequently, if one dimension is compromised the entire whare is impacted. Durie (1998) emphasised Māori generally consider Te Taha Wairua

the most essential dimension, reflecting Māori ontology. This claim continues to be supported by research today (Lindsay et al., 2020; NiaNia et al., 2017; Valentine, 2009; Valentine et al., 2017).

Te Whare Tapa Whā exemplifies the variation in philosophies of health between cultures. Hence, a universal approach to health is insufficient. For the discipline of psychology, international evidence suggests the inclusion of culture is essential if psychological practice with Indigenous populations is to be effective (Atdjian & Vega, 2005). Despite this, philosophies and approaches to mental health in Aotearoa have derived from Western cultures (Durie, 2017). For example, Western Academic Scientific Psychology (WASP), which underpins psychology in Aotearoa (Groot et al., 2018). Historically WASP has invalidated other knowledge systems and held Western values such as universalism and individualism at its core (Levy & Waitoki, 2015). This is concerning as 96% of samples in top psychological journals between 2003 and 2007 were from Western Educated Rich Industrialised Democratic (WEIRD) groups who comprise only 12% of the world's population (Henrich et al., 2010). A majority of WASP knowledge is therefore culture-bound and inadequately applied to Indigenous and diverse groups. Māori have well-developed knowledge systems of hauora that need to be reflected in mental health services (Came et al., 2020). Consequently, it is useful to turn towards ancestral Māori practices to explore their potential to contribute to Māori hauora going forward.

Traditional Approaches to Hauora

Indigenous peoples worldwide have long utilised ancient, holistic, and complex healing practices. These distinctive practices are informed by unique ontological, epistemological, cosmological, and cultural perspectives (Williams et al., 2011). Gone (2013) concluded

traditional healing modalities are most efficacious for assisting Indigenous First Nations peoples as they possess inherent potency through centuries of pre-colonial refinement. Akin to other Indigenous populations, Māori healing systems and knowledge developed over several thousands of years informed through cosmological beliefs. Through Māori ancestors kinship with te taiao (the environment) healing approaches were shaped, tested, and refined in what we may think of as early forms of Kaupapa Māori Research. The original kaitiaki (guardians) and specialists of Māori healing knowledge were known as *Tohunga*.

Tohunga

Tohunga were highly regarded authorities amongst their hapū and whānau. They were considered authorities and mediators between the physical and spiritual realms and as such, highly tapu (Jones, 2000; Rollo, 2013). Timu-Parata (2009) explains Tohunga practices were typically wairua-focused, aligning with enduring beliefs of the fundamentality of wairua to wellbeing. In the early 1900s national media began reporting sensationalistic stories about Tohunga instilling doubt and criticism of traditional healing in the public domain (Bennett & Liu, 2018). Following this, the Crown enacted the 1907 Tohunga Suppression Act criminalising, suppressing and undermining Māori healing practices and medicines, many of which involved wairua elements (or from the Crown's perspective, supernatural elements). Christianity had a clear influence on this legislation, as settlers and missionaries feared spiritual aspects of Māori life, referring to them as "puerile" (Grey, 1956). Conversion of Māori to Christianity was considered a corequisite to colonisation thus, assimilating Māori into this belief system required the rejection of traditional beliefs and practices. Prominent Māori academics, doctors and politicians of the time believed outlawing tohunga was in the best interests of Māori (King, 1983). This opinion may have been informed by traditional

healing modalities inability to fight imported infectious diseases (Durie, 1998; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011).

The legislation displaced and destroyed vital healing knowledge, and although it was repealed in 1962 its legacy continues today. Durie (1998) designated it the "greatest blow" to Māori hauora. Similarly, Bennett and Liu (2018) determined it had catastrophic consequences on mātauranga Māori. Following its abolishment there was likely trepidation surrounding Tohunga, pushing their practice further underground. Tohunga were potentially equally hesitant to practice publicly for fear of further recrimination. Despite the devastating impact of the Act, Māori healing knowledges, beliefs, and practices survived, many of which have experienced increased revival in recent decades. These diverse therapeutic practices include but are not limited to: *rongoā rākau* (Māori healing using plants), *kapa haka* (a group based performing art form), *karakia* (incantations), *waiata* (songs, chants), and *taonga pūoro* (Rollo, 2013). Revitalisation of these practices is found throughout Aotearoa and there is a sense within the zeitgeist that many Māori are eager to utilise these approaches (Ahuriri-Driscoll & Boulton, 2019).

Rongoā Rākau

One traditional healing modality becoming more widely used is rongoā rākau. Aotearoa's Indigenous flora is some of the most diverse and unique in the world, likely due to our isolated geographical position. A large proportion of this flora is endemic and viewed by Māori as taonga possessing beneficial qualities (Koia & Shepherd, 2020). Referred to as rongoā rākau, this ancient healing modality incorporates Māori customs and values. Not solely a treatment for physical ill-health, the primary goal of rongoā rākau is to restore and enhance the mauri and vitality of the tāngata and the whenua (Kerridge, 2016; Mark et al.,

2019). This belief is echoed by other practitioners who advised their key focus is on stimulating and supporting areas of the body to enhance holistic healing (Koia & Shepherd, 2020). Rongoā rākau reflects the interconnected nature of Durie's (1998) Te Whare Tapa Whā and the foundational concept of whakapapa, as we are linked to te taiao including rākau through shared whakapapa (Wikaire, 2020).

The relationship between rongoā rākau practitioners and the Crown is precarious. The 1981 Medicines Act prohibited rongoā practitioners from providing traditional plant remedies unless they were classified as an approved medicine (Kerridge, 2016). Contemporary legislation aimed to provide new standards in the form of Tikanga ā-Rongoā (Ministry of Health, 2014). Well-known rongoā practitioner Donna Kerridge (2016) argued the documents development ignored the advice of rongoā rākau experts and the result is an outline of rongoā Māori through a Ministry of Health lens, rather than a Māori lens. Tikanga ā-Rongoā embodies the tension of traditional Māori healing existing in a colonised reality where conflicting perspectives between Māori and non-Māori best practices exist (New Zealand Government, 2018).

According to Ahuriri-Driscoll et al. (2012) contemporary rongoā practitioners are concerned about their practices being exposed or inappropriately scrutinised by those from a positivist paradigm who may question its validity and reliability. Subsequently, their research focused on outcomes of healing, rather than practices used. These findings echo Durie's (2009) evaluation of traditional Māori healing practitioners being hesitant of going public for fear of ridicule, recrimination, or being constrained by outside regulatory bodies. Currently there is no evidence suggesting how mainstream health organisations use rongoā rākau. A recent survey of Waitemata DHB staff (n=1,181) found less than half of participants had an

understanding of rongoā yet, one third believed it should have a place within the DHB (Koea & Mark, 2020). These findings indicate knowledge of rongoā is lacking overall, however there is a notable minority presence who perceive it as a valid healing approach to work alongside medical practices. Recently, the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC, 2021) has offered a pathway for rongoā Māori healers and practitioners to allow ACC clients access to their services through the social rehabilitation category. This pathway has been guided by the definition of rongoā Māori from the Waitangi Tribunal's Ko Aotearoa Tēnei report (WAI 262, 2011) that is inclusive of rongoā rākau, mirimiri, whitiwhitikōrero, and karakia. As of September 2021, it is reported that ACC has approved rongoā Māori for 1,190 claims (Waikato, 2021).

Kapa Haka

Perhaps rongoā rākau is the most well-known traditional Māori healing practice. However, another practice offering therapeutic benefits is kapa haka. Kapa haka is a group based performing arts form that has been described as "the embodiment of what it is to be Māori" (Pihama et al., 2014, p. 17). The physiological benefits of kapa haka are apparent through its use of movement and coordination. Additionally, it offers significant psychological, relational, and wairua benefits. These include a strengthened sense of individual and group identity, discipline, enhanced mood, controlled expression of emotion, acceptance, confidence, safety, whanaungatanga (kinship), and support (Hollands et al., 2015; Kāretu, 1993; Paenga, 2008; Pettersen, 2007).

A case study of Te Pao a Tahu, a Kāi Tahu (iwi in Te Waipounamu/the South Island) kapa haka based in Ōtautahi (Christchurch), found two guiding philosophies within their rōpū (group): whanaungatanga and manaakitanga (Thompson et al., 2017). Whanaungatanga

allowed Māori from other iwi to collaborate with Kāi Tahu helping to develop their sense of belonging in the rōpū, which was considered important as many Māori live outside their ancestral area. Furthermore, the case study demonstrated manaakitanga assisted in minimising barriers to participation. For example, all whānau were welcome to attend and childcare was provided. Tauroa (1984) proposed communities benefit from the presence of whanaungatanga and kapa haka facilitates this through its collectivism, unity, shared responsibility, and foundations of support and aroha (love, care). Similarly, Pihama et al. (2014) argued kapa haka does not only affect the wellbeing of the participants, but also the audience whose emotions are evoked through the wairua, passion, and communication given by the performers.

The Vocal Traditions – Karakia and Waiata

The vocal traditions of karakia and waiata similarly hold deep healing abilities. Karakia is an oral tradition that might be interpreted as incantations, prayers, rites, ritual words, recitations, and invocations (Rewi, 2010). Rewi (2010) suggests ontologically, karakia fall into various categories. For example, karakia may be dedicatory, esoteric, and celestial when a person petitions Ātua. Such approaches indicate the potential of karakia as an intermediary between the physical and spiritual realms. Arguably karakia became more focused on īnoi or request following colonisation and the new adherence to Christianity among some Māori (Tate, 2010).

Today, karakia has a role in some mental health settings. Tohunga Wiremu NiaNia uses karakia throughout his engagement with tāngata whaiora in a clinical setting (NiaNia et al., 2016). Upon meeting, NiaNia begins with karakia to offer gratitude to the universe, environment, whakapapa, and tūpuna who have come before. Additionally, it provides an

avenue to whakamana (empower) and enrich the mana of the person and their whānau. Another clinical example of karakia is described by Staps et al. (2019). Their research with Māori mental health kaimahi (staff) found acutely unwell tāngata whaiora with diagnoses of bipolar disorder responded well to karakia which outwardly appeared to promote a calming effect. Within psychology, Bennett's (2009) doctoral research piloted a CBT protocol tailored to Māori that was inclusive of karakia and whakataukī (proverbs). Thirteen out of sixteen participants were comfortable with this inclusion and five took responsibility for performing these practices during the course of their treatment. Karakia can connect with the foundational philosophies of tapu and noa. Beginning and closing interactions in mental health settings with karakia allows the space to move from noa to tapu, and then back again, something that is particularly important when discussing issues of a sensitive or tapu manner.

Waiata are another Māori form of song and oral tradition. Ka'ai-Mahuta (2010) advised the primary aim of most waiata is preservation and transmission of mātauranga. This statement is supported by Sheehan (2017) who suggested waiata afford the ability to express connection with tūpuna, provide social commentary, engender a sense of communality, and connect people to wairua. When we hear pūrākau in the form of waiata we are innately connected to our whakapapa, evoking an emotional attachment that can teach and heal (Sheehan, 2017).

Mōteatea are a genre of traditional waiata that often involve a rhythmic chant. According to Jackson et al. (2018) mōteatea are uniquely Māori and comprise a collection of whakapapa, karakia, instructions, stories of both battles and bravery, warnings, places, landmarks, and significant events. Oriori are a type of mōteatea typically composed for young children to teach them important matters of their whakapapa (Jackson et al., 2018). Through these practices, strong links are established early in a child's life providing a foundation for them in

relation to places, people, and practices that are unique to their genealogy. According to Rollo (2014) waiata can also be considered a form of taonga pūoro, as the instrumental tradition considers "natural" sounds, including the voice, as a form of Māori singing treasure.

Taonga Pūoro

> Kei a te pō te timatatanga o te waiatatanga mai o te atua. Ko te ao, ko te ao mārama, ko te ao tūroa (it was in the night that the gods sang the world into existence. From the world of light, into the world of music). (Tiramōrehu, as cited in Flintoff, 2004, p. 12)

An alternate creation pūrākau from Matiaha Tiramōrehu, a Kāi Tahu rangatira (a person of high rank/esteem), proposed the creation of all things occurred through Ātua singing the world from Te Pō (the realm of darkness) to Te Ao Mārama (the world of light) (Reilly, 2018). Although Māori vocal traditions are widely recognised there is less understanding of taonga pūoro, the instrumental tradition that sing the reo of the Ātua. The whānau of taonga pūoro have been described by different authors as singing treasures (Flintoff, 2004), instruments of Māori ancestry (Tamarapa & Tikao, 2017), and sound producing devices (Lowe & Fraser, 2018). The term taonga pūoro provides insight into the depth, value, and potential these taonga hold. According to Nunns (2010, as cited in Rollo, 2014) the ancient kupu for these taonga was taonga whakatangitangi (to play an instrument).

It has been proposed that taonga pūoro were once an everyday part of Māori life and held diverse functions in rituals and practices (Nunns & Thomas, 2014). Nunns advised they provided a sacred dimension to aid conception, ease labour, promote plant growth, ease the passage from life to death, and to pass down knowledge (Beatson, 2003). Jerome Kavanagh,

a taonga pūoro expert and practitioner from Mōkai Pātea, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Kahungunu and the Caomhanach clan (Irish), suggested to his knowledge taonga pūoro have three uses (SOUNZ, 2020a). Firstly, taonga pūoro are rongoā Māori therefore, they offer Māori healing. They heal not only tāngata but te taiao as well. Secondly, they are important for acknowledging and uplifting ceremonies such as pōwhiri (rituals of encounter), tangihanga (funerals), and birth. Lastly, these taonga can be used for entertainment by creating moving musical experiences to be enjoyed by all. Rollo (2013) proposed their use for entertainment, forewarning, and healing. While Tamarapa and Tikao (2017) describe their use for attracting birds, accompanying karakia and waiata, signifying events, announcing, healing, and communicating with the spiritual realm.

There is conflict within the literature regarding the use of taonga pūoro for entertainment. Rollo (2013) and Kavanagh (SOUNZ, 2020a) proposed this purpose whereas, Makoare (1998) and Beatson (2003) debate they were seldom used as such. Rather than instruments as a leisurely activity, they were a functional necessity in te ao Māori, required to perform rituals and ceremonies in a tika (correct) way. This tension of mātauranga is reflective of the heterogeneity of Māori. After all, there were no such people called Māori prior to colonisation but rather distinct whānau, hapū, and iwi with their own unique identities and mātauranga. Conversely, it may reflect the nature of our colonised reality highlighting the importance of reflecting on the whakapapa of our knowledge. Currently, aspects of knowledge surrounding taonga pūoro may derive from historical ethnographic literature (Nunns & Thomas, 2014). For instance, Best (1925/2005) claimed the purpose of the pūtātara was to signal warfare akin to a European trumpet, or the potential of the pūtōrino to seduce a lover like the flute. These early writings and the knowledge they present must be considered

critically as they potentially frame taonga pūoro within Western conceptualisation of sound, music, and instruments.

Framing taonga pūoro through a Western lens is futile as Jerome Kavanagh (personal communication, November, 2021) advised "taonga pūoro is the scale of nature". Therefore, it exists on an unlimited scale that cannot be measured and defined alike Western sounds, music, and instruments. In fact, there are numerous ways taonga pūoro are distinct from foreign instruments as detailed below in Table 1. A key feature differentiating taonga pūoro is they are inspired by and created from the unique whenua, landscape, and environment in Aotearoa. They are fashioned from natural materials including rākau (wood), wheua (bone), kōhatu (stone), and hue (gourds). The materials have evolved with the sociohistorical time they find themselves in. For example, Nunns and Thomas (2014) noted one third of kōauau residing in Aotearoa's museums are constructed from human bone. Today, human bone has been replaced with alternative materials such as stone and wood in line with current societal norms.

Table 1

Differences Between Taonga Pūoro and Western Instruments

Taonga pūoro	Western instruments
Individualised instruments	Standardised instruments
Instruments are hand crafted	Instrument construction is industrialised
Instruments are predominantly intended for individual performance	Instruments are typically designed for ensemble performance
Instruments are strongly linked to language and social function	Instrumental development reflects the rise of instrumental music since the Baroque period

Taonga pūoro	Western instruments
Instruments are created entirely from natural materials	Instruments are made from a wide range of materials including natural and synthetic materials and metals
Instruments evolved in the Pacific and Aotearoa, areas geographically isolated from the West	Instruments evolved from centuries of constant cultural interchange
Music is almost entirely bound into social and ritualistic function	Music is a stand-alone art form as well as a social and ritualistic function
Instruments and their sound retain cosmological genealogy	Instruments and their sound are scientific in concept
Traditionally, music has no notation. The tradition is entirely aural, improvisatory, or ritualised	Traditionally music was shaped by the evolution of a notation system
Each instrument has a unique temperament and tuning	Instruments tuning and temperament is standardised

Note. Adapted from Lodge, 2007, p. 94.

The composition of each taonga pūoro is important, as it tells us the devices whakapapa. Each taonga is intrinsically linked to the Atua (original ancestor) who is the kaitiaki of the whenua they derive from. Through their whakapapa taonga pūoro also exist in whānau groups. For instance, the hue taonga are all descendants of Hine Pū te Hue (SOUNZ, 2020a). They clearly derive from a particular Atua or their conception is through a union of Ātua. For example, the nguru descends from Tangaroa (masculine Atua of the ocean), Hinemoana (feminine Atua of the ocean), and Tūtarakauika (personification of whales) (J. Kavanagh, personal communication, November, 2021). Hence, they are not solely related by material or sounds but also through whanaungatanga and kinship. In te ao Māori sound is interconnected between most things via complex whakapapa (Makoare, 1998).

Another distinguishing feature of taonga pūoro is understanding they each possess unique reo. Instead of producing music, the taonga reveals its voice (Makaore, 1998). By recognising the distinct reo, it becomes easier to understand the individual characteristics of each taonga. Like humans, they possess personality and a variety of emotions. Hodgson (2018) described the reo of each taonga as founded from their environment. For example, when we hear a pūtōrino made from totara (tree found throughout Aotearoa) we hear the voice of that tōtara.

Cattermole (2017) claimed all practitioners of taonga pūoro have a unique journey and relationship with the instruments. She detailed her excitement when hearing the reo of a taonga for the first time, the experience of its breathe mingling with hers, and the wonder at discovering its voice. The reciprocal relationship between taonga pūoro and practitioners is similarly explored by Hodgson (2018). The whenua provides the taonga and practitioners assist their reo being heard. He proposed this reciprocity supports practitioners wairua by strengthening their connection to a specific whenua or Ātua. In turn the mauri of the taonga and the practitioner are enhanced.

It has been noted that taonga pūoro are not easily *played,* for lack of a better word (Rollo, 2014). This is detailed by Peter Beatson (2003):

> For many years I have owned a small, exquisitely carved kōauau (a traditional Māori bone flute) made by the carver Brian Flintoff. Although I can extract tunes from the European flute, my Māori one remained obdurately silent no matter how many hours I spent blowing into or across what I presumed was its mouthpiece. I finally gave up, blaming my failure on the instrument itself, which I accused of having been created

> simply as a visually pleasing artifact never intended to produce real music. Then in April 2002, my friend Richard Nunns came round for lunch after giving a demonstration concert of traditional Māori instruments at the Manawatū Museum. I handed Brian's kōauau to him, complaining of its stubborn muteness. Richard put it to his lips and the house was instantly filled with a haunting, plaintive voice that seemed to speak straight from the ancestral Māori past. The kōauau was still very much alive, only waiting for someone who knew the secret of coaxing out the music lying dormant inside. (p. 17)

This is further elaborated on by Richard Nunns (as cited in Beatson, 2003), who explained while getting a taonga, in this case a kōauau, to make a noise is one thing…

> It's quite another to uplift a singing voice out of nothing but a hollow length of bone with three holes in it. That requires the application of the totality of your whole being – something most people cannot be bothered doing once they have reached the point of just making noises. They get discouraged quickly and can't be bothered persevering to transform noise into music. It requires total commitment and a lifetime journey to do that. (p. 27)

Taonga pūoro usage declined following the introduction of foreign instruments, music, and religion in Aotearoa. Around this period some Māori and Pākehā believed taonga pūoro were an obsolete practice destined to disappear (Rollo, 2013). Nunns (Beatson, 2003) considered missionaries to be the greatest contributors to the near extinction of taonga pūoro. This assumption was based on their fear of the wairua element of the devices. If Māori were to be successfully converted to Christianity, missionaries needed to undermine Māori knowledge

systems. Expunging taonga pūoro from Māori consciousness and replacing them with Western instruments assisted in this endeavour. During the 1900s taonga pūoro usage become less prevalent (Beatson, 2003). However, Jerome Kavanagh (personal communication, November, 2021) argued they were always still in use although, it was less public following the Tohunga Suppression Act.

Due to the Tohunga Suppression Act, there is limited literature relating to taonga pūoro in the early nineteenth century. An interview with Paeroa Wineera of Ngāti Raukawa in 1961 offered some unique insight into this time (Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision, n.d). Wineera was considered an expert of the kōauau and the interviewer referred to her as "the only remaining exponent" of this taonga. Jerome Kavanagh (personal communication, November, 2021) highlighted listening to Wineera play kōauau is different to what is typically heard today. For example, her playing was more repetitive and bird-like. Whereas, today kōauau is often played with longer notes and is more flute-like. Perhaps this is a result of one of the modern revivalists Richard Nunns being an accomplished player of the flute (Flintoff, 2004).

Renewed interest in these singing treasures began in the 1980s led by various advocates including Hirini Melbourne, Brian Flintoff and Richard Nunns (Flintoff, 2004). The 1984 Te Araroa hui (gathering) held at Hinerupe Marae (meeting area of whānau, hapū or iwi) on the East Cape is considered the first wānanga (forum) of the modern taonga pūoro movement (Nunns & Thomas, 2014). This hui focused primarily on constructing and playing taonga pūoro with some speculation of their traditional uses. The individuals drawn together through their interest initiated a collective named Haumanu, or breath of birds (Tamarapa & Tikao, 2017).

Uncovering historical knowledge was difficult for the revivalists as it had been seemingly erased completely (Nunns & Thomas, 2014). However, fragments of memory began emerging from their audiences and people slowly began sharing their knowledge. Nunns highlighted most of their informants were Kuia (elder females) whose memories were restored to consciousness after they heard the sounds of taonga pūoro (Beatson, 2003). These recollections accumulated and were corroborated to form a pattern demonstrating the centrality of taonga pūoro to the lives of Māori tūpuna.

Haumanu helped to revitalise contemporary knowledge of taonga pūoro. Although, Jerome Kavanagh (personal communication, November 2021) highlighted taonga pūoro were never truly dormant and were still used by Māori throughout the years prior to the "revitalisation". Interestingly, two of the leaders in the revival, Flintoff and Nunns, are Pākehā. Nunns acknowledged this and the importance of his collaboration with Hirini Melbourne, and the acceptance by Māori elders, for him to do this mahi (work) (Nunns & Thomas, 2014). He stated older Māori were the first among his audiences who accepted his "gifts" as they perceived him as being guided by wairua. He recalled an interaction with Rose Pere:

> At Manutuke I came out of the wharenui (house) into the fresh air, after a presentation to a lot of old people and I saw Rose Pere sitting outside. I asked her why she wasn't inside. And she said "I've heard you before. I came to see which way the taonga would lead you tonight". (Nunns & Thomas, 2014, p. 16).

He contemplated this and conceded that his "haphazard" approach to selecting what taonga to use was potentially guided by the taonga themselves. He articulated:

> And it has to be said that often those that were selected and played had a great effect on members of the audience, unlocking memories of long ago. Who could say what was guiding the selection? (Nunns & Thomas, 2014, p. 17).

Many others have also been advocates for the taonga pūoro revival however, Nunns and Flintoff have been most prolific in the written literature hence, their names often arise. Their mātauranga accumulated through time spent with Hirini Melbourne and others including Mauri Tirikātene, Rangiiria Hedley, Clem Mellish, Tūpari Te Whata, Ranginui Keefe, Rewi Spragon, Te Wārena Taua, John Collins, Tēpora Kūpenga, Te Aue Davis, Hemi te Wano, Joe Malcolm, Rangi Kipa, Pōtaka Taite, Bernard Makaore, Aroha Yates-Smith, Moana Maniapoto, Warren Warbrick, Horomona Horo, James Webster, James Rickard, and Robin Slow (Flintoff, 2004, p. 8). Therefore, Flintoff (2004) acknowledged the devotion of Hirini Melbourne to taonga pūoro and the knowledge drawn from many people provided the necessary mātauranga for him to write his book "Taonga Pūoro – Singing Treasures: The Musical Instruments of the Māori".

Māori Cosmogony

Flintoff (2004) argued taonga pūoro are best appreciated when the cosmogony that guided their conception is known. Māori cosmogenic narratives of creation and existence reflect complex connections from the beginning of time down to the kinship between humans and the natural world (Stewart, 2021). They propose all things possess a mauri and a whakapapa (Rollo, 2014). It is important to reiterate differences exist amongst creation pūrākau depending on locality, iwi, hapū, and whānau. The following exploration of Ātua who are prominent in taonga pūoro are drawn from various sources and respects alternate variations. Table 2 below provides the name, whakapapa, photo, and brief description of several of

Jerome Kavanagh's taonga pūoro. Several of these taonga are mentioned throughout the next sections.

Table 2
Jerome Kavanagh's Taonga Pūoro

Taonga pūoro	Whakapapa	Photo	Description
Pūtōrino	Hineraukatauri (Atua of flutes), Tāne (Atua of the forest and its creatures), Tāwhirimātea (masculine wind Atua)		A flute with two complementary voices, male and female. The male sound is trumpeting, whereas the female sings a crying sound.
Pūtātara	Tangaroa, Hinemoana, Hinemokemoke (an ocean deity), Tāne, Tāwhirimātea		Conch shells that produce a range of sounds, from a signalling call to a melodic sound when manipulated with a dampening object such as the hand.
Nguru	Tangaroa, Hinemoana, Tūtarakauika		Semi-closed flutes typically made from whale ivory however, they are also made of soft kōhatu, rākau, clay, and hue stems. Nguru are played with the nose or the mouth.

Taonga pūoro	Whakapapa	Photo	Description
Pūmoto-moto	Tāne, Tāwhirimātea		Long flutes with a single finger hold near the bottom end. The notch in the top is blown over and traditionally played over the fontanelle of a pēpi to implant pertinent whakapapa and knowledge into their subconscious.
Pōrutu	Tāne, Tāwhirimātea		A long flute that typically has between three and six finger holes near the bottom end.
Tumu-tumu	Parawhenuamea (deity of earth waters), Rakahore (deity that personifies rock), Kiwa (an ocean deity), Tangaroa		Ancient rhythmic taonga. It is suggested historically that they provided a rhythm to aid in remembering oral histories.

Taonga pūoro	Whakapapa	Photo	Description
Pūrerehua	Tāwhirimātea, Tāne		Pūrerehua can be made from rākau, kōhatu, or wheua and create a whirling sound.
Pupurangi	Kiwa (ocean deity), Hinemoana, Parawhenuamea		The shells of kauri (tree found in the North Island) and flax snails which create a special song when blown like a kōauau.
Hue puru hau	Hine Pū Te Hue		Large dried hue that have had their seeds removed. The neck is removed and blown over, creating a vibrant bass sound.

Taonga pūoro	Whakapapa	Photo	Description
Kōauau	Tāne, Tāwhirimātea		Cross blow flutes made from a range of materials including wheua, rākau, and sometimes kōhatu. Most kōauau have three finger holes also this varies. Each material and kōauau produce a unique song.
Porotiti	Poutini (kaitiaki of pounamu), Parawhenuamea, Tāwhirimātea, Tāne		Typically porotiti are oval shaped discs with a cord running through two holes. By looping the cord around the hands, twirling it so it begins spinning or by alternating between applying pressure and relaxing the cord, the disc begins to hum. The player can blow gently to create new rhythms and sounds.
Roria	Tāne, Hinewai (deity who personifies light misty rain)		Slender pieces of wood which create a unique vibration when plucked. The sounds are amplified and modified by the players mouth manipulation. This creates quiet songs.

Taonga pūoro	Whakapapa	Photo	Description
Ponga ihu	Hine Pū Te Hue, Hinerauamoa (wife of Tāne), Tāne, Tāwhirimātea		Tiny hue that have had their neck removed. Ponga ihu are played with the nostril and emit a soft, sweet sound.
Karanga manu	Tāne, Parawhenuamea, Tangaroa, Hine Pū Te Hue (Atua of the hue)		Calling flutes that mimic the sounds of manu (birds) when blown on certain angles.
Poi raupo, poi harakeke, kū (left to right)	Huna (guardian of harakeke flax), Tāne, Hine Te Iwaiwa (deity of weaving), Parakuti, Hinerauamoa, Tangaroa, Hinemoana		Kū is a single-stringed bow tapped with a rod or knuckles. It can be modified if the player cups their mouth over the string to create a resonator.

Note. Whakapapa was given by Jerome Kavanagh (personal communication, November, 2021). Descriptions derive from Flintoff (2004).

Ranginui and Papatūānuku

As aforementioned there are multiple Māori traditions regarding creation pūrākau. This section is guided by aspects of Te Rangikāheke and Tiramōrehu's versions. The universe

took shape from the sound of the Ātua singing therefore, the sky father Ranginui or Rangi is considered the origin of melody or tunes (Flintoff, 2004; Tamarapa & Tikao, 2017). Whereas our origins are in Papatūānuku or Papa therefore, heartbeats or the rhythms of music descend from Papa (Rollo, 2014). Rangi and Papa's children and mokopuna (grandchildren) are the Ātua and kaitiaki of various domains taonga pūoro descend from.

Hineraukatauri

Hineraukatauri is a feminine Māori deity who is recognised as the Atua of flutes (Melbourne & Tuhiwai, 1993; Rollo, 2014). Pūrākau suggest she loved her flute so deeply that she chose to reside inside it (Flintoff, 2004). Hineraukatauri is personified as the casemoth and the pūtōrino embodies this. While some Māori flutes are resemblant of other Indigenous instruments, the pūtōrino is distinctive to Aotearoa and holds complementary masculine and feminine voices. The following pūrākau explores the origins of this duality:

> As dusk waned into the darkness of night a male moth flew by. The moth was searching for the cause of a weeping, lonely, love song wafting in the night air. However, the source of the alluring tune was elusive. The moth landed on a tarata tree branch and carefully examined his surroundings. He spotted a long twitching bag hanging from a branch. Hineraukatauri gracefully emerged from her home. The male moth was enamoured by her beautiful yellow, white and black pattern. Hineraukatauri advanced on the moth and they embraced, joining in a union of love. The embrace rendered the male moth exhausted and Hineraukatauri took him into her cocoon. She consumed him to provide nourishment to her eggs that soon filled her home. (Flintoff, 2004, p. 65)

Nunns and Thomas (2005) referred to the pūtōrino as an enigmatic taonga. It is known for its ability to stir a wide range of emotions from a ghostly chill to a heart-warming resonance (Flintoff, 2004). The male reo of the instrument is trumpeting and often used to summon. Whereas the female reo can resemble a crying sound. Some pūtorino possess a third reo, that of Wheke, the mysterious daughter of Hineraukatauri. Flintoff (2004) suggested all Māori flutes descend from Hineraukatauri including the kōauau, pūmotomoto, pōrutu, rehu, and nguru.

Tangaroa and Hinemoana

Tangaroa, the masculine Atua of the ocean is the mighty father of the shell taonga pūoro. The reo of these taonga is reminiscent of Tangaroa's seabirds. Hence, their reo is distinctive from the delicate melodies of land-dwelling birds as Tangaroa's descendants must hold their own against the raucous chorus of waves and wind (Flintoff, 2004). Tangaroa's most well-known taonga is the pūtātara, a trumpet made in union with Hinemoana, Tānemahuta or Tāne, Hinemokemoke, and Tāwhirimātea (J. Kavanagh, personal communication, November, 2021). The shell derives from the ocean while the mouthpiece is from the forest. The binding used to connect the shell and mouthpiece is sometime pīngao, an Indigenous tussock like plant found in sand dunes thus, connecting the land and sea. Some suggest the pīngao was gifted to Tangaroa from Tāne as a peace offering following the separation of their parents (Lowe & Fraser, 2018).

Hinemoana is the feminine Atua of the ocean (Phillips, 2018). Komene (2009) personified her more specifically as the Atua of the sea floor and everything that lives in her realm. There is little said of Hinemoana's role as the Atua of certain taonga pūoro in the literature. However, Jerome Kavanagh (personal communication, November, 2021) advised she is one

of the Ātua of the pūtātara, nguru, pupurangi, and kū as shown in Table 2. Komene (2009) described her as the Atua of large mouth shell taonga such as the pūtātara, pūmoana, and pūpakapaka.

Tāwhirimātea

Tāwhirimātea is the masculine Atua of winds. Variations exist as to his parentage, some traditions suggest he is the child of Rangi and Papa, other propose he is a descendent of Rangi and Pua te Pō (Rollo, 2014). Tāwhirimātea and his whānau opposed the separation of Rangi and Papa, reflected in his ongoing battles with Tāne's children. However, the wind whānau are not innately angry and mischievous and it must be noted they aided Tāne in his quest to collect the baskets of knowledge essential to human existence.

The descendants from Tāwhirimātea have unusual voices that can evoke strange feelings (Flintoff, 2004). They whistle, moan, and possess a resonance not typical of the physical realm. This may be because Tāwhirimātea and the winds have no physical body therefore, their reo is that of the spirit world. This whānau of taonga includes the porotiti and pūrerehua. From personal experience, these taonga have an ethereal quality. Their sound is so unknown yet, so familiar. They create deeply resonant vibrations, and their reo is heard and felt. Tāwhirimātea also plays an important role in many taonga pūoro being heard, as any taonga that requires wind or breath to hear its reo is intrinsically linked to Tāwhirimātea. As shown in Table 2, this Atua is connected to the kōauau, ponga ihu, pōrutu, pūmotomoto, pūtātara, and the pūtōrino to name a few.

Hine Pū Te Hue

Hine Pū Te Hue is one of Tāne and Hinerauāmoa's children (Uatuku, 2007). She is the Atua of taonga pūoro made from hue, or the gourd (Komene, 2009). Slow et al. (2016) provide further insight into Hine Pū Te Hue:

> In the great war of the brothers, Hine took their anger and places it into the gourd to be in turn replaced by peace. The gourds carried karakia for safety which were to be removed in times of need. The gourds are also the holders of the codes for many sounds. From the boom of the kakapo, the coo of the kereru, to the tangi of the kuia. All gentle, calming and peaceful. (p. 6)

She became the distributor of peace and the mother of the hue whānau. This includes the hue puruwai, hue rarā, hue puruhau, kōauau ponga ihu, and poi āwhiowhio (Rollo, 2014). The small hue become delicate nose flutes and present delicate, magical sounds. Medium hue often become poi āwhiowhio that are whirred and twirled to allow their twittering voice to be heard. The larger hue often have their top cut off and blowing over their opening creates a deep resonant booming sound alike the mating call of the kākāpō (Flintoff, 2014).

Taonga Pūoro as Rongoā Māori

Oral evidence suggests taonga pūoro are becoming more widely used as rongoā in peoples personal lives and in more formal group settings, for example an Oro Ātua session with Jerome Kavanagh (Pūoro Jerome, n.d.). As the mātauranga and practice of taonga pūoro as a healing modality grows it is important to explore the ways it can potentially contribute to hauora for Māori. The next section explores this within the theoretical framework of Te Whare Tapa Whā.

Te Taha Wairua

As aforementioned, Te Taha Wairua is considered foundational to Māori wellbeing. Wairua is difficult to translate into English however, a common somewhat restrictive translation is spirit or spirituality. Wairua has been noted for its "ineffability, immateriality, and experiential nature" (Valentine et al., 2017, p. 69). We may consider it the network connecting all things and although intangible, it is able to be perceived, sensed, and felt (Ahuriri-Driscoll, 2014; Elder, 2017). Cram et al. (2003) found in their study amongst twenty-eight Māori participants wairua was the most named aspect of health. Similarly, Valentine's (2009) doctoral research delved deeper into understandings of wairua with Māori tāngata and four key themes emerged: wairua is fundamental, knows no boundaries, is a perceived sensation, and is relational.

Te Taha Wairua also encompasses a person's capacity for spiritual awareness, faith, and an understanding of the link between their situation and environment (Durie, 1998). The sociohistorical background in Aotearoa has led to wairua not being widely understood or attended to in health systems. This is particularly pertinent to mental health practice that has been underpinned by Euro-American philosophies (Reid & Robson, 2007). Marginalisation of this essential dimension creates barriers to appropriate psychological assessment and intervention. For instance, wairua disruptions may be viewed as psychopathology therefore, treatment is focused solely on Te Taha Hinengaro without inclusion of Te Taha Wairua (NiaNia et al., 2019b; Taitimu et al., 2018).

The esoteric nature of wairua makes it difficult to address in typical clinical encounters. However, research suggests if wairua is appropriately attended to in these settings then positive outcomes are possible. This is found in the partnership of Tohunga Wiremu NiaNia

and Pākehā psychiatrist Allister Bush (NiaNia et al., 2016). The two practitioners blend Mātauranga Māori with Western knowledge to form a synergistic approach to assessment and intervention described in several case studies (Bush & NiaNia, 2012; NiaNia et al., 2017; NiaNia et al., 2019a). Bush and NiaNia (2019a) acknowledge their partnership is founded on the belief that tāngata are first and foremost spiritual entities. Initially, the focus of their clinical interactions is to establish whether the presentation is related to a wairua transgression or psychopathology. If it is determined to be a wairua issue, a wairua intervention is offered and vice versa allowing tāngata whaiora equal access to Māori and non-Māori practices. One case example revealed a single session utilising Māori healing offered immediate relief and resolution of distressing voice hearing experiences and pseudoseizures (Bush & NiaNia, 2012). The session involved: exploration of wairua; psychoeducation of the concepts of mauri, mana, and tapu; whakawetewete (a ritual to resolve hurt, conflict, or transgressions between people); and karakia. At two and twelve-month follow-up sessions the tāngata whaiora reported to remain well. This collaboration demonstrates how Māori and Western practices can work symbiotically.

Te Taha Wairua and Taonga Pūoro

The Innate Wairua of Taonga Pūoro. Much of the existing research of sound and wellbeing focuses on the physics of instruments and their physiologically impact, rather than looking at how sound is healing on deeper, unseen, spiritual levels (Goldsby et al., 2017). A key element of taonga pūoro is its ability to connect to the realm of wairua and convey this through transcendent sounds (Flintoff, 2004; Makaore, 1998; Matthews & Paringatai, 2004). Historically it is believed these taonga were used to invoke or call upon Ātua, implying an inherent metaphysical link (Komene, 2009). Today, it appears taonga pūoro still afford wairua healing as Hinewirangi Kohu-Morgan (2021) described using them and “singing the

soul back into being" (p. 6). The sounds produced by taonga pūoro are "rich in their evocative and atmospheric capacity" and can be felt on multiple levels (Nunns & Lodge, 2006, p. 66).

The literature suggests the link between sound healing and spirituality has long been utilised by Indigenous peoples. For instance, Indigenous peoples in the Himalaya's and Tibet used singing bowls to produce a vibrational sound for spiritual ceremonies and healing (Goldsby & Goldsby, 2020). Newer research is beginning to examine the effects of such modalities. For example, Goldsby et al. (2017), studied the effects of singing bowls, alongside other Indigenous instruments, on mood, physical pain, anxiety, and spiritual wellbeing as a prelude to a future randomised controlled trial (RCT). They found all participants experienced decreased anger, depressed mood, fatigue, and tension post-sound healing and the sense of spiritual wellbeing increased in all participants. Moreover, they found participants who had never experienced this type of healing modality to experience a significantly greater reduction in tension compared to experienced participants.

Connection to Whakapapa. Taonga pūoro may facilitate healing through connecting tāngata to their whakapapa. For instance, the kōauau historically played an important role in birthing rituals. According to White (1924, as cited in Best, 2005), kōauau made from human wheua was used to assist in difficult cases of parturition. Best (2005) suggested the kōauau acts as a medium between māmā (mother), pēpi (baby) and tūpuna (ancestors). Komene (2009) proposed the usefulness of such approaches and that the potential power was enhanced if the kōauau was made from an ancestor's wheua. This connection allows the māmā to draw upon the wairua of her tūpuna to provide emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical tautoko (support). Another example of how taonga pūoro can connect to whakapapa

is exemplified in the pūmotomoto. Pūmotomoto is the kupu for the fontanelle on a pēpi, and the name of a taonga pūoro. This particular taonga is played into the fontanelle of a pēpi to allow the transfer of whakapapa, knowledge, and karakia before it closes over (J. Kavanagh, personal communication, November, 2021).

My personal experiences at Jerome Kavanagh's Oro Ātua have led to other tāngata revealing it provided them an opportunity to connect and communicate with their tūpuna. This allowed them to acknowledge soul wounds, a form of historical trauma that continues to impact people across generations over time (Duran, 2006). Through this acknowledgement they were able to make amends and move forward in their healing journey. In a recent interview Jerome Kavanagh spoke to this connection:

> There is a definite connection there [with taonga pūoro] to our tūpuna. And I guess, you know when we look at it through a Māori perspective and lens… The whakapapa isn't just to humans it's also to the environment. And so that genealogy is coming through the music too. And it gives time and space for those kind of thoughts to come through. And those kind of feelings to come through. (Radio New Zealand, November 8, 2021).

Weaving taonga pūoro into people's journeys to wellness may provide powerful, immediate effects to dimensions that are otherwise difficult to access. For example, clinical psychologist Melissa Taitimu (2016) described collaborating with Māori healers who use karakia and waiata to complement her clinical interventions to create a woven, holistic approach. Through this approach she acknowledges inclusivity of tikanga and Mātauranga Māori allows the best

approach to addressing soul wounds many Māori have through colonisation that exist on a wairua level.

Te Taha Hinengaro

Te Taha Hinengaro is focused on emotional and psychological wellness and a person's ability to think, feel, and communicate well. This wall of the whare acknowledges the body and mind are inseparable (Durie, 1998). Traditionally, psychological illness was thought to result from breaches of tapu, or an imbalance between tapu and noa (Russell, 2018). This resulted in abnormal manifestations in all hauora dimensions including the mind. Perceptions of mental distress may still be thought of in this way. For example, Taitumu et al. (2018) conducted qualitative research with 57 Māori participants with intimate experiences of the label's "schizophrenic" or "psychotic". Despite Māori being exposed to mainstream health and social services for over a century, the predominant explanations for these experiences were cultural and spiritual. The authors acknowledged cultural and spiritual beliefs of phenomena labelled psychoses may be withheld by tāngata whaiora and their whānau for fear of discrimination or judgement. As previously discussed, mental distress may be caused by wairua disruptions. However, this can impact on a person's hinengaro, requiring approaches to wellbeing that address all four dimensions.

Tāngata whaiora that present with mental distress in clinical settings and are referred to psychologists will likely be exposed to talk therapies. Kazantis and Deane (1998) reported 55% of psychologists in Aotearoa have cognitive-behavioural orientations yet, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) in its current form has been critiqued for its relevance and usefulness with Māori tāngata whaiora (Bennett, 2009; Cargo, 2008; Mathieson et al., 2012). CBT is an evidence-based intervention that aims to restructure cognitions using cognitive and

behavioural methods, however historical studies lack ethnic and cultural diversity resulting in concerns of how applicable it is for diverse populations (Naeem, 2019).

Bennett (2009) undertook seminal research on adapting CBT for Māori with major depressive disorder. He presented four domains that conceptualised Māori values in the adapted protocol: whakawhanaungatanga (the domain of connectedness), Te Taha Wairua (the domain of spirituality), Te Taha Whānau (the domain of extended family), and whaikōrero (the domain of metaphor). Within these four domains adaptations included whakapapa sharing/self-disclosure, exploring whakapapa via genogram, assessment of client's connection and access to cultural resources, karakia and whakataukī in accordance with client agreement, inclusion of whānau, te reo translations, adapted cognitive conceptualisation, education on Te Whare Tapa Whā, and visual formulation. This research showed promising results with an excellent retention rate (94%) and 66.67% of participants having their depression symptoms reduce by over 80%. More recently Shepherd et al. (2015), trialled a computerised form of CBT (cCBT) inclusive of Māori tikanga, mahi toi, and te reo. Participant feedback suggested the culturally relevant elements significantly aided their engagement with the programme, supporting the argument that culturally tailored interventions are more successful for Māori.

Te Taha Hinengaro and Taonga Pūoro

Psychological Wellbeing. There is a scarcity of literature covering how taonga pūoro can influence psychological wellbeing, yet significant research suggests sound (and music) is widely utilised as a tool to regulate, adapt, and enhance psychological state, mood and arousal (Chanda & Levitin, 2013; Rosenberg et al., 2021; Sakka & Juslin, 2018). Indigenous sound healing has been shown to improve aspects of psychological health in recent studies.

For instance, a recent RCT by Philips et al. (2019) compared the effect of a didgeridoo (Indigenous instrument from Australia) sound meditation to a silent meditation on stress and mood in undergraduate students. Both meditations were found effective at decreasing self-perceived tiredness, energy, and negative arousal however, the didgeridoo was more effective for acute stress and relaxation. Furthermore, the didgeridoo participants reported significantly higher levels of enjoyment and likelihood of attending another session. While Lee et al. (2019) found their health promotion programme requiring participants to play the didgeridoo resulted in reduced blood pressure and salivary amylase (a stress biomarker). The results of these studies are interesting however, it is worth noting they both took the didgeridoo out of its original Indigenous Australian cultural context. Therefore, potentially even more benefits could be gained if the cultural integrity of the practice was in place.

Further research has focused on "music listening" and psychological health. A meta-analysis by Chan et al. (2011) suggested music listening had positive impacts on depression in adults, and showed greater efficacy was achieved following multiple sessions. More recently Janzen et al. (2019) found significant improvement of depression symptoms; anhedonia, or the inability to experience pleasure from experiences that would typically be pleasurable; quality of life; and sleep in participants with diagnoses of major depression when using a combined music listening and rhythmic sensory stimulation intervention (where low frequency transducer devices were positioned on their lower back and at ear level allowing a mild vibrating sensation). The effects of participants listening to their favourite music and listening to relaxing music (sound composed of alpha binaural beats) was assessed by Nawaz et al. (2018). Self-reported mood measures indicated participants were significantly more relaxed after listening to the relaxing music (78%) rather than their favourite music (21%). The self-reported data aligned with neurophysiological results (via EEG) with relaxing music

producing more alpha waves in their brains at a statistically significant level. These findings are important for building the knowledge of sound healing enacted through music listening. Taonga pūoro has similarities to music listening as participants are only required to listen making it easily accessible for people to access its potential psychological benefits.

Identity. A complex interplay of factors contributes to psychological distress. For Māori some of these factors may include disconnection from one's culture, history, and identity (Durie et al., 2009). Durie (1998) has long argued the importance of identity to mental health and overall wellbeing (Durie, 1998). Rewi (2010) uses the metaphor of a tree to portray the weight of identity, when a tree has firm roots, it has a firm foundation to weather the elements. Māori identity is constructed in relation to whakapapa connections (Mahuika, 2019). This is seen in Māori defining themselves through genealogical connections to their maunga, awa (river), waka, and tūpuna exemplifying a complex classification system (Dudley, 2016). Stewart (2021) described this system as a "powerful antithesis" to individualistic assumptions of human beings and Durie (1998) argued knowing one's human and environmental genealogy is an important contributor to wellbeing.

Tamarapa and Tikao (2017) proposed taonga pūoro provides healing through strengthening Māori identity and pride. Taonga pūoro may connect tāngata to their cultural identity in a meaningful way by creating space for them to connect to the original tūpuna, the Ātua, who both people and taonga whakapapa too. Beatson (2003) advised taonga pūoro are possibly a conduit for "revitalising long-suppressed oral recollections" (p. 30) and mātauranga that was kept dormant through colonisation, based solely on the reo of the device. While Boer and Fischer (2010) suggest sound and music can trigger past memories allowing us to reminisce. Through this connection, Māori can remember, reclaim, and reaffirm our heritage. The reo of

our Ātua may help us connect more deeply to who we are, who we come from, and where we come from.

Access to Te Ao Māori. Because experiencing taonga pūoro does not require a certain level of Mātauranga Māori or immersion in te ao Māori to participate it holds potential to be easily accessed by a range of Māori no matter their "knowledge". Some Māori may experience whakamā regarding gaps in cultural knowledge (Metge, 1986). While this concept is typically thought of as shame, embarrassment, or inadequacy, Metge (1986) advised whakamā is not purely psychological problem as it also has a wairua dimension. Thus, it affects the entire being. Woodard and O'Connor (2019) argued experiences of whakamā are "pungently intertwined with the experience of colonisation" (p.104). Whakamā is considered an inhibitor to Māori potential (Wilson, 2018) and has been identified as a potential barrier to health and engagement as it may prevent tāngata from accessing health services (Cram et al., 2003; Kidd et al., 2013).

Taonga pūoro could offer tāngata space to reconnect with te ao Māori from any knowledge level and provide opportunities to develop cultural knowledge at one's own pace. Research by Muriwai et al. (2015) found Māori with greater levels of cultural efficacy had stronger psychological resilience. This reflects earlier suggestions from a longitudinal study by Marie et al. (2008), who found a secure Māori identity was a protective factor able to mitigate the impact of adversity. More recently, Fox et al. (2018) investigated Māori cultural embeddedness with rangatahi Māori (Māori youth). According to their findings, Māori cultural embeddedness was found to be adaptive and consequently it was positively linked to adaptive coping and wellbeing. Cultural embeddedness was also shown to predict adaptive coping strategies which in turn, predicted wellbeing. The researchers argue this attested to the

resilience of rangatahi Māori who have a strong foundation in their culture. As cultural reclamation and pride is discovered through taonga pūoro this may engender a protective factor towards Te Taha Hinengaro.

Te Taha Tinana

The dimension of Te Taha Tinana focuses on one's capacity for physical health, growth, and development. Te Taha Tinana goes beyond Western biomedical assumptions of health. Durie (1998) highlighted Māori understandings of physical health differ from reductionist notions as reflected in the philosophies of tapu and noa. Tapu in its simplest form may be perceived as holding an element of restriction (Durie, 1998). Maniapoto (2012) elaborated on this to describe tapu as an institution which works to protect the mana of a person, thing, or object. Therefore, tapu serves a practical purpose to protect the safety of tāngata, whānau, and the whenua until a state of noa is achieved (Sullivan & Hakopa, 2017). Noa is complimentary to tapu and is the state of no restriction or normalcy (Mead, 2016). Mead advised noa should not be perceived as the opposite of tapu, rather it is a state where balance has been restored. Subsequently, tapu and noa have important roles in Māori health, with noa indicating safety and tapu providing protection.

Tapu in the human tinana (body) was inherited by Hineahuone, the first human and woman. According to Murphy (2019) Hineahuone was "sculpted from the menstrual waters of her mother Papatūānuku at Kurawaka, the vulva of the earth" (p. 251). Hineahuone was gifted body parts by numerous Ātua and inherited mauri from each of them (Whatahoro, 1913/2013). Tāne then breathed life into her nostrils, honoured in the continued practice of hongi (pressing of noses). As descendants of Hineahuone Māori possess elements passed

down from various Ātua in our tinana today and the importance of hau is particularly relevant to taonga pūoro as many require hau to have their reo heard.

Māori placed great emphasis on physical wellbeing, as exemplified in the agility and dexterity required for Māori practices such as kapa haka, mau rākau (traditional weapon-based art form), poi (a ball or weight attached to a tether and used as an art form) and waka ama (outrigger canoeing) to name a few (Best, 1925/2005). Forms of rongoā Māori such as mirimiri and romiromi (Māori massage) were focused on the tinana, particularly as an approach to relieve pain in the limbs (Durie, 1998). Gregg et al. (2006) found in their evaluation of a mirimiri programme with kaumātua that participants experienced pain relief, reduced blood pressure, reduced stress, and social support. This implies these forms of rongoā heal the tinana and other hauora dimensions simultaneously.

Te Taha Tinana and Taonga Pūoro

Oro. Few clues exist in the literature regarding the use of taonga pūoro to aid physical wellness. One taonga which is known to assist physical ailments is the porotiti. The porotiti can be spun over individuals with respiratory issues to allow flowing air to assist their breathing (Tamarapa, 2015). Taonga pūoro practitioner Jerome Kavanaugh described using the porotiti to heal sinus issues, headaches, and provide a calming effect in times of stress (SOUNZ, 2020b). Additionally, he discussed using it above a hapū (pregnant) māmā's abdomen to sooth and calm pēpi. One of the healing mechanisms in such applications could be related to the oro of the taonga. Oro denotes the resonance, frequency, and vibration of a taonga. All things in our world possess a unique oro. Resonance of sounds may influence our bodies in ways we are yet to understand.

Hau. The kupu hau often refers to wind, breath, or vitality (Mead, 2016). Henare (2015) explained hau as a "comic power" and "vital essence" (p. 89). He describes all things as having a "fundamental assembly of life forces" (p. 89) that includes a hau, a wairua, a mauri and a tinana. Hau is therefore, an innate aspect of taonga pūoro. It is also essential to the practitioner and the recipient and provides a connection to Māori wind deities. A lack of research in regard to taonga pūoro and hau exists, therefore we may look to the benefits of other Indigenous breathing practices. Pranayama is a form of yogic breathing from India, prana meaning vital force or life, while yama means control (Singh et al., 2017). Regular practice of pranayama is associated with positive effects on respiratory function, cardiovascular system, and moves the autonomic nervous system closer to parasympathetic dominance also known as the rest and digest mode which helps to calm the body (Kuppusamy et al., 2018; Shankarappa et al., 2012; Shasikiran et al., 2015). The alteration to these functions reduces stress and strain on the systems, consequently resulting in overall health improvements. When using various taonga pūoro, some of them require breath from the mouth while for others, the breath from the nose is used. Therefore, the necessity of needing to focus and stay with the breath for the player may provide similar benefits as seen in other Indigenous breath practices. For those who are receiving taonga pūoro from a player the sounds may assist them to practice slower, more intentional breathing.

Sound and Human Physiology. From a Western scientific perspective some research has examined the role of sound and music on the human brain and body. Perlovsky (2008) argued music activates the instinctual evolutionary brain centres and newer regions of the cortex to form connections that engage one's whole being, enacting a harmonious experience on the human soul. An early study by Möckel et al. (1994) examined the neurochemical effects of three styles of music: a waltz with regular rhythm, a modern class with irregular

rhythm and a meditative piece that was non rhythmic. While the waltz and modern piece had no neurochemical effects, the meditative music significantly decreased cortisol (the bodies stress hormone) and norepinephrine (a hormone and neurotransmitter) levels. More recent music listening studies have corroborated these older findings (Salimpoor et al., 2011; Yehuda, 2011).

Te Taha Whānau

Māori are relational and orientated towards collectivism (Brougham & Haar, 2013). This is conceptualised by the dimension of Te Taha Whānau, which highlights tāngata must be recognised as existing within wider social systems. Sometimes whānau is translated to the English word family, which Elder (2017) argued is inadequate. The kupu whānau traditionally referred to groups intimately connected via whakapapa connections. In contemporary discourse its reference has expanded to describe groups of Māori who share common associations or interests often called "kaupapa whānau" (Cunningham et al., 2005).

Furthermore, Te Taha Whānau acknowledges the capacity for tāngata to belong and share with others as central to wellbeing. Similarly, te Tiriti principle of partnership holds whānau at its core. In a broad sense partnership contends Māori, iwi, and hapū have the right to contribute to governance, design, and delivery of health systems in Aotearoa (Kingi, 2006; Waitangi Tribunal, 2019). On a whānau level this suggests whānau should be active participants and co-designers of their mental health strategies. Recently Te Oranga Hinengaro survey reported Māori who perceived their whānau were doing well were 24% more likely to cope with everyday life stressors than those who rated their whānau as not doing well (Russell, 2018). These results suggest a positive correlation between individual and whānau wellbeing. Elder (2013) found in her research of Māori with traumatic brain injuries that it

was advantageous to position the whānau as the focus of healing rather than solely focusing on the individual patient. It has been proposed that Māori resilience throughout post-colonial time is due to the evolution and extension of whānau structures (Kara et al., 2011). Consequently, individualistic approaches to mental health done in isolation from whānau and social systems may be inappropriate.

Te Taha Whānau is considered vital in modern approaches to Māori health (Bennett, 2009; Elder, 2017; NiaNia et al., 2016; Walker et al., 2008). The Māori mental health approach Mahi a Atua positions whānau at its core. Mahi a Atua is a framework, intervention, paradigm, and philosophy that enacts ontological transformation (Mahi a Atua, 2021). This process involves sharing ancestral pūrākau with tāngata whaiora and their whānau to offer a Māori frame through which meaning can be found and sense can be made. Rangihuna et al. (2018) offered an example of an 8-year-old boy presenting symptomatology typically labelled attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). In a classic clinical encounter first line treatment may include behavioural interventions and medication. Whereas, in Mahi a Atua this child might be compared to the curious Atua Uepoto, whose story can be explored to frame the presentation and possible intervention from a Māori perspective that is not deficit orientated. This affords the child's whānau the opportunity to view his challenges via a culturally congruent lens and to participate in collective wānanga to find their best way forward.

Te Taha Whānau and Taonga Pūoro

Whanaungatanga. For many Māori whanaungatanga is as important as breathing (Kidd, 2015). This claim is supported by research demonstrating the importance of connection and whanaungatanga to health outcomes. For example, Levack et al. (2016) found

Māori participation in pulmonary rehabilitation was mediated by whakawhanaungatanga. Participants placed high value on culturally meaningful connections and an absence of these resulted in less motivation to attend. Similarly, the aforementioned study of a mirimiri programme with kaumātua by Gregg et al. (2006) found whanaungatanga allowed the physical and social healing benefits to flow. Māori value connecting with others, understanding their history, where and who they came from. This knowledge is essential to locating who we are in relation to others (Gilgen & Stephens, 2016).

Taonga pūoro can be easily experienced in with whānau and rōpū. It is appropriate for tāngata of all ages, reflective of traditional and contemporary whānau units. Moreover, they present opportunities to connect outside of the taonga pūoro session. For instance, Jerome Kavanaugh's Oro Ātua healing sessions are often followed with shared kai. This facilitates manaakitanga and creates space where Māori can be Māori. Graham and Masters-Awatere's (2020) systematic review of 14 studies found Māori often experience the clinical world of the public health system as alien therefore, wellbeing interactions that happen in Māori spaces and that are led by tikanga should be encouraged.

Whanaungatanga may be similarly found in the relationship between tāngata and practitioner. Taonga pūoro practitioners are not bound by regulatory bodies therefore, there are less restrictions towards practitioner-client boundaries. While boundaries are necessary, the line where boundaries exist is specific to te ao Māori. For example, it has been highlighted that judicious self-disclosure is appropriate and effective when working with Māori to allow a more personal therapeutic alliance to emerge (Bennett, 2009). Carlson et al. (2016) found the importance of shared relational experiences outside the consultation room were just as important as those inside the medical consultation room for Māori. This included whakapapa

sharing, reciprocity, manaaki, and shared interests. An example is offered of a nurse-patient relationship. The patient described most of their consultations involve kōrero about their mokopuna which is a shared commonality. Through their discussion they are able to naturally weave in kōrero about clinical concerns in an authentic and meaningful manner. The genuine care in this relationship promoted engagement and is thought to contribute to better health outcomes (Carlson et al., 2016). When tāngata feel comfortable with others, there is a foundation to build a meaningful relationship from. A taonga pūoro practitioner will likely begin with sharing their whakapapa and potentially other aspects of their history. This begins the process of whakawhanaungatanga and allows the attendees to understand and connect with the person sharing taonga pūoro with them.

Summary

Te ao Māori is underpinned by ontological concepts deriving from creation narratives which continue to inform Māori ways of being and knowing today. While colonisation has attempted to dismantle all aspects of the Māori world and continues to have damaging consequences for Māori today, an ever present resistance by Māori has protected our mātauranga and taonga over time, including taonga pūoro. The practice and knowledge of taonga pūoro not only survived but has also seen continued revitalisation over the past 40 years particularly through the efforts of Hirini Melbourne and Haumanu. This chapter has given a comprehensive exploration of the limited literature pertaining to taonga pūoro and its potential as rongoā. By exploring its potential through the framework of Te Whare Tapa Whā it demonstrates its possibility to provide holistic healing for Māori.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore Māori perspectives of the potential of taonga pūoro as rongoā through three overarching rangahau questions:

1. How do Māori understand taonga pūoro?
2. What are Māori experiences of taonga pūoro as rongoā?
3. How can taonga pūoro benefit hauora?

This chapter provides a description and justification of the methodology employed to address these questions. It begins with a brief overview of Kaupapa Māori Research which provided the theoretical and methodological underpinnings for this study. Following this, details of the research processes are explained including the ethical considerations, resource development, recruitment, and participant demographic information. The chapter concludes with an explanation of reflexive thematic analysis, the method chosen to analyse the data set.

Kaupapa Māori Theory and Research

Kaupapa Māori Research is a distinct ontological, epistemological, and methodological framework derived from Mātauranga Māori, the ever-evolving body of knowledge that encompasses all aspects of Māori knowledge (Mead, 2016). Mātauranga Māori originated from Māori ancestors and has no ending thus, it will continue to grow with future generations to include things not yet known of this world. Mead (2016) and Stewart (2020) argue Mātauranga Māori is similar to a philosophy of science, or as an explanatory tool to help Māori organise and understand the world. Mātauranga Māori was, and continues to be, suppressed through acts of colonisation. Attempts to undermine it were recently seen in a letter published in The Listener by seven professors from the University of Auckland who

claimed Mātauranga Māori is not a valid form of knowledge (Clements et al., 2021). Kaupapa Māori Research provides a strategy to critique and rebuke such attacks and to enact tino rangatiratanga.

Although the term Kaupapa Māori is relatively new, our tūpuna have been theorising and conducting Māori science across history, as evidenced within many of our pūrākau (Haitana et al., 2020; Pihama, 2001; Smith, 2012). According to Smith (2012) one of the earliest Māori "research projects" is described in the pūrākau of Tāne-nui-a-rangi making the arduous journey to the heavens to retrieve three baskets of knowledge. These baskets have various interpretations however, Maori Marsden (as cited in Ruru, 2021) advised te kete tuatea refers to the basket containing present knowledge, te kete tuauri is the basket of things unknown, and te kete aronui as the basket of knowledge humans are actively seeking. Another form of early research is seen in Māori knowledge of the stars and night sky (Harris et al., 2013). This in-depth understanding assisted Māori tūpuna to navigate across the Pacific Ocean to this land.

Kaupapa Māori Research is underpinned by Kaupapa Māori Theory which emerged surrounding the wider Māori cultural and educational initiatives in the 1980s. Thought-leaders, including Graham Hingangaroa Smith (1997), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), Leonie Pihama (2001), and Russell Bishop (1999) contributed greatly to the early development of Kaupapa Māori Research and their continued influence is seen today. According to Henry and Pene (2001) Kaupapa Māori literally refers to a "Māori way" of doing things, being, and thinking that wholly encapsulates te ao Māori. Consequently, Kaupapa Māori Research can be understood as research that is done in the Māori way, by Māori, for Māori, and with Māori. As such, Kaupapa Māori Research cannot be thought of as a singular, prescriptive

methodology. To acknowledge our diverse realities, Kaupapa Māori Research has wide-ranging possibilities influenced by things such as whānau, hapū, iwi, gender, and geographical location to name a few (Pihama, 2015).

Kaupapa Māori Research assumes and privileges the legitimacy and validity of Mātauranga Māori therefore, it was considered the most appropriate framework to underpin this rangahau that was interested in Māori knowledge and our aspirations for better mental health outcomes. With the diversity that exists amongst Kaupapa Māori Research it is important to discuss the principles that have guided its expression in this current project.

At the heart of Kaupapa Māori Research is the principle of *tino rangatiratanga* which relates to self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy, and governance (Pihama et al., 2002). The statement "by Māori, for Māori, and with Māori" reflects the essence of tino rangatiratanga (Smith, 2015). This foundational principle operates to ensure Kaupapa Māori Research is Māori-centred, ensuring Māori needs, wants, and aspirations are the focus. Tino rangatiratanga was critical in informing the kaupapa of this current study. Through kōrero with Jerome Kavanagh, a taonga pūoro expert and practitioner, tāngata who had experienced healing through taonga pūoro, and my own experiences, it was clear that a diverse group of Māori saw potential benefits from research in this area. From this standpoint, the research took shape and was centred around self-determination and control over the future of taonga pūoro and its potential to enhance Māori wellbeing.

According to Pihama et al. (2002) *whānau* is the principle that sits alongside tino rangatiratanga at the core of Kaupapa Māori Research. They advise Māori values, customs and practices are organised around whānau and "collective responsibility" (p. 39) and

consequently whānau is an essential aspect of Kaupapa Māori. Pihama et al. (2002) argue the key factor of this principle is that Kaupapa Māori Research is diverse, accessible, and available to all Māori. Whānau informed several layers of this study. Firstly, the research whānau including the researcher, supervisors, cultural advisor, and participants were a diverse group of Māori. This diversity was seen in whakapapa, age, sex, education, location, and knowledge and immersion in the research kaupapa, ensuring a breadth of views contributed to this study. Secondly, each member had a unique role and was considered to represent whānau even as individuals, allowing diverse and valued whānau perspectives to come through.

According to Walker et al. (2006) Kaupapa Māori Research often serves to challenge prevailing power imbalances, relations, and social practices which disadvantage Māori. They articulate this in the principle of *social justice* where Kaupapa Māori Research can seek to redress these power imbalances thus, allowing meaningful benefits for Māori to be seen. The social justice element of Kaupapa Māori Research lies in its critical roots and Eketone (2008) argued this is a result of its alignment with Critical Theory. In this rangahau social justice was considered an innate aspect of the kaupapa. At a structural level, engaging in Kaupapa Māori Research within the academic environment inherently challenges dominant power and knowledge structures thus, contributing to the ongoing struggle for the legitimisation of Mātauranga Māori in Aotearoa. In relation to meaningful benefits to Māori, this study was undertaken with a strong understanding from oral communication, that taonga pūoro potentially have a positive influence on hauora. With this leading the kaupapa, further knowledge was seen to contribute to building the literature base for the continued revival of taonga pūoro in hopes that it will become more widely utilised to enhance Māori wellbeing. Social justice also informed the research where it was intended to provide Māori engagement

with research that is positive, practical, useful, and that they are considered experts of. This may help to address past and protracted inequities for Māori in research.

Kaupapa Māori Research is grounded in *Mātauranga Māori* (Mahuika, 2011). Therefore, it assumes the legitimacy and validity of Māori knowledges and worldviews. Mātauranga Māori is an evolving body of knowledge (Durie, 2017). Kaupapa Māori Research contributes new, updated, and innovative knowledge to this space. This principle informed how Mātauranga Māori was approached and engaged with in this research by positioning it as assumed and taken-for-granted. This allowed the positioning of taonga pūoro as rongoā to take place and the participants kōrero to be accepted.

Kaupapa Māori Research is proposed to be inherently *decolonising* through embedding and privileging Māori worldviews, knowledge, practices, and priorities (Haitana et al., 2020). This allows Kaupapa Māori to challenge the marginalisation these aspects of te ao Māori have been subjected to through the Western lens and allows them to be normalised. Smith (2012) argued that decolonisation must be central to Kaupapa Māori Research that seeks to reclaim ownership of Māori knowledge. Decolonisation informed this rangahau by not positioning taonga pūoro as a "complementary" or "alternative" practice. This allowed space for experiences such as wairuatanga (spirituality) to be explored and considered normative whereas, they may not usually be discussed as such. The research process was therefore one that aimed to contribute to dismantling hegemonic beliefs about Māori and to give full expression to the aspirations inherent in te Tiriti.

Haitana et al. (2020) suggest Kaupapa Māori Research takes into consideration the context and confines past research has had for Māori and seeks new research that aims to be

transformative. Moana Jackson (as cited in Mahuika, 2009) encouraged Māori to reclaim the truth about who we are, who we want to be, and our histories. The transformative aspect of Kaupapa Māori theory is later reiterated by Moana Jackson (2011) who argued it "asks us to dream" (p. 77). This rangahau approached the principle of transformation by contributing mātauranga that not only seeks to remedy the devastation colonisation has caused to taonga pūoro but also to highlight, celebrate and embrace a practice that is uniquely Māori. Transformation also informed the positioning of participants who were seen as experts of the knowledge that this study sought. This situated the participants as engaging in research collaboratively rather than being part of research that is done "on" them.

Ethics

Ethical considerations were considered in multiple ways. Firstly, robust exploration and understanding of the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (2017) and Te Ara Tika (Hudson et al., 2010) was completed. Through this process, six ethical issues were highlighted and then peer reviewed with the research supervisors to address how they would be mitigated:

- *Autonomy*. It was ensured that participants had clear information about the rangahau and their rights. Their understandings of these areas was checked before they provided voluntary consent. Privacy and confidentiality was addressed by not including identifying information in the thesis against their wishes.
- *Non-maleficence*. Risk of psychological or spiritual harm was mitigated by utilising a semi-structured interview approach to data. Although there were broad questions and prompts, participants were only asked to kōrero about things they felt comfortable sharing.

- *Justice*. This rangahau sought to recruit participants who identify as Māori. This was not considered discriminatory as there is a paucity of research that centres Māori voices, knowledges, and worldviews. Therefore, non-Māori participants would not have held knowledge relevant to the rangahau questions.
- *Mana*. Justice and equity for participants and culture was enacted by practicing tikanga Māori throughout the research process. For example, whakawhanaungatanga, manaakitanga, whānau, and te reo Māori.
- *Whakapapa*. Jerome Kavanagh, a leading taonga pūoro practitioner and cousin of mine, was consulted in regards to the kaupapa of this rangahau. He gave his tautoko for the rangahau with the belief that it will be beneficial for Māori and the continued revitalisation of our traditional practices. His whakaaro aligned with that of my supervisors and I.
- *Tika*. The chosen methodological framework, Kaupapa Māori, ensured the entire research process was culturally appropriate and centred Māori aspirations. The entire research whānau were Māori allowing the contribution of rich and diverse Māori worldviews.

Following this iterative process the rangahau was considered low risk. A low risk notification was submitted and accepted by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (see Appendix A). Alongside the aforementioned ethical considerations, this rangahau was also guided by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) and Cram's (2001) seven ethical considerations: aroha ki te tangata (respect for people), he kanohi kitea (being a seen face), titiro, whakarongo… kōrero (look, listen, and then speak), manaaki ki te tangata (looking after people), kia tūpato (being cautious), kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (not trampling on the

mana of people), and kia māhaki (being humble). The role of these considerations throughout the rangahau process is woven into the following sections.

Semi-Structured Interview Design and Guide

Guided by Kaupapa Māori Theory and the ethical considerations, a semi-structured interview design was chosen as the method to collect data. Interviews were considered the best approach to facilitate he kanohi kitea by "fronting up" to the participants to allow them a deeper understanding of who I am, where I come from, my intentions and also to demonstrate my gratitude for their contribution. Face to face interviews in person or on Zoom also allowed aroha ki te tangata to be enacted. Time was available and prioritised for whakawhanaungatanga before, during, and after the interviews. While manaakitanga was carried out where appropriate such as providing kai and refreshments.

A comprehensive interview guide was developed to collect data (see Appendix B). It was important to have a strong knowledge of taonga pūoro and the research questions prior to developing the guide to provide a conceptual basis for the interviews. The questions were designed with the ethical consideration of kia māhaki in mind. Although I would participate in the interview with academic and experiential knowledge of the topic, it was important to be mindful that the participants were the experts of the knowledge the rangahau questions sought. The guide consisted of questions and prompts to identify descriptive, reflective, and theoretical knowledge. Te Whare Tapa Whā provided an initial conceptual framework for hauora to guide the interview questioning. The guide honoured the ethical concern of titiro, whakarongo… kōrero by providing space for the participants and I to collaboratively set the interview agenda and direction. The participants were active co-producers of knowledge as they directed the interview to certain areas they felt were relevant. This assisted in

ameliorating potential researcher biases and assumptions about the topic and for a wider range of knowledge to be explored. Thoughtful reflection throughout the interviews allowed certain lines of questioning to be followed or removed after listening to the participants kōrero.

Recruitment

A recruitment pānui (advertisement) was developed (see Appendix C). It included a brief description of the research kaupapa, what would be required from the participants, ethical approval details and contact information. Jerome Kavanagh provided an image of his taonga to display on the pānui and advertised it on his mahi and personal Facebook pages. Around 70 people expressed interest in participating on these Facebook posts. The initial 18 participants who directly contacted Jerome or I through email and Facebook messenger were sent an information sheet (see Appendix D). The ethical guideline of kia tūpato informed the information sheet. It was necessary to provide participants a clear explanation of the rangahau and what their participation would require to ensure safety and transparency. Consent forms were also developed to ensure participants understood their rights and to ultimately uphold their mana as guided by kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (see Appendix E).

Participants

14 participants were included in this rangahau. The original number of participants I sought was 15 however, the final participant did not show for our interview on Zoom. At this stage it was deemed enough data had been collected from the 14 participants to adequately answer the research questions. This was concluded through data saturation, the concept of information redundancy when interviews were not producing data that new codes and themes would be constructed from (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Table 3 provides the participants

demographic information. Most participants gave permission for the researcher to include their first name, age, and iwi in the thesis and one used a pseudonym. This provides deeper insight into the whakapapa of the knowledge constructed in this rangahau. It also honours the participants for their unique contributions and highlights their importance as co-producers of the findings in the following chapter.

Table 3

Participant Demographic Information

Name	Age	Iwi
Jessica	34	Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi
Māia	38	Ngāti Ranginui Ngāti Korokī Kahukura
Manawa	39	Ngāti Tūwharetoa Ngāti Maniapoto Ngāi Te Rangi
Charmaine	34	Ngāti Kahungunu Te Aitanga a Māhaki Rongowhakaata Ngāti Tūwharetoa Ngāti Maniapoto Ngāti Porou
Summer	27	Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi Ngāpuhi Tainui
Arios	43	Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi
Whitney	26	Waikato Tainui Ngati Korokī

Name	Age	Iwi
Richard	27	Ngāti Porou Te Rarawa
Kody	25	Te Aupōuri
Adam	35	Waikato Ngāti Porou Ngāti Tūwharetoa Ngāti Pāoa
Pania	51	Tainui Te Arawa Ngāti Kahungunu Ngāi Tahu
Anituhia	29	Rangitāne o Wairau Muaūpoko Ngāti Apa Ngāti Raukawa Ngāti Kuia
Janine	60	Tainui Ngāti Kahungunu Ngāti Tūwharetoa
Ruth	43	Ngāpuhi

Positionality

Prior to describing the research process, it is important to share my positionality and offer the reader an understanding of my standpoint, motivations, and lens that may have influenced all stages of this research. I am a 30-year-old wahine of Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Kahungunu, and Pākehā descent. I was born and raised in Tauranga where I attended a small rural primary school in Pahoia and then a co-educational Catholic college. Following my schooling I have spent time living in Wellington, Wānaka, Australia, Canada, the United

States, and Japan and have been fortunate to travel to 22 countries. Alongside studying at Massey University by distance, I have mainly worked within the ski industry for the past eight years and more recently as a community mental health support worker. My worldview draws from my grounding in Māori and Pākehā culture and my experiences in Aotearoa and around the world.

My initial research motivations were to undertake research that was beneficial to Māori, strengths-based, and that contributed meaningfully to Mātauranga Māori. Through kōrero with my cousin Jerome Kavanagh, my supervisors, and through experiencing Jerome's Oro Ātua, the research kaupapa developed. It is hoped this research can be a foundational contribution to the limited literature of taonga pūoro and can be followed by a larger doctoral study.

An important aspect of this rangahau is the whakapapa Jerome and I share. In Kaupapa Māori Research whakapapa is seen as a strength as it denotes not only a principle, but a concept that is one of the foundational building blocks of te ao Māori (Mahuika, 2009). Our shared whakapapa allowed the mana and tapu of the kaupapa to be upheld and protected. During whakawhanaungatanga with the participants I openly shared that Jerome and I are cousins. Walker et al. (2006) suggest the process of whakawhanaungatanga in Kaupapa Māori Research allows the identification, maintenance, or formation of past, present and future relationships. Hence, allowing Māori a position to locate themselves with others present. Through sharing this whakapapa connection at the beginning it may have made the participants trust me more or otherwise influenced their kōrero and our relationship.

Due to the recruitment method, 12 of the 14 participants had experienced taonga pūoro as rongoā at an Oro Ātua session with Jerome and two had experiences with other practitioners. Therefore, Oro Ātua is often spoken of in the findings. Oro Ātua is Jerome's taonga pūoro sound healing journey that he explains "is the voices of the environment" (SOUNZ, 2020a). My own experiences attending Oro Ātua sessions allowed me to get better familiarity with taonga pūoro and could have influenced each stage of this study. Holding this "insider" position meant it was important to remain reflexive throughout the process. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) recommends "at a general level insider researchers have to have ways of thinking critically about their processes, their relationships, and the quality and richness of their data and analysis" (p. 137). Maintaining reflexivity through self-reflection, gaining the appropriate cultural knowledge and skills, and ongoing kōrero with my supervisors and Jerome enhanced the integrity and validity of this research.

To gain more context into Oro Ātua the following video is suggested for the reader - https://news.sounz.org.nz/oro-atua-a-puoro-maori-sound-healing-journey/

Research Aims

From my standpoint and interactions with my supervisors and Jerome the research questions developed:

1. How do Māori understand taonga pūoro?
2. What are Māori experiences of taonga pūoro as rongoā?
3. How can taonga pūoro benefit hauora?

Research Process

Aroha ki te tangata and manaaki ki te tangata were at the forefront of the research process. Participants who agreed to participate were contacted to organise the time, date, and location for the interview. Participants were given the choice to kōrero in person or via Zoom. These options were all based on participants preference however, some interviews had to be conducted via Zoom due to practicalities around travelling to their rohe (region). Interviews were conducted in different settings including: the participants homes (n = 2), café/restaurants (n = 4), at a park (n = 1), at a mall (n = 1), the participants workplace (n = 1), and via Zoom (n = 5).

A key feature of the interview process was whakawhanaungatanga, the process of placing relationships and whakapapa at the forefront of the encounter. Prior to the interview the participants and I established ourselves through sharing whakapapa and other pertinent information. This helped us to locate ourselves in relation to one another, form connections, a level of comfortability, and safety. The length of time engaged in this process varied and was participant-led. To demonstrate respect and integrity for the participants and my ethical responsibilities, I offered to go through the information sheet and consent form to check their understanding.

The interviews varied in length from 40 minutes to 1 hour and 40 minutes. Karakia was used to begin and end some interviews, as guided by the participants. More time was spent following the interview with several participants to kōrero further and share kai. Due to the non-prescriptive nature of Kaupapa Māori Research, these encounters were varied and required researcher flexibility. The longest time spent with a participant was four hours. At the end of our time manaaki ki te tangata was shown through offering the participants a koha

(offering, gift) of a $40 Pak'nSave voucher. This was offered as a token of appreciation for their time and contribution alongside a handwritten card to express my gratitude to them.

Each interview that was in person was recorded using a dictaphone, while all interviews on Zoom were recorded through the software. Interviews were each transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Some of the recordings were transcribed through Otter AI software however, they needed to be transcribed again by hand due to incorrect translations and for better familiarisation with the data. Participants were invited to receive and review a copy of their transcript. Responses to this varied with some wanting to receive a copy to review (n = 6), some asking for a copy but not to review (n = 5), and some not wanting to receive the transcript (n = 3). The six participants that did review the transcript did not wish to change or amend anything. Several participants requested a copy of the completed thesis.

Reflexive Thematic Analysis

The data collected through the interviews was analysed using a reflexive approach to thematic analysis (TA). TA refers to a cluster of methods that allow patterns ("themes") to be captured across qualitative datasets. Unlike some other qualitative methods (for example interpretative phenomenological analysis, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, and grounded theory), TA is not bound to any theoretical or epistemological orientation making it appropriate for utilisation within Kaupapa Māori Research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is important to note, while TA allows theoretical flexibility, it is not atheoretical.

Sometimes TA is perceived as a single approach however, under the TA umbrella exists three distinct "schools": codebook, coding reliability, and reflexive (Braun et al., 2018). For the purposes of this research a reflexive TA approach was deemed most appropriate as it is

positions researcher subjectivity as a resource, is creative, and promotes reflexivity. The valuing of subjectivity is particularly pertinent to Kaupapa Māori Research which also honours everything the researcher's whakapapa brings with them as significant.

Braun and Clarke (2006; 2020) propose six phases of reflexive TA: (1) familiarisation with the dataset; (2) initial data coding; (3) generating initial themes; (4) reviewing and developing themes; (5) defining, refining, naming themes; and (6) producing the report. These phases are intended as scaffolding to "democratise access to qualitative methods" (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p. 4), rather than being prescriptive or procedural. The recursive process of moving forwards, backwards, and between these phases is described in the next sections.

Upon beginning analysis, decisions were made about what approach to reflexive TA would be most suitable to answer the rangahau questions. When contemplating the use of a deductive or inductive approach it was useful to situate these terms on a continuum rather than as dichotomous (Braun & Clarke, 2021). An inductive approach was settled on to enable analysis that was predominantly reflective of the data, and less theory-driven. With this choice came acknowledgement that a purely inductive approach is impossible. Rather, the approach in this study prioritised data-driven meanings rather than theory-based meanings whilst acknowledging that some deductive analysis was used to ensure coding contributed to the construction of meaningful themes relating to the research questions.

Process of Analysis

Firstly, time was spent becoming familiar with the dataset. This was done by listening to the interviews again, refining the transcripts produced by Otter AI (transcription software) particularly in relation to kupu Māori, printing the transcripts, reading them again, reflecting

on them, and noting aspects that stood out. Following this, initial codes were generated by hand. All data that could be useful for addressing the rangahau questions was coded. When coding, semantic and latent approaches were used as they both offer meaningful information. Semantic codes allowed for explicit meanings within the data to be highlighted. Whereas latent codes noted underlying meanings, assumptions, and ideas that informed the data (Terry et al., 2017). The focus then shifted from interpreting individual codes to interpreting meaning across the data set. Codes were reviewed to assess shared meanings amongst them and whether the shared meanings could collaboratively form themes and sub themes. It is important to note again, codes were actively constructed by the researcher, they were not existing in the data waiting to be found. Some codes had to be let go in this process as they no longer fit within the analysis.

The themes continued to develop through a reflexive process that involved the data set being continuously engaged with on a deep level. This required re-evaluation and exploration of codes, moving codes between themes, and breaking themes into more categories. A particularly helpful aspect of this process was writing the codes on paper and displaying them on a large table to be contemplated and rearranged over a period of two weeks. The development of themes was also an iterative process. This involved potential themes being reviewed with my main supervisor to discuss and compare findings, and to identify areas of convergence or similarities in coding schemas. Through this process the final themes were constructed. Each of these themes provides a coherent explanation of a unique aspect of the data set. Together, these themes form a narrative that addresses the research questions. It is important to note, most of the themes have connections with each other and address more than one of the research questions and this is congruent with the interconnected nature of te ao Māori. The seven themes are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter presents the findings constructed from the participants kōrero. Following an iterative process of refinement, and through consultation with the research supervisors, themes and subthemes were constructed to address the research questions as shown below in Table 4. Each theme begins with an introduction and then a comprehensive analysis that is a mix of participant quotes and researcher interpretation. The use of quotes allows the participants kōrero to be presented accurately. As the transcripts were transcribed verbatim some words have been removed and replaced by ellipses for ease of reading.

Table 4

Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
Whakapapa	Childhood Encounters
	Ātua Connections
	Te Taiao
	Tāngata-Taonga Relationships
Healing Experiences	
Te Taha Wairua	
Te Taha Hinengaro	Meditative
	Expanded Consciousness
	A Uniquely Māori Approach to Healing
	Psychological Distress
Oro	
The Protracted Influence of Colonisation	Legitimacy
	Awareness and Access
	Disconnection
	A Decolonising Practice
Reconnection	

Whakapapa

Taonga pūoro is a connection to our past and our tūpuna. (Jessica)

This theme reflects participants understandings of taonga pūoro. Their understandings displayed patterns of meaning related to whakapapa including: taonga pūoro as ancestral instruments, Ātua connections, te taiao (the natural environment), and tangata (person) - taonga relationships. Discussion begins with the whakapapa of their taonga pūoro knowledge from childhood.

Childhood Encounters

While many of the participants were introduced to taonga pūoro as tamariki (children), they were typically used ceremonially or for play, rather than healing. For some participants it was not until adulthood that dormant childhood memories of taonga pūoro resurfaced:

> In my head I was like, "okay I haven't been that exposed to taonga pūoro before". But the thing is, that I have, but I didn't realise that it was… We had a pūrerehua that my uncle made… But I just thought it was some kind of cool thing to play with. And because I haven't grown up in te ao Māori that much. So it wasn't until now and then when we went to the taonga pūoro with Jerome that I saw some… I was like "hey I know those things". (Kody)

Other participants described having visceral childhood memories of taonga pūoro and how deeply affected they were by them without knowing what they were at the time:

> I think just different times throughout my life when I've been in Māori situations like on the marae or somewhere someone's pulled something out and used it… I think as a kid I always noticed something happens when they do that, when they use it. But not being aware. What I do remember is always stopping. Stopping, like it grabs my attention. (Pania)

Pania explained how taonga pūoro captivated her as a child. She was transfixed by their sound and presence so deeply that she would stop and give them her full attention. Māia was also introduced to taonga pūoro during childhood in a unique way through interactions with the cocoons of Hineraukatauri in her environment. She described seeing holes in tree's that represented the holes of the kōauau, and being drawn to them:

> It wasn't until later in my adult life that I made the connections with taonga pūoro from when I was a child… I used to think I was the kaitiaki or the guardian of the cocoon, Hineraukatauri…. I'd see them all around the garden all around my house… And it wasn't until like years later that I connected through a friend of mine who makes taonga pūoro. And I started learning about the whakapapa and you know who they are and where they live and everything about them. That's when I connected and was taken back to the memory when I was in childhood. So to me, that was the start back then. When I was an adult, that was the connection. That was the mātauranga (knowledge) that took me back to when I was a child. (Māia)

These reflections suggest participants adult experiences with taonga pūoro helped to trigger memories of their childhood experiences. Through their adult lens and with more

mātauranga, participants were able to connect and deepen their past understandings and perceptions.

A number of participants were introduced to taonga pūoro as rangatahi through kapa haka. Two of the tāne (male) participants noted the pūtātara as particularly memorable. Arios described the challenge in his youth of coaxing the taonga to sing its reo. He shared his initial experiences:

> It was just like an introduction… Here, have a go at this… (blowing sound) and then you run out of breath because you're like "it's not working"… [And then asking for someone else's] "give us a go of your one bro, this ones broken". (Arios)

While Richard remarked on taonga pūoro being seen as a less exciting aspect of kapa haka when he was young:

> I guess my first experience probably kapa haka… Actually, I remember a time when the pūtātara was kind of looked at as the dumb job… Yeah. Because you had to stand at the back and blow the conch, while everyone was up the front doing the performance. (Richard)

Richard reflected on the evolution of his perspective. As an adult, he now spoke of appreciating the mastery and skill required to play taonga pūoro. The evolution of participants understandings across their lifespan was a commonality. Nevertheless, these first encounters are important reflections on the whakapapa of the participants knowledge providing context to their kōrero to follow.

Ātua Connections

Some participants began their descriptions by referring to taonga pūoro as "ancient" (Manawa), "beautiful, indigenous, historic" (Charmaine), "old… traditional" (Māia), "Māori instruments" (Kody). Others started by defining taonga and the status of pūoro as taonga for Māori:

> First of all… Taonga in itself would say that it's a treasure. And it is for our people. (Pania)

While most participants began by defining taonga pūoro as Māori instruments, deeper reflection saw their definitions progress to a more conceptual level. Some participants explained taonga pūoro as representing the breath of life, connecting to our creation pūrākau (ancestral narrative) of Tāne breathing life into Hineahuone. Adam made the following assertion:

> For me it's the breath of life. Gave breath of life to the first human, in a sense of Māoritanga and our pūrākau and our stories… You know the patterns of the winds the song that makes against nature… The breath of life. And articulating that with song and instruments. (Adam)

His understanding positions taonga pūoro as representative of our unique origin story. These taonga are symbolic of the beginning of human existence, reflecting the beliefs, traditions, and values that underpin te ao Māori.

Intrinsic links to Ātua were also considered by other participants. Jessica, a Te Atihaunui-a-Pāpārangi taonga pūoro practitioner, discussed how teachings in her rōpū (group) have always started with Ātua. She highlighted the link between resources pūoro are created from and the Ātua who protect these realms. She conceptualised this connection:

> It's hard for people to connect to that word God but it's easier for them to connect to Ātua because they can go and see Ranginui in an instant. They can go to Tāne-Mahuta (Atua of the forest and its creatures). They can lie upon Papatūānuku… All of that without even having taonga pūoro, ko koe te taonga pūoro. So you are the pūoro. And by laying upon Papatūānuku you will hear your heartbeat, that's her heartbeat. (Jessica)

Jessica's rich description considered how Ātua are more easily accessible for tāngata whenua "because it is our taiao". They are present in our reality, distinct from imperceptible Gods. Her insight also suggests that because we are from the same whakapapa line we are uniquely connected to our Ātua. She also explores how we are a pūoro, our natural rhythm and heartbeats reflective of those we descend from.

Summer situated taonga pūoro as existing in an otherworldly realm, that of our Ātua. She analysed her whakaaro and offered evidence of it through noticeable changes in the environment when the reo of a taonga is heard:

> I think that they transcend through our plane of existence and into the Ātua's. I feel like they can hear it. Like, sometimes when you do it you can… The manu will come. Or the wind is blowing a different way… You just notice the things around you

> shift… And you've got to do karakia… You've got to you know, because you know you're entering in a space that just is strong with the wairua. (Summer)

Summer advised she places a korowai (cloak) around herself through karakia when moving in this space. She went on to acknowledge she has had experiences in te ao wairua (the wairua realm) across her lifespan and understands these can be "scary" and must be treated respectfully. Summer's kōrero suggests taonga pūoro opens space for communication with Ātua, whether we want to ask for guidance, petition them, or give thanks.

Māia had a similar whakaaro. She likened taonga pūoro to "a vessel back into the past, to our tūpuna. Instant connection to our tūpuna, to our atua". She also discussed a "portal" that taonga pūoro opens:

> If you're not ready to go through that portal or through that door, then you're gonna feel like, yeah, stop listening to that. And that's what I think taonga pūoro does… It has the ability to, for you to tap into… Your unlimited potential, our wairua that you haven't tapped into before. (Māia)

Some participants spoke directly to the whakapapa of taonga pūoro. For example, where the rākau (tree, wood) came from, who constructed the taonga and who is playing the taonga. Pania and Adam spoke explicitly of this whakapapa connection:

> For me there's been a personal connection. I guess that would be the whakapapa. I know these instruments are from our people. It's what my tūpuna used… Whakapapa. Yeah. And our relationship in te ao Māori. Our relationship to things like wood,

> kōhatu (stone)… It's not just a piece of wood, it comes from a tree that we whakapapa to. Back to through Tāne, and the creation story. Yeah. So, there is that whakapapa. (Pania)

> Being part of it reminds me… I have whakapapa too. I came from the earth too. I grew from the ground. I'm a seed of Tāne too. This is my brother, this is my sister. (Adam)

Arios described taonga pūoro as resonating with us as Māori because they are in our DNA. He proposed this inherent link is always there "even if we don't know about it, it resonates so well with us". He went on to discuss an interaction he had with a Māori kuia at a marae in Ōtaki. They were present on the day attending a political event that was travelling to marae around Aotearoa:

> I was playing kōauau, and this lady had never heard kōauau before… She approached me and said "what is that noise? What is that sound?"… Because kōauau can have quite a high pitch. And she goes "it sort of pierced my heart, I've never heard this sound before". Like "oh, okay well this is our sound"… "What do you mean?"... "I guess that's the sound of our tūpuna coming through kōauau". (Arios)

Arios' account suggests the sound of kōauau sparked a remembrance for this kuia. His description of reo piercing her heart alludes to it touching her on a profound and new level.

Sharing the same whakapapa as taonga pūoro exemplifies Māori understandings of the interrelation of all things. Akin to humans, some participants discussed taonga pūoro as

possessing mauri (life force), as living too. This concept was explored in some of the interviews:

> Depending on a type of what it is, this will carry a different mauri. Like every rākau is a rākau, but you know kauri will sound different to a tōtara (tree found throughout Aotearoa)… It'll feel different… They play a lot different too… I'd even say it depends on where its grown in Aotearoa… Let's say a tōtara up North will sound a bit different to a tōtara down South… Looking at things like rākau and that as living entities like you and I. (Arios)

In interactions the taonga share their wairua and mauri with us, as we also share ours with them. Arios discussed pūoro that he has made and how although they innately possess mauri, his construction also infuses his mauri inside them:

> For me it was working with the rākau, placing the part of me and my mauri in there… Just sort of a thing in the future, I wonder what you're going to be doing, are you going to be different? Because even though they are just objects… They have mauri as well, just like we do, you know, they carry stuff. And they'll go far beyond and probably live a lot longer than I will… With the making of this stuff, it carries a part of you. (Arios)

Other participants also highlighted commonalities with taonga pūoro and other cultures, particularly Indigenous ones. Arios noted "each other continent will have their taonga pūoro that's specific to them and what's happening in their environment". Summer commented "I think those are quite similar and Indigenous, like Aboriginal instruments, and they have the

didgeridoo… But I think for me personally, I feel more connected to taonga pūoro because of the Māoritanga that it resides in, and the history of our people practicing it".

These descriptions highlight the importance of the environment from which each taonga is formed and the Ātua who preside of these realms. Each taonga possesses mauri and wairua, from both the elements of te taiao that give them their form, and the person who fashions and uses them.

Te Taiao

Several participants highlighted the resources from Aotearoa's unique whenua that pūoro are constructed from including "stones, wood, shells, pounamu (greenstone)" (Manawa), and "bone and hue" (Summer). Charmaine noted these natural materials enhance each taonga as they are the materials our tūpuna would have used historically that "adds some spirituality to it".

Some participants discussed taonga pūoro as the personification of te taiao:

> To me… Taonga pūoro is the sound of our natural environment… Us mimicking the sounds of those natural environments through an instrument. (Anituhia)

Anituhia's description proposes taonga pūoro are a vessel to know the sound of our taiao. While we can always hear te taiao, taonga pūoro may assist when we are in urban environments or away from our papa kāinga (ancestral home), allowing us to hear and feel the sounds of home. Ruth explored this concept:

> Kinda like takes me back in a vision. You could hear it in the middle of the city but you can feel the rākau of forests. And the birds…. So it takes you away. (Ruth)

Other participants also linked taonga pūoro to mirroring sounds of Aotearoa's manu. Endemic manu were among the few animals that our tūpuna shared Aotearoa with and Summer's reflection speaks to this intrinsic connection tāngata whenua have with this taiao:

> From what I understand it is or how I perceive taonga pūoro is our personification of nature, te taiao. Including its creatures… A lot of it is like manu. So, the sounds and the callings of manu… I would say it's the natural sound of our native bush and our birds. It's just like a relationship with us and nature. (Summer)

Taonga pūoro were understood by some participants to whakapapa to certain Ātua, or more than one Ātua, depending on the part of te taiao they were from:

> You have many taonga pūoro that are from the whenua. And you have many that're from the moana (ocean) aye, and you have those that are a combination of both. So that they are coming together. (Arios)

An example of this union may be the pūtātara that is formed from elements from Tangaroa (the conch) and Tāne-Mahuta (the rākau). The interaction between taonga pūoro and te taiao was also highlighted by participants who explored the necessity of Ātua in assisting their reo being heard:

> The wind you know… I can't remember the name of it, but the one that you swing? It wouldn't be a taonga pūoro without the wind right? Because it uses the wind to make the sound. (Whitney)

This understanding positions te taiao, Tāwhirimātea, and the player as essential for taonga pūoro to exist and realise their potential. Thus linking them to several realms.

Some participants, notably those who are practitioners themselves, considered how taonga pūoro are all around us and available any time. Arios explored this notion:

> Sometimes you just need to sit in the space and listen… Cause there's taonga pūoro happening when the wind goes through trees or through the bushes, that's taonga pūoro… When the wind brushes by your ears, that's taonga pūoro too… Yeah it's all around us aye, it's all a part of us. You know there's little bits of vibration happening everywhere. Even like say if you walk into a house, and you think "oh that doesn't sound quite right". Yeah so you karakia, and what is karakia, its wind going through the strings in your voice box aye? Another form of taonga pūoro. So you see how it all becomes? It's actually been around us forever. (Arios)

Others also highlighted that anything can be a pūoro:

> You can sort of turn anything into a taonga. If you develop a relationship and just mahi (work) with it… You can make a noise, a sound out of almost anything from our taiao, from our ngahere (forest), from the beach. (Whitney)

Jessica discussed this as the "found sound aspect of taonga pūoro". She pointed out:

> A walk along the beach is really a great opportunity not just to find instruments remade, but also to sit on the beach and actually be a part of the band with Tangaroa and with the sand and with the wind… Beach walks just became something totally different because of taonga pūoro. (Jessica)

Jessica spoke of her daughter and the experiences they have had with the "found sound" element of taonga pūoro. She recalled a journey they took up their awa (river) where her daughter declared "Mum, I'm gonna find us a taonga pūoro before we leave the awa". Later, her daughter was making a whistling sound with a rock that Jessica described as not having a hole right through, but enough of a gouge for it to be a karanga manu. Jessica discussed how the potential of kōhatu is often premeditated to only be rhythmic striking, as seen in tumutumu. However, as evidenced by her daughter, taonga pūoro can surprise with their multifaceted nature and ability.

Tāngata-Taonga Relationships

Numerous participants utilise pūoro in their everyday lives. Four participants incorporate pūoro in their mahi to enhance and contribute to wellbeing. Nine participants have pūoro that they utilise for purposes such as: relaxation, calming, stress relief and meditation. Most of these participants spoke of the relationships they must build with their taonga, similar to relations between humans. Summer discussed her pūoro and personified it as male, suggesting it has qualities associated with the masculine:

> I try and play it when I feel the calling to play it… With my pūoro we've gotta build a relationship. And I feel like it's a male too so I'm just like (sigh)… Another relationship with a male (laughs). (Summer)

Jessica shared how she cares for her whānau of taonga pūoro with affection, reflecting Māori philosophical perspectives of all beings being alive and interconnected. Jessica reflected on the mutual relationship she has with her pūoro:

> Four years ago, I was probably rolling around with deer bones in a bag. And now I have a beautiful set of whānau taonga pūoro, I've had a whare taonga pūoro made for them… I just actually after work, at the end of the week, I take them to the river or to the ocean just to sort of get some water and bless them and put them sort of to moe (sleep) for a few days before them and I connect again, and we get back to work because they actually work just as hard as I do. Yeah. So just being appreciative of them. (Jessica)

Pania also used personification when discussing the relationship that exists between tāngata and taonga pūoro:

> Developing a relationship with pūoro is like developing a relationship with people. Not everyone's going to connect straight away or open up. You have to build that relationship. (Pania)

These descriptions highlight the whanaungatanga between people and taonga, a relationship defined by kinship and connection. Whanaungatanga is seen in the reciprocity of tangata-taonga interactions:

> Taonga pūoro are natural… And sort of… Those instruments in themselves have their own wairua. And the sound that actually comes out of them is them sharing their wairua with us. (Kody)

Taonga pūoro are viewed as another living entity that a relationship must be forged with. As aforementioned by the tāne participants who had difficulty with the pūtātara, a taonga is not waiting to be played. Rather, they are open to coming together with a person to find synchronicity within a reciprocal relationship.

Summary

These descriptions situate taonga pūoro as our kin, founded on our epistemological concept of whakapapa. This aligns with whakapapa often being considered an explanatory framework through which we understand our world and reality. The participants described taonga pūoro through this lens, situating Māori and taonga pūoro as mokopuna (descendants) from the same ancestral lineage. Whakapapa is a critical aspect of our identity as Māori, allowing us a foundation from which we exist upon, a connection to our past and future, and a sense of knowing who we are.

Healing Experiences

It's been life changing for my healing journey. (Anituhia)

This theme examines the participants overarching reflections on their experiences of taonga pūoro as healing, their thoughts of the initial encounters including what drew them to attend and how they felt before, during, and after the experience.

Participants introductions to taonga pūoro as a healing modality varied although they tended to be in adulthood and grounded in a curiosity and eagerness to incorporate Māori healing into their lives. Whitney couldn't recall how she came across taonga pūoro but spoke of it being at a time when she and her whānau were "in the thick of this whole serious commitment to really Indigenising our lives… And re-learning a lot of mātauranga that we've lost".

Some participants came across the healing potential of taonga pūoro through online resources created during the COVID-19 lockdowns of 2020. Anituhia found an Oro Ātua session by taonga pūoro expert Jerome Kavanagh on YouTube. She had previously done several meditation and mindfulness practices however, they were unable to take her to the level of healing that she was transported to through that first online session:

> I didn't feel anything like what I felt when I did my first taonga pūoro meditation… Just with the soothing sounds of the pūoro grounding you… It was at that point where I was completely conscious to the point where I envisioned myself to be this tree grounded in Papatūānuku. (Anituhia)

Being conscious, aware, and present is the goal of many meditation traditions and often takes time and dedicated practice to achieve. Despite this, Anituhia was able to immediately experience a level of awareness through pūoro beyond that of her previous non-Māori

meditation experiences. Her experience of "complete consciousness" was linked to Papatūānuku and te taiao, illustrating the interconnection of all things in te ao Māori.

Some participants spoke of experiencing taonga pūoro at a time when they needed healing. Summer made this reflection on her first wānanga experience. She had recently become a first time māmā and was experiencing "a whole lot of feelings around my son having a Māori name and not realising how hard and difficult that was gonna be". She described concern for her son moving through life in Aotearoa with a Māori name due to the potential for him to experience racism, discrimination, and negativity. She was questioning her decision and explored how an initial taonga pūoro session reaffirmed her choice and her Māoritanga:

> I was just going through that weird space of… Did I fuck up by giving him a hard Māori name? Or be staunch and continue being this mana wahine (a term that encompasses the mana that is inherent to women) type of lady?... And then far, we went aye… And it was just everything I needed at that time in my life. It kept me going and it was just… I couldn't turn away from being who I am, which I think… That's what I was doing. (Summer)

Māia also discussed being on a personal healing journey around the time she was reintroduced to taonga pūoro in adulthood. She connected the realm of her tūpuna as interacting with her present experience and guiding her:

> I think it was something that my tūpuna actually put in front of me for me to recognise and go down that path. Because then I met so many different people from taonga pūoro who helped me on my healing journey. Taonga pūoro itself was healing

> for me as well… The connection, the understanding of, or answering questions that I had for so many years… It spoke to me a lot back then. (Māia)

Her reflections suggest it was not only the sounds of the pūoro that were healing, but also the whanaungatanga and connections with others it facilitated. Whanaungatanga was considered a contributing factor by many participants to what led them to experience taonga pūoro healing. For example, they may have gone along due to whānau connections, through friends inviting them along, or through knowing practitioners.

Several participants described being in a low or anxious mood on the day they planned to experience taonga pūoro. Following the session, they found their mood significantly lifted and their anxiety ameliorated. Charmaine spoke about her first Oro Ātua session and described waking up that morning in an uncharacteristic "*bad mood*". She almost didn't attend:

> But I ended up going and as soon as I got to the place I felt healed. It was very welcoming… And then once we started the class it was just amazing and got better from there… The sounds of the instruments just took it to another level… I felt it was lifechanging… I was amazed with how it changed my whole feeling from before the session to after… I was like a totally different person. I felt absolutely healed. It just swept away all my worries, any pain that I felt in my body, so I physically felt healed as well as spiritually and mentally as well. (Charmaine)

She spoke of feeling immediately healed upon entering the space and how welcoming it was. Charmaine also described the experience as healing on multiple layers inclusive of Te Taha Tinana, Te Taha Wairua and Te Taha Hinengaro.

Whitney also described the day of a taonga pūoro wānanga she attended. She woke up with anxiety and described a "churning" feeling in her puku (abdomen). She contemplated not attending but ended up going with her son as she knew "it's gonna be helpful":

> We all laid down… I just felt… Like oh my gosh it's getting worse because I'm having to lay still… And then as she [the practitioner] went through, I got to a point where I sort of, I guess my emotions sort of peaked and I started crying. You know, just like an emotional release of having to stay still you know focus on the sound… listen. Also, sit with how I was feeling… I almost feel like I have a little detox every time I have a session... Like I get really sniffly… I want to cry and it just feels… Almost like a bit of a cleanse. (Whitney)

Many participants spoke of the cleansing aspect of taonga pūoro. Kody had previously attended three taonga pūoro wānanga. She described during two of the sessions she had a lot on her mind and felt as though she was simply listening to someone play instruments. However, during a session she attended with a clear mind she was able to surrender to the healing. She explained:

> I was just lying there… It was just like you're just in a neutral state for a while. And all of a sudden… If you go somewhere in your mind, and then it makes you feel something… You just start crying. And then that's when I really fully thought that it

> was healing. It's like… You don't realise sometimes… These stored… Feelings, emotions, and things in your body. And that when you go into that, it allows you to release those things without actively knowing you're doing it. (Kody)

Likewise, Ruth's experience was one of release which she described as occurring on physical, mental, and wairua levels:

> When he started you know, the release, the weight of my body was just sinking into the ground. And I knew I had a lot on my shoulders that I needed to get rid of. You know, I was stubborn all year… I was stubborn all year to step into me. So there was a battle I was battling within myself… And yeah, but really started when I started listening up and just letting go. (Ruth)

A commonality amongst most participants saw them crying and weeping during their experience, reflective of their surrender to the moment. Crying can occur when people are experiencing a wide spectrum of emotions. Summer characterised her tears as cleansing:

> I just went in there and I just knew what I had to do. And I just lay down. And I remember crying. Everything go. I just remember… Like, just lifting off this heaviness off my heart and off my shoulders… It literally felt like the sound was washing away like water all the things that was on me. And just wiping… It was like waves of just emotions and waves and waves and waves and it just kept washing away everything and it was such a cool feeling to be in a space like that. (Summer)

Kody spoke of her tears not being conscious, rather they were her body taking over and releasing what it needed to release:

> Nowadays it's like "oh are you only crying cause you're sad" you know what I mean? Well, it was like… I'm not actively crying. It's more water that's just coming out of my eyes… And it just won't stop. (Kody)

Some participants recalled memories of observing how taonga pūoro impacted other tāngata and the relief it visibly provided them. Arios detailed an experience witnessing Jerome using a kōauau:

> He took out his ponamu kōauau… And it just really pulls you in deep… Especially if you're just laying there and ready to be put into that meditative state. And I just watched him when he was playing that. And… It was like, the people, just, fell off. Whatever it was that they were carrying… And just like ding and the lights just turned on... Say kei roto i te pō, so in the dark, then all of a sudden I've come out of the dark… It's like you have no sense, and then you have all your senses. So that's what I mean, there's a blockage and then you're unblocked. (Arios)

Arios' musings are reminiscent of our Māori creation pūrākau by describing a process similar to moving from Te Pō (the darkness) to Te Ao (the light).

Some participants recounted their experience as being profound, particularly those who had experienced trauma in their past. Manawa contemplated her initial experience:

> I don't even know really how to even explain it. Because it just blew me away. I've never had an experience like that. And it shifted something inside of me. I just felt amazing for ages afterwards… That shift, it never left. And I always remember it really clearly. But yeah for someone… Because I had a very very traumatic childhood… Ongoing trauma for the first 7 years… Enough to get me diagnosis of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), and depression, and anxiety… But… Yeah it was pretty profound experience. (Manawa)

The ability for taonga pūoro to deeply affect participants who had experienced trauma in their history and to offer healing on a level not easily accessed through other modalities was a commonality amongst the kōrero. Anituhia described pūoro as "filling a void" that she had previously filled with cannabis and allowing her to be present in a more caring space where she could "learn to love" herself.

A predominant theme across the participants was it being an unforgettable experience with the healing effects lasting long after. Charmaine described feeling as though "I had just had a shot of coffee or something like that, but it lasted longer". Janine also described the lasting impact of pūoro:

> My first experience… Something that I'll never ever forget… The next day because I was feeling so wonderful I took the day off work. I'm sharing this because I've never done that in my whole life… It had such an effect on me. I wanted to stay as I put it "in the now". You know, in the now, feeling good. To the point, even my partner, I got home and he goes "oh, you've changed". He noticed the glow in my eyes. The physical energy I had… Everything had shifted off me. So those are the things that I

> love about pūoro… Not just me but I've witnessed other people that have gone in physically unwell, mentally unwell, and then when they get off that floor and get up, its shifted for them. (Janine)

Arios described similar effects, “I know for about a good six months after that I was glowing”. He described being unable to stop sharing his experience with others, and how noticeable it was outwardly to those around him:

> It was like I was glowing and I couldn’t stop raving on about stuff aye. And it was a bit hard cause I was still kind of floating up here and couldn’t quite come back here to be grounded… So yeah it was quite huge. (Arios)

Summary

The participants described what led them to taonga pūoro, and how their unique experiences affected them. Commonalities amongst their experiences surrounded inquisitiveness around Māori healing and starting a process of decolonisation. Many participants were beginning, or on, a healing waka at the time. They described seeking healing from various things, including depression, postpartum depression, anxiety, disconnection, trauma, colonial trauma, domestic violence, and physical ailments. Taonga pūoro facilitated healing through connecting to te ao Māori. This connection allowed them to connect to their tūpuna, Ātua, and te ao wairua which helped them to shed some layers of their mamae (pain). Many of the participants found their experiences to be profound and resulted in a significant shift in themselves that was often outwardly noticeable to their whānau and friends. The healing benefits they received often stayed with them long after the session.

Te Taha Wairua

> When we listen to taonga pūoro you connect more on a wairua level. (Manawa)

This theme was constructed following kōrero with the participants about their wairua experiences through taonga pūoro and how they believe it can contribute to hauora on this level. All participants described taonga pūoro as impacting their wairua. Overwhelmingly, these experiences were visual in nature, and significantly tied to their tūpuna. These experiences were profound, intense, and insightful for the participants.

Prior to exploring these wairua experiences and the whakaaro surrounding them, it is important to provide context by explaining the participants understandings of hauora. When reflecting on what hauora meant to them, the participants typically spoke of it as a holistic concept. They interwove aspects such as Te Taha Hinengaro, Te Taha Tinana, Te Taha Whānau and Te Taha Wairua into their definitions:

> Health and wellbeing is a mental thing, emotional thing. I think spiritually as well and a physical thing… If none of those things are good, even if your mentals not good, your physicals not going to be good… They're all connected… They affect each other. (Charmaine)

Many highlighted the influence each pou (post, dimension) has on the others, and the importance of finding balance between them. Several participants referenced Te Whare Tapa Whā to provide a framework for their beliefs around hauora:

> I think that Te Whare Tapa Whā is probably the best model to go off… All those physical, wairua, mental… Tick all those boxes… Whānau. I believe that too… I've only just started trying to get a balance between those four. And wairuatanga is the only one that I can get to through pūoro. (Summer)

Many participants described wairua as being the foundation to hauora. As Māia explained:

> The wellbeing of my wairua. Foremost. Without the health and wellbeing of my wairua, my tinana (body) won't flow, my hinengaro (mind, thoughts) won't flow, the whānau won't flow… So that's key for me… A happy, healthy wairua… The foundation of everything. To me it's the vehicle, the driver… I know when I'm not on the right path, or I've deviated, and my wairua is like pulling me back. (Māia)

Arios had a similar whakaaro:

> Hauora and oranga (health, livelihood) to me is… Spiritual connection… I'm a great believer of once that spiritual connection is solid everything else will become solid. So if you look at Te Whare Tapa Whā model, so taha wairua for me is the main pou. Like all the other pou can be slightly weak… That means you know, my tinana could be all over the place, my whānau could be all over the place, and same as my hinengaro, but as long as my main pou is taha wairua, then everything else will come along with that. (Arios)

As the participants highlighted the importance of their wairua being strong some proposed that healing on a wairua level must occur before healing other pou. Whitney explored this concept:

> Learning mātauranga Māori and mirimiri (massage) confirmed it for me that physical… Raru (trouble, problem) and ailments… Can stem from the emotional and energetic and spiritual raru and manifest into physical… It's like mirimiri first of all we approach the emotional and energetic and spiritual health before we do the physical stuff. You know, the way I was taught… The wairua mahi, the energetic mahi, the unseen mahi is the tuakana (elder sibling), and then the teina (younger sibling) is the physical. (Whitney)

She used the metaphor of a tuakana-teina relationship to demonstrate the inherent relatedness between the levels of a person's raru. For example, they may be experiencing physical raru that stemmed from a wairua transgression. To address both issues, the causal one may be addressed first.

The participants kōrero suggested taonga pūoro may be helpful to heal within te ao wairua, as it can transcend the physical and metaphysical realms. As Summer explained, taonga pūoro can transport us to:

> A liminal space… You're not in the present or the past… You're just between time. (Summer)

As taonga pūoro opens the possibility of moving beyond the physical word, it also allows the opportunity for alternate experiences. Summer surmised:

> Taonga pūoro is more for the wairua and less for your ears. (Summer)

Almost all participants experienced visual phenomena during taonga pūoro healing. To give deeper context to the following discussion, some of these healing experiences included taonga pūoro used alongside other Māori practices including karakia, pūrākau, and waiata.

Many participants were contemplative when asked how they would define their visual wairua experiences. Pania gave the following perspective of the distinctions between the constructs *vision* and *visualisation*:

> He [taonga pūoro practitioner] took us through a session. And it started, I was following what he was telling us to do and where he was taking us and then all of a sudden I was gone. Like, no you're taking too long and I'm gone… I was swimming in the sea like I was a whale. The next minute I was soaring like I was an eagle… But I was still very much aware of what was happening around me… A visualisation is something we create. A vision is something we're experiencing…. No it was very much a vision… That's the vibration. Its freeing our connectedness to the tinana to allow us to move in te ao wairua. (Pania)

This sentiment was echoed by other participants who regarded the visions as something they experienced while still retaining conscious awareness. Pania implicated the ability of taonga

pūoro to transcend our physical realm through its vibration and resonance. As it freed this space, it allowed her to move within the wairua realm.

Adam's first experience with taonga pūoro was at age 15 in a rehabilitation setting. During that time, he was given the opportunity by a practitioner to create a kōauau and he still sees that practitioner today, 20 years later. Adam reflected on his experiences and explained:

> I think that taonga pūoro opens the doors to, especially for males I think, permission to see in colour, permission to see in patterns and something beautiful that's not all dark and grr… You know that brutality that has been imposed upon us as a sense of manhood… It's introduced, it's not an Indigenous thing… Taonga pūoro, it has been a significant part of myself seeing in colour again… Very borderline hallucinogenic stuff… Hearing things… But mostly seeing colours and that just coming off people… I definitely think the taonga pūoro woke those things up. (Adam)

Adam believed assumptions regarding masculinity being dark, brutal, and hard have been imposed on Māori men through colonisation. He articulated how taonga pūoro allowed a space to reawaken and accept a more authentic way of seeing and being as a tāne that is genuine to te ao Māori.

Several participants had interactions with their tūpuna during healing encounters. Janine spoke of her first experience. She was in a poor frame of mind and getting sick. As the session began:

> I knew I had to shut my eyes and visualise what he [taonga pūoro practitioner] was telling me to do. So when he spoke for us to go dive into the water… In this particular case it was the moana because he wanted us to visualise seeing what was around us… As soon as I did the dive in, my mother appeared and came down and hugged me. And it's the first time I've actually spoken to her since she's passed. She comes regularly in dreams, but she won't speak. And I could never understand why, but I know now why… So, that was beautiful. Even, she held my face… And I put my hands over her. And I tell you what, it was lovely to feel her warmth again. Because that's what she used to do to me, grab my cheeks, both sides of my face, kiss me and say I love you. It was just so real to me… But that's not the first time she's come you know… Its every time I go [to the sessions]. (Janine)

Janine had been to three Oro Ātua sessions by Jerome Kavanagh and had unique experiences each time. However, connection to tūpuna was a consistent element:

> One time I remember I was actually in a forest. So different sceneries. Going to different places where all these people were and I didn't have a clue who they were. That was really unreal, because I was going "oh my gosh"… But I guess now that I understand it more, I think they were my tūpuna coming. The ones that have gone years and years ago. Because I didn't feel scared. (Janine)

Several participants described experiences with people they identified and recognised as their tūpuna. Ruth participated in taonga pūoro healing with her study rōpū at the conclusion of 2020 following what had been a tough year. To begin, she felt a release with the weight of

her body sinking into the ground. She spoke of an internal tension she had been battling all year and how pūoro assisted in overcoming this:

> There's a part in his session where he takes us to the mother whale… So just before that part, you know I received a vision of this kuia descending down to me. She came to me, she had long hair, the moko kauae (female chin tattoo)… She was very young, and she looked like my Mum… And she came down to me and she gave me a hongi (touching of noses), and she goes "tēnā koe kui". So she called me kui and I was like "what?"... I remember that so vividly and then she goes "tēnā koe kui, it is time". And then she went you know like happy… Content with what I was about to do, and what she was meaning, her intentions to see me… That's when I just was able to let all the doubts, that was holding me back from me pursuing to be myself… Had fallen off. And then it came to the whale sound and I just cried… That was a huge healing for me… To let go of the fear and the doubt… That I had, of everyone's perception of me if I was to step into who I'm created to be… It felt very… I was connected to her, but I didn't know her yeah… That was the step through the door… Cause I've always seen the key, I've always seen the door. Now I see the door open but I never step through it. So that was my step through the door… It was like my body was asleep but my consciousness was still awake and still receiving pūoro. (Ruth)

Ruth's explanation of this wahine as young, looking similar to her mum, and having a moko kauae might suggest she was one of her tūpuna. Therefore, while she did not recognise her as someone she has met in this physical realm, they may have been connected through whakapapa and taonga pūoro opened the space for them to connect. Ruth's kōrero suggests this was a transformative experience.

Summer's wairua encounter was similarly interconnected to multiple aspects of te ao Māori. She described hearing a particular pūoro that sounded like Tānemahuta and guided her to feel as though she was in the ngahere. Upon hearing this all she could see was one of her tūpuna running through the bush:

> I was watching him and then he just picked up something off the ground… And just ran with it. And I remember talking to my mate, because me and my mate went, and she said she felt the same thing. She was like "bro I just remember being in the bush". And I was like "oh my god, I was the same"… I reckon it was a vision. I reckon I actually saw someone. Because it was… Bush from back home. Don't know that I've been, but I recognised it as home. Like up the river. And I knew that I hadn't been there before but someone I knew had been there. Or like a tūpuna of mine had been there. That was him… And I liked it… I knew I was safe. My tūpuna were there. It was so cool… It wasn't scary… It was nice. And I felt… In a way it was kind of like a lucid dream… You're present but you're asleep… At one point I remember looking around at the room, and then opening my eyes and being like "fuck, did I just like…". Because I remember seeing people lying down. And then I opened my eyes. (Summer)

Summer went on to describe having visual experiences across her lifespan. She commented these occurrences happened so often as a child that "it wasn't like… A thing… They were just a part of my life". She shared a memory of herself and her four cousins who were all born in the same year. Their Nan would put them down for naps and upon waking they would kōrero about how they had been together in another realm during their sleep. On one such

occasion Summer had a bad experience, she was screaming and appeared distressed to her Nan. Although she cannot recall what happened, Summer and her cousins were all baptised to give them protection. Following baptism “it stopped”. Summer then began having lucid dreaming experiences when she was hapū (pregnant) which she described as scary. She acknowledged taonga pūoro “was a good way for me to be in that space and not feel scared like I have been before”. It facilitated a space where she felt safe and at ease having wairua experiences.

Taonga pūoro was similarly described by other participants as being a space where wairua experiences could be nurtured and had safely. Māia discussed taking her daughter to a session with the intention of giving her an experience with taonga pūoro and meditation. She described her daughter as having the “gift” and the exceptional experience she had:

> She had quite a deep meditation where she connected with one of our tūpuna. And she… She also had seen him get his mataora (traditional Māori facial tattoo) done… So that for me was more than what I expected for her to experience… So when we were taken out to the moana with the tohorā (whale) she also saw our tūpuna getting his mataora done… My daughter was 12 at the time... She loved it. She didn't want to go at the beginning. But then when we went, she was deep into it. And because she has… The gift as well… For me, I’m trying to nurture that side of her. And I thought taonga pūoro would be pretty… Special. And it definitely took her to a place where she hadn’t experienced before… I knew it’d be amazing… And beautiful and all that but it was just next level. (Māia)

Such experiences can be a gift. Although in Western psychology and psychiatry these experiences may be incorrectly pathologised or attributed. As the above excerpts suggest, taonga pūoro may be an approach through which we can view, support, normalise, and make sense of these experiences in a way that is appropriate to te ao Māori.

Whitney shared her knowledge and experience of te ao wairua through taonga pūoro. Her motivation to share was centred on the belief that more research in this space is necessary, particularly as wairua experiences are common amongst Māori. During a pūoro session she was acutely aware of otherworldly presences in the room "coming in and out… The doors were chattering away". A profound experience then took place:

> It's not often this happens to me, I'm not really a seer… There's a lot of us that are seer's but… I had a wahine that came in… She wasn't really human… She came in and stood over me. And I just knew she was sort of more… She had like an Atua essence… She came in and I was thinking "I don't know what's going on". Because it's not common for me… But she came and she stood over me… My head was down. But this is what I was seeing in my mind's eye. Stood over me and I was thinking "oh my gosh, what is she? What is she gonna do? What is she here to do?". And she put her hands over me and, and immediately I knew it was awhi (embrace), she was like "I'm just here to help take away… I'm here to help you release… Just relax, just let it go"… She put her hands out… And I just felt like she was lifting… She didn't say anything. I didn't even see her, all I saw was from here [waist] down. She had these seriously warrior legs. I remember like wow, I have no idea what she is. But she was a staunch wahine, I want to say like Atua Wahine she was some sort of, I don't know, goddess or something. But she had this light around her that's how I knew she was

> not human human… She just was like, “I'm just taking it” and then just left. And I was like “I don’t know what just happened to me, but it was amazing”… Like I said, its just not something that I go through often. So I was quite overwhelmed… No words or anything… She was just urging me to surrender and release. And then she… I just felt this literal lift… I was head down but she had her hands over me… And then she just went. And she was like, “that's all, don't worry, there's nothing else to this”. (Whitney)

Whitney described initial apprehensiveness towards the experience, although the wahine was able to quickly put her at ease. Whitney experienced a dramatic shift as the wahine took what needed to be released. She went on to describe it as “amazing. Freaky. But beautiful. Beautiful because I have a lot of friends who experience a lot in like te ao wairua, so I guess good because I can kōrero with a lot of people about stuff like that… I think I will remember it forever”. She compared each session she has experienced to “a little detox… Almost like a bit of a cleanse”.

Manawa had a wairua experience where she saw herself as a child, which she referred to as unusual and dreamlike:

> It stood out massively for me anyway… I ended up covering my face because I was just crying.. So many tears came out. And it was like I went into a dream, even though I was awake… I visualised things, I had visions… And it was like I wasn’t there anymore… I went into a different realm… And I went back and saw myself as a child. And went over and hugged myself, like as if I was my own Mum. And just hugged my inner child. Like, the child of me, the child version of me. And I just

> hugged her so tight, and I was just like you know, you're going to be okay. Like, you actually are okay. And this all is going to be okay. And it is… That's what happened during the healing session… He [taonga pūoro practitioner] does talk about mother and child [with a tohorā nguru (nose flute) made from the tooth of a mother whale who was stranded on the East Coast of the North Island with her calf] so I did wonder whether my subconscious or something took that, what he'd said, and that influenced it? Or whether it was just me… I have no idea… I don't even really know how to explain it. Because it just blew me away… And it shifted something inside of me. I just felt amazing for ages afterwards… Even that shift, it never left… The way that I felt afterwards, was just so light. (Manawa)

Manawa contemplated the influence of pūrākau in the session. She concluded that she wasn't sure of the experience's genesis however, the healing she experienced from it was immense and has stuck with her. Similar to other participants, something shifted and released, leaving her with a feeling of lightness.

Kody and Richard, a couple who were interviewed simultaneously, spoke about their individual experiences and how they connected to each other within the realm taonga pūoro opened. Like others who have experienced Jerome's Oro Ātua they were guided out onto the moana as though they were albatross and looking for a whānau of whales. Kody first explained:

> [I] flew out into the water and I… Saw my little family and they weren't in the circle, just going swimming around and around. And then I landed, he [Jerome] goes "land in the middle". So I did. And then I saw this other albatross up in the sky. I said oh,

“ko wai koe? Who are you?”. And they weren't responding to me… And then I had a look and this bird was wearing a necklace. And it was a necklace that Richard [partner] wears around his neck. And I was trying to get his attention. I was like “hey, it's me”… But he wasn’t having a bar of it. And so like we ended up both sitting in the circle side by side. And then… All of a sudden, there were multiple rings of whales around us… It was once [just] me in it. And once Richie came into it there were all these other whales… And then I became human… And then I went down to the water, cause I wanted to look up and see these rings of whales from the water… And then it started getting real dark and real black. And I was like “oh, I'm going too deep”… And all of a sudden this whale came down and I heard him say “no, we've got you… And then put me on his back and like, lifted me out. And I was like who is this whale?... And then I was like oh this is my koro (grandfather)… And then because you think okay these are all my ancestors around me and for them to say “hey no, we've got you”. Then I felt…. Yeah and then like I went back up and I turned over and I was hugging him. Then… Jerome’s like “okay whānau, now we're gonna, you know, fly back to the beach”. And I was like “no”… I turned back into a bird and I was like “no, I don't want to leave”. So I was trying to get back down to this whale. But I just couldn't. So I had to fly back… And then I was talking to Richard afterwards and I was like “hey, did you see me like (inaudible) were you an albatross?”. And he was like “no, I didn't see you”… And then I was like “yeah, me and you were in the circle together” and he's like “now that you say that”… And he was like “I could not sit in the centre of the circle, I could only sit on the side”. Because we weren't both in the centre… We had to be off side of the centre to be in the circle. (Kody)

Richard echoed Kody's experience by explaining how when he went out onto the moana he struggled to sit down on the water and was unable to sit in the centre. Kody advised "I was there with you, but you couldn't see me". Both of their descriptions were vivid and it appears they were intertwined within te ao wairua. There was a strong sense of interconnectedness with tūpuna and symbolism of their whakapapa with the rings of whales surrounding them.

Richard detailed another wairua experience he had during taonga pūoro. Jerome guided him to visualise himself as a fish and to swim into the moana. Richard said "I just couldn't do it. I kept turning into a bird and flying over the top… I kept trying to dive into the water… I just couldn't do it". Once he was flying over the deep ocean, he revealed he could see a lone baby whale:

> And it was weird because I felt like I knew the whale… All I can visually remember hard out… Like it happened for real… All of a sudden it just went (noise) like the eye of the whales staring right into my face… That's when I kind of knew, I knew them… I was thinking you know, maybe it was Auntie or something like that. But then I've realised later that maybe it was my mum visiting me because I lost my mum a few years ago… It was weird because I was… A dog. I felt I was… It's weird to say, but I felt like I was a dog trying to hug this whale with my head. And we're… Just rubbing heads… I was just constantly wanted to rub my head on the head of this whale… It sounds out of it… Felt like love I suppose… But at the same time it was sad… He [Jerome] actually… Before that he's talked about a mother's connection with a mother or something aye. He actually did speak about that… It's honestly almost felt like each session has been tailored for me personally… Even though it's for group and everything. But yeah, it just felt like love and it felt like sadness, it felt like sadness

> hard because I couldn't believe it… Whenever I feel some sort of presence of my mum… I'm just trying to say like “hi mum”. (Richard)

Richard’s mother had passed away and pūoro combined with the accompanying kōrero guided him to experience a connection with her. In some Oro Ātua sessions Jerome will kōrero about the connection between mother and child, often embodied as whales. Woven together, these aspects were able to take Richard to a space where this connection could be experienced.

A pattern amongst these experiences is the connection participants had with their tūpuna. These interactions saw their tūpuna providing them tautoko (support), awhi, whakamānawa (encouragement), and aroha (love, care, affection). Their tūpuna, despite having left this physical realm, assured them of their continued presence. Some of these tūpuna were not visually recognisable and Richard offered an explanation for this:

> What are the chances that when you enter this realm, you're entering the spirit realm… So they're able to come and visit you as well? And what are the chances that you even know people four generations back in your bloodline? Do you even know who your great, great, great, great grandparents are? You might know their name. Do you even know what they look like? Can you picture them in your head right now? So let's say 10 generations back… There would have been someone out there that probably loved whānau… So what are the chances that someone's come to check on you and been like… “That's my blood line. I'm so proud of them, even though I don't know them, never met them”… In our bloodline, you only go for a couple of

> generations, there's already 10, 20 odd people that it took to get together to make you, you know? (Richard)

Richard suggested although we may not be consciously aware of the multitude of tūpuna we have across many generations, they are numerous. Acknowledging the many people who contribute to one's whakapapa can give a sense of belonging, protection, and comfort when experiencing their presence and wairua.

All of the kōrero shared above implies how taonga pūoro can contribute to hauora on a wairua level. Some participants spoke more explicitly to this and Manawa proposed taonga pūoro offers a "different type of healing". She explained her view:

> I think it contributes really well in the wairua space… When you look at models of wellbeing like Te Whare Tapa Whā… There's lots of information and opportunities to get healthier physically, there's lots of promo about it and lots of resources out there. There's lots of things like act, commit, belong in the community. There's all these campaigns for whānau in community… There's always things out there for education stuff, but there's not, there's no campaigns for wairua work. There's no ads saying, you know, get in touch with your spiritual side, and… You know, let's all focus on healing so we can clear the pathway for our children. (Manawa)

Manawa makes an important observation surrounding hauora initiatives in Aotearoa. While many Māori understand the vital nature of wairua to our wellbeing, it is not always considered in the various health systems we interact with. The lack of public promotion and

inclusion of wairuatanga in mainstream messaging contributes to the difficulties with people accessing support in this space.

Summer explained how taonga pūoro can heal our wairua and reflects on other Māori practices offering similar benefits:

> I knew it was gonna hit that deep wairua level of healing and that's what I needed because not everything can transcend that deeply into your own soul and your own wairua and your manawa (heart)… Not everything can and like the only places that I feel can get to that level is like being on a marae, like a karanga (call)… Sometimes karanga can just hit deep. And a mōteatea (traditional chant) can just hit deep. (Summer)

Other wāhine participants highlighted Māori sound practices that offer similar benefits to taonga pūoro. Pania shared the practices she believes open up te ao wairua:

> Karanga, karakia, oriori (traditional lullaby), taonga pūoro, waiata… They all have to do with sound. (Pania)

As Pania highlighted, these practices are all related to sound and oro. Oro is a sound, an energy, a vibration, deeply felt not only in our tinana but also in our wairua.

Summary

The participants generously shared their experiences and perspectives of taonga pūoro in relation to te ao wairua. All participants spoke to their experience as touching their wairua

and allowing them to have exceptional experiences in this realm. Their experiences transcended our physical world and provided them guidance, reassurance, confidence and peace. Many felt light and settled after these events, often a stark contrast to how they felt prior. Taonga pūoro opened a space for deep connectedness with their loved ones who had pass on and their tūpuna. This process often coincided with the collaboration of taonga and pūrākau. This suggests there may be a synergy of wairua and hinengaro processes at play enabling these experiences to occur.

Te Taha Hinengaro

[Taonga pūoro] has definitely helped me on that journey of learning how to truly self-heal. (Anituhia)

This theme highlights the participants experiences and perspectives that relate to Te Taha Hinengaro. Many participants described how taonga pūoro was meditative, expanded their consciousness, and offered a uniquely Māori healing approach to psychological distress. This theme begins with discussion of the participants meditative encounters and the benefits these had on them.

Meditative

A considerable number of participants reflected on taonga pūoro as being meditative. Manawa advised “while music’s good for your soul and your spirit and how you’re feeling, I find taonga pūoro is more like a meditation type of tool”. This differentiates taonga pūoro from being a practice of leisure and positions it as a practice of healing. Several participants had tried meditation practices previously with mixed experiences. Yet through taonga pūoro,

they found a meditative experience was more accessible. Jessica explained her history with meditation:

> Taonga pūoro have so many textures… It has… Sort of the whole package for me. My great thing for a chaotic brain… Is distractions… Peaceful, safe distractions. Which taonga pūoro do because they'll sit you down, keep you focused on a feeling or a sound or a thought… And I actually have never been able to find meditation before… So I feel like that healing thing… Can be contained into that meditation thing. Like I actually found meditation. I've actually found silent meditation since then… And it really did start with taonga pūoro. Being able to sit down, catch those key breathes to move through the process and get to a point of stillness or mindfulness. (Jessica)

Taonga pūoro provided a means through which the healing benefits of meditation such as stillness, presence, and mindfulness could unfold. Jessica, and several other participants, proposed through their meditative experience they were able to calm their chaotic brain and to whakatau te mauri (settle their mauri). Arios explored this settling aspect:

> If my mind's settled then I'm actually open to start to feel the vibrations and the frequencies that are surrounding us… I just use taonga pūoro as a… Way of calming my mind down. Focusing. But even then, once it goes down and I'm in that focused, mediative state… That's when my journey will begin. But yeah I'll tell you what, definitely helps when you've got these sounds going on. It just feels good. Like even if you just get regular music that sends a nice awesome cooling vibration and through that you can start getting in touch with all the other vibrations like the air,

> everything… The mauri of everything. So yeah, I'd say that'd be it for me really. Just to try and calm my mind down, only cause we get so busy with everything. (Arios)

Arios suggests taonga pūoro can assist him to get to a meditative level from which the healing journey begins. He noted this healing is on a psychological level as it calms his mind, allowing reprieve from the bustle of everyday modern life.

Charmaine introduced taonga pūoro at her children's kura (school) and explained how calming it was for the tamariki and teachers:

> We played it and did like a yoga session for them where they meditated… All the children were laid down in the whare at this marae… And we did a meditation class for them and I played that, Jerome's instruments for them, and it was amazing. And it got them really relaxed… Because the kids were quite hectic that day. There were a few that were a little bit naughty and things like that. And their energy was very high. We wanted to just calm the mood and settle them… Because it was coming to the end of the day… They looked really relaxed and giggly and happy. It was really nice… Kept them all balanced I'd say… Along with me and the teachers and that… It was beautiful. (Charmaine)

Charmaine noted the palpable difference in everyone's disposition and the overall atmosphere through playing recorded taonga pūoro. It helped to facilitate moving the tamariki from high energy to a calmer state.

Numerous participants highlighted how taonga pūoro was beneficial for providing them respite and a chance to pause:

> It was such a meditating type of experience. And you just decluttered… I just decluttered everything that was going on in my head. And like, just paused for an hour and just relax. (Summer)

Summer proposed benefits to Te Taha Hinengaro through "decluttering". For Summer, this "clutter" may have related to her concern and worries, as mentioned earlier in theme two, that came along with becoming a first time māmā and wanting to do the right thing for her son.

Anituhia's meditative experience was healing psychologically as it helped to reaffirm the validity of mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori to her:

> When I did the rākau meditation [one of Jerome Kavanagh's taonga pūoro sessions on YouTube]… For the first time… I actually felt really in that meditating zone of pure consciousness… It truly backed up what I constantly hear people say… You know, our wairua flows through the rivers, it's on the mountain tops, it's in the rākau… It's through the sounds, like it's everywhere and everywhere and taonga pūoro really helps me… Get into that space and… It brings you to that space… Where you can let go of like self-judgment, hate and all of those things. And truly open up your heart space and look at love in such a different [way]. (Anituhia)

As she reached "pure consciousness" for the first time she saw the legitimacy of taonga pūoro healing, allowing her a foundation from which she could see the world and herself

differently. She related this to her acceptance of our interconnectedness with te taiao thus, strengthening her identity.

Other participants spoke of taonga pūoro being a medium through which self-reflection was possible as Ruth advised “it took me way in to where I was supposed to have a look”. Summer believed self-reflection was important for her growth as a wahine and a māmā:

> It really helps you just sit down and collect yourself and just… Be with yourself. I think it's easy to just avoid trying to look at yourself. Self-assess and you know, analyse the things that you're doing. And taonga pūoro really forces you to do that even if you don't want to actually open your eyes to your own bullshit. (Summer)

Summers description suggests taonga pūoro allows self-reflection in a non-confronting way. Whitney, a mirimiri practitioner, shared a similar sentiment. The meditative nature of taonga pūoro initiates space for deep connection with oneself and an allowance to be present:

> But in my opinion, they both [taonga pūoro and mirimiri] help to reset and calm the nervous system. From the fact that you're having to keep somebody still, you're having to get them to breathe, you're having to get them to tap into how they're actually feeling… Slow down yup and be in the moment. (Whitney)

Being present was believed to also provide a “reset… There’s so much trouble in this world… To have that moment of blocking out the noise of the world… It’s a reset” (Ruth).

Other participants who play taonga pūoro shared how it helps them. Jessica advised she had difficulty finding stillness and was “never able to catch [her] breath”. Taonga pūoro helped her on this journey:

> My first I suppose… Proper, memorable taonga pūoro… What got me on the path, is probably hearing it with one of my friends… She was making out of glass… I brought one of her glass pieces… That glass piece actually was one of the best practices that I could have had. And it was because it was an easy play. And it got you to stay with your breath. And at that time, I just never was able to catch my breath. And I learned over time to catch my breath with this pūtangitangi. (Jessica)

Anituhia also found taonga pūoro to be useful for times she needed to focus her attention on certain tasks:

> I feel very distracted by lyrics and things like that. I find pūoro also is very good for when I need to get some mahi done or something like that… And that's when I can… Just zone in to the pūoro and… Get what I need to get done. (Anituhia)

Some participants suggested the depth of mediation they reach with taonga pūoro is accessed through some of our other traditions also:

> For me, it allows me to go deeper into a state of whakamoemiti (to express gratitude, praise, thanks), meditation… I can't get that with anything else but taonga pūoro. Apart… With like karanga and waiata. But there’s just something different about the frequency in the energy, me te hā (and the breath) of taonga pūoro. (Māia)

> Maybe a karakia brings me to that same space as well. But once again, you could tie that to taonga pūoro as well, because of the vibration. It's probably the vibration. (Anituhia)

These suggestions propose there is something inherently healing about sound. As participants discussed these practices (karanga, waiata, karakia) they also contemplated the distinctiveness of taonga pūoro and related this to oro and frequency. Their experiences also speak to te ao wairua. It is not surprising that many aspects of their kōrero were intertwined as through te ao Māori we understand all these aspects will be entwined at all times.

Expanded Consciousness

Several participants discussed how taonga pūoro helped to expand their consciousness. Adam described an aspect of taonga pūoro that he finds notably healing is its ability to awaken things inside that he believes "humans should be awake to". He spoke of it opening a pathway for possibility and to better oneself. He proposed a hypothetical day, "wake up, go to work, lunch, smoko, come home, dinner, sleep", and how when we succumb to that reality we can be easily triggered by anything that disrupts it. He described the alternate reality taonga pūoro offers:

> I would say waking up… The intelligence to formulate your own reality. I don't want to say not conform… But… Not to be too hard on yourself fitting a mould or fitting a space. Because I think a lot of the turmoil, or frustration, comes from "I don't fit in this space"… I think it somehow helps to revisit a space to just relax. (Adam)

The sense of expansion taonga pūoro offers creates a space for self-acceptance and peace. He also noted his experiences with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and how settling taonga pūoro was "it helped me to just navigate that instead of just rushing around". Adam then shared how returning to Māori wellbeing practices after mainstream approaches was healing:

> As a youth experiencing taonga pūoro among other modalities… I'd have to say that I had to stay within that realm of Māori healing because it was a fine line of… Things becoming overwhelming. And then mental health involvement and stuff like that… I bounced around the DHB [District Health Board] for quite a number of years and then came back reintroducing myself to Māori healing with [removed name]. Jerome. Hearing his story and wow its common, it's not like… I'm gonna sit in this little corner and keep this to myself. It was wow, cool… Heart expansion stuff. (Adam)

Hearing Jerome's kōrero and journey to wellbeing assisted the depth of healing taonga pūoro afforded as it was combined with whakawhanaungatanga (process of building connections). The process of whanaungatanga allowed deeper connectedness between Jerome (as the practitioner) and Adam (as the tangata whaiora). Adam was then able to relate to the story Jerome shared and feel as though he could begin opening up about his journey.

Charmaine detailed her expansive experience with taonga pūoro that opened up new ways of connecting with her tūpuna:

> They [taonga pūoro practitioners] verbally worded the connection with your ancestors, but I felt like I could feel it physically while they were mentioning it as

> well… And then afterwards I felt more connected to my ancestors… I know I'm connected to them, but I never really thought of them like that. But they opened my eyes to how connected we really are to them. And how we can just forget that and that we were in the same stomach as my mother, and her mother… To think of it in a deeper way. We're deeply connected. But to feel it as well. So, the love that I felt for my Mum, they helped me find the love for my grandmother the same way. So, to not just look like "you're just my grandparent" and not feel anything which is how I felt most of my life. That session was the first session that actually made me aware of feeling the love for my mum, loving my grandparents the same way, and their ancestors. (Charmaine)

Charmaine described a healing that is multifaceted. During and after the session she had a greater sense of connectedness to her grandparents and tūpuna. Rather than viewing each generation before her as distant or removed, she was able to view things through a Māori lens where the boundaries within whānau are more fluid.

Other participants reflected on how taonga pūoro opened them up to a greater understanding of their tūpuna. Whitney referred to this aspect as a "remembrance":

> Most taonga pūoro it's a journey… You know, you start out, there will be like a peak of the journey… Definitely set up for… Emotional releasing and you know, deep healing. Yeah… Just resonates. And I'd say… I sometimes call it like a remembrance. You know, it's like this feeling of remembrance of what our tūpuna had and did. (Whitney)

Greater reflection, understanding, and appreciation for those that have come before us was experienced through taonga pūoro.

A Uniquely Māori Approach to Healing Psychological Distress

Some participants discussed how taonga pūoro offered them a type of hinengaro healing that was different and distinct to talking therapies that are common in Aotearoa. Anituhia spoke with candour about her experiences with mental distress and the impact taonga pūoro had in her healing:

> I've had more clarity, and more guiding and healing from taonga pūoro, then I have my therapy sessions… Because taonga pūoro for me, has given me a healing where I get the same benefit from a therapy session, but I don't have to talk about or have to vocalise… Because for so long… Especially in my healing process… I was stuck in a phase of being a victim. (Anituhia)

Anituhia explained how talking therapy was challenging as it required verbalisation of her trauma, whereas taonga pūoro afforded her healing without having to talk about distressing experiences from her past:

> In therapy, don't get me wrong… There were helpful aspects. But… I came to a place where… I wasn't truly healing because… My therapy session was coming up, and I was going, "oh no, here I am"… I'm constantly a reminder of what's happened to me… Just from having an appointment with a therapist… I felt like therapy made me overthink things too much like made me get into a state of overthinking or constantly… Bringing myself back to the experience… Whereas taonga pūoro…

> When I'm truly healing and addressing my things… I address it but I'm not stuck in that constant overthinking it… It just breaks down that anxiety I suppose… What I'm trying to say… Is that when I use pūoro in a healing sense… It's not that… I'm using it to completely numb out everything that I need to address because I'm very aware of how important it is for us to, you know, address certain problems or… Catch ourselves thinking and things like that… But pūoro gave me… Pūoro was the vessel that gave me the self-belief that I was truly healing, regardless of the overthinking or being brought back to that moment... So therapy didn't give me any sense of easing that overthinking stage, you know what I mean, or that therapy didn't help me with the subconscious stuff. Whereas taonga pūoro helped me with those areas… It got me out of that subconscious conditioning. And it got me out of that, continuously spiraling, and this whole state of mind… You know, like, truly blocking myself really from doing the healing that I needed to do. (Anituhia)

Here Anituhia acknowledged the role and importance that talking therapies had for her and the tension that exists as it was unable to address all aspects of her mamae and distress. Rather, taonga pūoro reassured her that she was and would find healing without her cognitions getting in the way. From this space the healing flowed, something she had difficulty with during talk therapy. She went on to explain that the healing can complement each other and her disappointment that clinicians she was working with did not suggest Māori healing practices to her:

> The assistance of my doctors, my psychiatrists, and my therapists, you know, the people I did have around me was helping. But it was almost like… I was coming to a plateau of my healing where I wasn't getting any better. And I wasn't getting any

> worse… But I was still in that same state of mind… And that's why it was… Taonga pūoro just keeps presenting itself to me… Rongoā Māori just keeps presenting itself to me and I wasn't listening… Because there was… There was no one out there… Like my therapist wasn't talking about it. My doctor wasn't talking about it. And neither was my… I think it's a psychiatrist I was seeing… Even though I was Māori, none of them were talking about you know Māori healing or anything like that. (Anituhia)

Fortunately, Anituhia ultimately found taonga pūoro and was able to find healing she needed which was culturally congruent.

Another perspective was shared by Manawa. She had a wairua experience (highlighted in theme three) where she saw and comforted herself as a child. Her experiences with Western therapies had seen suggestions of healing the "inner child" and she described being perplexed by this:

> You know because I'm a youth worker, so I've done a lot of study around child development, youth development. All these kinds of things. So, I remember being told things like, speak to the inner child. Or you know, heal the inner child. And always thinking… That just makes no sense. And how is anyone supposed to do that? Like "oh yeah, oh I just need to go and heal the inner child, I'll just go do that then". And it wasn't until I had that experience that I was like… Man, that's actually the child version of me that they must be talking about. But I don't believe that can just be, that anyone can just access that type of experience by going to see a psychologist. Or

> talking about their trauma or any events that have happened. Like its completely different. (Manawa)

Manawa's kōrero highlights the importance of acknowledging past trauma and the significance of doing so in a culturally appropriate way. She proposed the healing she experienced from taonga pūoro can clear the way for therapies with a focus on challenging and changing cognitions to be more effective:

> When you have these healing experiences then you can, then it frees you up to focus more on like CBT or things that you can do yourself. And trying to give yourself messages and try to retrain your brain. But like, it's really hard to go from a place of darkness, and just like, "okay now I'm going to change that message in my brain… I'm just going to change my thoughts now". (Manawa)

Other participants spoke similarly regarding the role of taonga pūoro in helping them to centre themselves in a position from which psychological healing could begin. Māia shared her experience:

> Recently I've gone through a bit of postnatal depression. I don't actually like using those words I think it's a colonised whakaaro on that. But it's helped me just to come back into the present, back into me, back into centre. And just even me playing taonga pūoro while I'm trying to put my son to sleep it's just giving me that time or that space just to kia tau. I think it's been really important for me at this time not being able to get to many wānanga or getting out there and stuff like that and still wanting to have that connection with te ao wairua, te ao Māori and being… In that space. (Māia)

Māia acknowledged certain Western psychiatric diagnoses and constructs do not align with her, thus the healing offered to treat her mamae by non-Māori or 'mainstream' providers may not be well-aligned. Whereas taonga pūoro allowed her hinengaro healing whilst also addressing her wairua and connectedness.

Summary

Through their experiences, participants were able to have profound settling, relaxing, insightful, and reflective moments. These times were often referred to as meditative. An extension of this meditative aspect was the opportunity for expansion of their consciousness, opening themselves to new and broader ways of knowing. Some participants who had experienced mental distress and contact with mental health clinicians proposed taonga pūoro offered a distinctly Māori approach to healing Te Taha Hinengaro that they felt unable to access with Western therapies. The distinct healing taonga pūoro offered facilitated healing to flow without the aspects found most difficult in talk therapies.

Oro

Something happens in the nervous system during an oro session. (Whitney)

This theme details the participants perspectives of the oro of taonga pūoro. The participants explored oro and the elements it encapsulates such as resonance, frequency, and vibration. The participants whakaaro centred around their understandings and experiences of oro and the benefits they believe it may have for hauora.

Jessica explained her understanding of oro within taonga pūoro:

> I think there's an inward oro and an outward oro… Quite a lot of taonga pūoro people will say pūoro atu, pūoro mai… So the concept of pūoro, the kupu is a pū, or a container. And oro, so a container of echoes or vibrations. So when they're talking about that as in pūoro atu is a vibrational outwardness and with that you would be the pūoro mai. There's this exchange of oro, of echoes, and vibrations that happen. (Jessica)

She highlighted taonga pūoro as having two distinct types of oro: pūoro atu and pūoro mai. This again highlights the reciprocal relationship between taonga and tāngata and demonstrates the inherent mauri pūoro possess. Jessica then elaborated further on the origins of oro descending from the deity Pāoro:

> Pāoro is the goddess of echoes… To my understanding she created caves, of course because that's where echoes are the loudest. And the origins of sound being… From silence. And light and colour having a vibration of its own too. And music having a colour of that same free vibration. So, this whole… Intertwining again of everything can actually just happen with that word oro. And that Atua, Pāoro. And in my understanding… If we were able to make that a kupu or a word, Pā as in village, and oro as in echoes… It's more like a village of echoes… That's just the way my mind thinks and breaks down… It makes me able to connect to Pāoro better, visualise her quite a lot more. (Jessica)

Most other participants did not unpack the meaning of oro. However, many spoke of the distinctive frequency of taonga pūoro. Richard described the frequency as similar to that

found in binaural beats, an auditory illusion where two different frequencies are listened to simultaneously in each ear. Binaural beats are anecdotally suggested to have a wide range of benefits:

> Have you ever heard of binaural beats?... I think it's similar to that. I think it sits on that sort of level…. It's more frequency, it's more of a frequency thing… And binaural beats, from my understanding, it's like a frequency… Some people use it to go to sleep, some people use it to lucid dream, for astral projection and everything like that. I think it sits virtually on the same level but binaural beats are created probably… Through a computer that sends frequency, whereas this is a natural frequency. (Richard)

Richard highlighted binaural beats are artificially constructed, whereas taonga pūoro create natural frequencies that may assist with relaxation or wairua experiences. Arios reflected a similar belief that the frequency and vibration of taonga pūoro creates a uniquely Māori frequency:

> Just like every sound creates vibration and creates those frequencies, taonga pūoro is in… Its own frequency as well… For me, it just has a frequency that stands out above and beyond… There's a few songs, like in Māori that are out there… Got the full band behind it but then you can start hearing like a pūtorino… Kōauau. Even some points you can hear a pūtātara. But you know… For my ears… They just roll with the same sort of frequency. (Arios)

Arios described the frequency as resonating on the same level he does, reminiscent of earlier discussion regarding our creation pūrākau. His proposal suggests the taonga deriving from his taiao is important as these frequencies stand out and connect most notably for him above others from foreign traditions.

Several participants highlighted that "every sound has a vibration" (Whitney). Ruth suggested "all I see is vibration" when contemplating pūoro. This vibration and frequency were considered inherently healing as Adam advised:

> I believe that taonga pūoro and our instruments are within a frequency range that's to do with healing. (Adam)

Manawa suggested the vibration allows a union of realms to connect and interact, amplifying the healing experience:

> I wonder whether the pūoro themselves, and the vibration of them, brings in Ātua or our tūpuna into it. So that it's not just me, myself and I meditating. It's me plus other… Like a higher source type thing. (Manawa)

This implies oro can transcend realms and invite those not in this physical world to be present with us. When connected to these presences a greater depth of healing is possible.

Other participants proposed the vibrational healing is manifested within the tinana through its response to the pūoro:

> The biggest thing you feel like, the vibration wasn't actually coming at me. It was resonating from within. So it was a vibration that was like inside, coming out. So think of it like a balloon. You know blowing up… It was just inside me then coming out… Something's getting pushed out but other stuffs getting put in to take its place. (Arios)

Others described the oro coming from the pūoro, working its way through, and coming out:

> I could feel it through my body. Like its coming inside my body and coming out sort of like a big bass speaker. (Charmaine)

Pania recalled a memory with her brother and a kōauau:

> I remember him coming home with a kōauau once it's… The bone one. And playing it and the way he explained its healing properties, its ability to heal. So, the bone, the sound of the breath through the bone, Tāwhirimātea… Sends a vibration that resonates with our bones, within our bones… It would actually be the vibration within our own bones aye that shifts. It causes that, the ripples, through the body, through the cells so it changes the frequency of everything. (Pania)

Pania highlighted the interaction of the taonga, Tāwhirimatea, and the breath and mauri of the tangata. All three of these elements were necessary for the healing of the oro to be possible. Pania described how the oro goes into the cells of the tinana to clear space. Whitney also explained the healing that occurs on a cellular level:

> I think the difference too with taonga pūoro is… It just feels like healing on like a cellular level… My mentor always talks to us about, with miri and romiromi (massage), how we are healing the DNA like we're healing the mamae that's held in the cells like passed down to generations and I feel like that's the difference. For me when I hear taonga pūoro, I feel like it activates something different inside of me… It just feels like immediate healing. It feels like the right frequency for me too… It just feels like immediate healing right to like the core. (Whitney)

Pania reflected on the impact oro has not only on a cellular level, but also on the wai (water) in the body:

> If you've sat in on a few you would [of] experienced or seen or witnessed people just breaking down… And that's the movement of the waters. Helping the waters and clearing the blockages… Vibrations. (Pania)

Whitney and Pania suggest that taonga pūoro can clear blockages and intergenerational mamae that could be on a wairua, hinengaro, relational, or physical level that is held in the tinana. Oro enables the wai that may be stuck to move and release.

Anituhia described an experience she was guided to through taonga pūoro. She had been immersing herself in pūoro and described being guided by her intuition. Through this, her and a friend went for a drive with their tamariki to Castle Hill in Te Waipounamu. Here they utilised the materials they took with them as taonga pūoro:

> I had this wee box with me and the piece of greenstone and a couple of other significant crystals that I had been holding with myself during my healing. And there was a moment… Because we were up there and we were cleansing… Meditating and we were really feeling the mauri of this area. And before we knew it here was my friend and I… Starting to make… Sounds. She had this… It wasn't a flute but… She was playing it like a flute… I started… With this wooden box kind of just rubbing it… It was just making… Like [a shh] sound… I don't know it was a completely different feeling for me… Going from just listening to it, to actually being a part of the vibration and playing it. (Anituhia)

Anituhia described the deep impact the resonance of the taonga and the mauri of the whenua had on her. The effect was significantly different from her past experiences of being a recipient of taonga pūoro being played by others, to now practicing it and experiencing the vibrational effects first-hand.

Many participants utilise recorded versions of taonga pūoro in their daily lives often to assist with meditation, sleep, focus, or to help them get back to the space they accessed at a kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) session. The participants had varying views of how oro can contribute through recordings. Some participants noted its absence:

> I think there is a slight difference with someone playing it in front of you as opposed to listening to it through a phone. Still healing but yeah… For instance, our classes that we used to teach… Everyone was like sitting in front of [names removed] and they'd be playing their taonga pūoro. And it's like a ripple effect… Whereas I think when you're playing it via the stereo or your phone, I don't think that would have the

> same effect… Because our tūpuna didn't play, record on devices… To get the most authentic outcome and you know benefits and the effects is to listen to taonga pūoro in person. (Māia)

Whereas others suggested the oro is still present however, the practitioner's mauri and wairua is missing on recordings:

> There are even recordings of taonga pūoro… Everyone's got a smartphone. So then you can even… Use that… Not as good as you know having someone that plays to get you into that state of calmness… One phone I'll play say ngahere noises or sounds of the moana, the other one I'll look up google for taonga pūoro sounds… I'm a fan of devices in the sense that you can use them as tools to start bringing out things. Especially those that are digitising their sounds. You won't fully get… But you can sort of… The sounds still carries the vibration… The only difference is that you won't have, we'll call them a practitioner, behind that to really fully give… I suppose you can get at most a watered down version. (Arios)

As is typical tikanga for Māori, participants observed that experiencing taonga pūoro in person, kanohi ki te kanohi, allows for a deeper experience as the mauri, wairua, and presence of all parties involved can be felt and used as a resource.

Summary

Most participants did not refer to oro specifically however, their kōrero had a consist pattern that featured various aspects of oro. The participants contemplated taonga pūoro as possessing a frequency that resonates with us as Māori because they are from our taiao. The

vibration from this frequency was proposed to open up new healing spaces that could influence the cells and wai of the tinana. Some participants proposed this allowed for intergenerational mamae and blockages to be unstuck and released. The participants had differing beliefs around oro in recorded forms of taonga pūoro. Despite this, oro was a distinct aspect of their healing experiences.

The Protracted Influence of Colonisation

What was once common, is now rare. (Adam)

This theme highlights the patterns amongst participant kōrero relating to their understandings of barriers towards taonga pūoro utilisation in Aotearoa. Overall, their whakaaro linked to an underlying idea, that colonisation has influenced and continues to influence the status of taonga pūoro as a healing practice today. Their perspectives centred around legitimacy, access, awareness, and disconnection from te ao Māori. This theme ends with the participants proposal of taonga pūoro as a decolonising practice.

Legitimacy

Several participants discussed the protracted influence colonisation has on the legitimacy and validity of taonga pūoro for healing. Some participants began by discussing the validity of mātauranga Māori in our current colonised reality. Manawa expressed “some people think there’s no science to it. When I think there is. There is definite science. It’s just not the right science that they want to talk about or whatever”.

Others shared this whakaaro, that Māori knowledge and practices are often not considered "evidence-based" or "scientific" in Aotearoa. Whitney recalled a conversation she had with her sister regarding the validity of our practices:

> We don't know the science, but I think there's something to do with the nervous system. Something happens in the nervous system during an oro session and… During mirimiri and romiromi as well. And you know it's funny because I've said this before, "it's not science". And one of my sisters said to me, "it's not science as we know science, but it was science to our tūpuna. They did study it"… And it's very true. It is our science. (Whitney)

These wāhine acknowledged the difficult position taonga pūoro is situated in in our colonised reality. Many participants considered the ongoing impact of colonisation and how that looks today:

> It's still an effect of colonisation that we have to really prove to the man, and everyone, and even some Māori because they don't, you know like all Māori have very different beliefs. (Manawa)

Manawa acknowledged how diverse we are as Māori and the wide range of our experiences, knowledge, and affiliations with our culture. Anituhia also explored challenges that we may face in our communities when promoting taonga pūoro:

> I believe that… Our society and the way that Māori are stigmatised here in New Zealand is a big barrier for Māori to connect with that [taonga pūoro]… Especially

> when… We go from learning, this Westernised, conditioned, colonised way of living, for someone to turn around and tell you… This is okay now, this is how we heal, it's going to be very confusing for our people. (Anituhia)

Some participants spoke about Māori healing not being accepted or valued as reflected in government decisions around what to fund. Richard highlighted Work and Income (WINZ) subsidising healthcare and dentistry but not Māori healing practices "because our cultural healing practices are not recognised… The government won't pay out for them". Janine discussed how ACC is beginning to implement Māori practices with their inclusion of rongoā Māori. She describes this as a move in the right direction as "it should be available for anyone".

Awareness and Access

The invalidation of taonga pūoro through colonisation has resulted in a lack of awareness of it and accessibility to it. Jessica believed taonga pūoro to be the "problem solver of the world… Sort of the answer to world peace in my eyes. It's just… Having to convince everybody". She gave a lived example of this lack of awareness while she was practicing taonga pūoro as a friend received her moko kauae:

> Her whole whānau, Māori as, were like, "that was so beautiful". And I go, you know what it shouldn't be surprising… It was so deep, but I go, I love it… It's beautiful to invoke those feelings in somebody, but we shouldn't be surprised by that. They should be… Brought up with them. (Jessica)

Many participants expressed a similar whakaaro of Māori not being aware of taonga pūoro. Alongside the reasons surrounding legitimacy other explanations were given:

> I don't think people realise that its even a thing to help with healing to be honest. Some people will but a lot of people I know, especially Māori… Especially if you've grown up in like gang environments or… You know if you've not grown up around your marae maybe... I just don't think people know about it much. (Manawa)

Manawa acknowledged disconnection from te ao Māori correlates with disconnection to our taonga. Whitney spoke of the mamae she has surrounding this disconnection and lack of awareness amongst our people:

> I think taonga pūoro… I felt the same way with miri, like I get upset when I meet people… You know Māori, who don't know what it is, who've never experienced it. And I'm just… I tell everyone. I'm like, we should all have experienced it and we should be experiencing it regularly. For our emotional and spiritual health. (Whitney)

Other participants spoke of misconceptions surrounding taonga pūoro. These tended to be towards issues of "earning the right" to use and play. The notion that a person needs certain whakapapa or special authority to be an exponent of taonga pūoro was explored by Adam:

> Like the whole… Are you allowed to do that? Who gave you the rights? What's your whakapapa? You know. And the only thing holding ourselves back is ourselves. (Adam)

Adam hoped going forward that more of our whānau will be utilising taonga pūoro:

> For it to be common again. Taonga pūoro "oh yeah". Something that's kind of tapu. Oh it is… But until I realised that it's not so tapu that its untouchable. (Adam)

He acknowledged taonga pūoro is a taonga, it is sacred to us. Nevertheless, it is not so tapu that it should not be used and practiced respectfully by Māori.

Manawa spoke about the limited awareness surrounding taonga pūoro and her struggles to find Māori healing:

> It's a big generalisation, but if you're growing up in the city like I did, and away from maybe your marae… You know your home… You just don't know where to go. You don't know what's out there… I know where to go now. But it's because I've spent years trying to find these types of things. It's because I've… Actively gone and looked. (Manawa)

This whakaaro was echoed by other participants who shared they sought out taonga pūoro and other Māori healing approaches, but they were not readily available in all areas. Kody shared:

> I was only exposed to it because I saw it on Facebook you know…. But if I'd never been exposed to that one thing… I never would have gone. (Kody)

Richard highlighted that not all people utilise or have access to the internet and social media:

> Yeah you can capture all the young people through social media, but there's a lot of people in the world that aren't on social media or don't look at posts from businesses. (Richard)

Adam expressed taonga pūoro should be more mainstream, rather than people only discovering it if they find themselves in a challenging position as he did in rehabilitation:

> It should be easier for the youth of today… To be implemented. It shouldn't have to be… Based on personal stuff, it shouldn't have to have been… At 15… A whole heap of trouble, and then you know… We could skip that whole and offer [it]. (Adam)

Many participants spoke of the limited number of practitioners doing this mahi. When asked whether she encourages others to experience healing from taonga pūoro Manawa advised "no because there's not enough of it around. I wouldn't have anywhere to send them". Adam also contemplated the access of practitioners and their ability to share their mahi:

> It might sound basic but the availability of practitioners… I'm not too tech savvy but I think Jerome's the only person that offers his skill set and that mahi you know openly and regularly. Brings it to the street…. And to the schools. There's probably a lot of people doing mahi but I would have to say… And for those willing to learn, even like myself, if there was a class tomorrow, my days free… I'd attend it you know. (Adam)

Another insight was the barriers to gaining knowledge of taonga pūoro. Limited opportunities are available for workshops on making and playing pūoro. Other participants highlighted the

discrimination amongst our own communities surrounding pūoro practitioners being self-taught.

Some participants noted socioeconomic barriers to taonga pūoro healing:

> You might just not know anyone who plays taonga pūoro or be able to get to you know wānanga or... Yeah, they just might not have the means to experience such things unless it's on online. They can hear it but to actually meet someone or… Yeah, I think that could be a barrier. (Māia)

Māia and Kody proposed some suggestions for overcoming these obstacles:

> Going into the communities more. And maybe holding space in those communities and having it more accessible and maybe not… I don't want to say like [not] charging because, you know, we have to make a living. But I find a lot of whānau who do need a lot of healing can't afford wānanga or can't afford to do things. (Māia)

> A little bit more of a system to allow others so that cost wasn't a barrier for anybody. (Kody)

Strategies to overcome economic barriers were discussed. Richard and Kody suggested a koha box that people could contribute to if they have the means to pay for another person to experience pūoro.

Disconnection

Participants considered the role of disconnection to te ao Māori as a barrier:

> They might be disconnected from te ao Māori. They might not go to wānanga or marae or you know, they might not affiliate anything like that… They might just not know how or have a connection. So, I think that yeah there is barriers. (Māia)

Whitney began by exploring the obstacle disconnection sets in regards to identity:

> Identity… Those struggling with their identity and not feeling proud or connected to our culture for so many different reasons. And there's so many of us. I think all of us are probably battling with that to some degree. But those who are really struggling, obviously, that would be a barrier. (Whitney)

Openness to taonga pūoro and its potential for healing was seen as a barrier by some participants:

> Them not being open. If they're not open, you won't get the full… You might get an idea of what's going on, but to actually feel it you gotta relax, you gotta be open, you gotta feel and that will take you on your journey. (Janine)

As many participants indicated taonga pūoro was healing for their wairua, they also acknowledged this may be an area of discomfort for some people:

> People who don't feel comfortable… Maybe in te ao wairua. They don’t feel comfortable to do that kind of mahi. They don't feel spiritual, you know? People who are… Still functioning and in a traumatised place. (Whitney)

A Decolonising Practice

Despite these barriers most participants shared the belief that now is the time to continue reviving taonga pūoro as a distinctly Māori healing practice that supports decolonisation. Whitney stated, “I can never think of a better word for it than reclamation. Like we really are… I don’t feel like we’re in the prime yet. But I feel like we're creeping up…”. Janine noted from her perspective “I can see that the younger generation are embracing it more”.

Some participants spoke of a palpable shift within their own thinking regarding the revitalisation:

> I stopped rebelling and started working and just said actually I have to… Change our kid's minds. And make them… Better thinkers. And better able to resolve emotions that actually aren't attached to us… I'm an artist. So I'm quite introverted. But taonga pūoro has put me in the public realm. And it’s that whole well, if you're doing this mahi you actually have to put it out in the open. For your tūpuna and… For the mahi that you're talking about. You have to be the proof in the pudding. You can't just talk. You have to do it… And that takes a face and a body and a physical sound not just in a museum when there’s buttons next to the taonga. (Jessica)

Jessica discussed her growth within her mahi as a pūoro practitioner. She spoke about the importance of action in this space, rather than simply words. Others made this suggestion and contemplated how to take action:

> I think a lot of work needs to be done in our back yard in regards to implementing what we already have… And not getting over the pain but kind of like shifting… How do we move forward? (Adam)

The concept of moving forward was noted by many participants who suggested we are currently "on the precipice of change" (Summer). Several participants linked this desire for change to wanting a better future for their tamariki:

> I just feel like now is the time to really delve and share a bit more about our traditional ways of healing… That answers really lie in there. And tapping into the more spiritual side and the wairua side of things to clear the path for like my children. (Manawa)

> Not having my parents around that. And then throughout their lives and not being able to show me. I'm changing that with my kids… I'm wanting to teach my kids and expose them to taonga pūoro, mau rākau (traditional weapon-based art form), te ao Māori. Yeah to change that, what I didn't get… I give my son pūoro just to play with. Just so he can see it, feel it. Even though he's not playing it, just so he knows... He will grow up knowing what they are. (Māia)

Māia and Manawa's perspectives link to the knowledge that they will be tūpuna one day and hope to leave a legacy for their mokopuna in generations to come.

Summary

Colonisation has created and perpetuated the barriers to taonga pūoro healing as highlighted by the participants. Despite these barriers, participants shared their perspective that we can and should continue to revive taonga pūoro as a healing approach. Their perspectives were grounded in the belief of the benefits this healing can offer. They described a shift within themselves and the collective to turn towards action with hopes for a better future.

Reconnection

> I am from a long line of Māori who have travelled and navigated the big wide oceans to get me here. It will never ever be taken away from me. (Summer)

This theme reflects the participants whakaaro of taonga pūoro ultimately being a healing practice of reconnection. Reconnection to various aspects of Māoritanga is important considering the barriers to taonga pūoro were largely related to disconnection. Reconnection and greater knowing through taonga pūoro occurred on several layers involving te taiao, whenua, whānau, tūpuna, oneself, identity, and te ao Māori.

Most participants considered how taonga pūoro is a practice and tool for reconnection and reclamation. On a foundational level participants contemplated how it connected them to te taiao and to whenua:

> I felt very loved and connected. Grounded. I felt like I was in touch with nature more. Very in tune. It was unreal. (Charmaine)

Greater harmony and relationships with te taiao were acknowledged by several participants:

> I guess that's the thing for me because like most of the sounds [of taonga pūoro] that I hear it makes me think of nature straightaway… So there's been times where I'd listen to it and like it and I'd think of a bird from it, but I know it's not a bird, but I'm thinking of a bird you know? And then yeah, it makes you feel a little bit more connected I'd say. (Kody)

Some participants advocated for taonga pūoro being a practice of healing for not only tāngata, but also for the whenua.

> Another aspect of what pūoro is that I believe, aside from the self-healing… Something I've also learnt through the likes of the whānau that, you know, run these pages… Jerome and other whānau down here that are raising the awareness of pūoro is the healing purposes that it has on our whenua as well you know… Not only is it healing for us but also giving our gratitude… Like our offering to our Ātua. (Anituhia)

Anituhia situates taonga pūoro as a practice that resonates with our Ātua, through which we can communicate our gratitude.

Connection to whenua was described by other participants who spoke of living away from their ancestral lands. Taonga pūoro afforded them the opportunity to connect with their whenua from afar:

> I kind of wanted to feel like I was back home without having to travel all the way to Whanganui. I just wanted… That feeling of connection. That feeling of… Being up the river. You just feel home. You feel the history. You feel the reo. You feel the culture. You feel the hui (gathering) that have happened there a million times, the discussions, the whakaaro that have been shared on the space. You feel that when you go home to wherever your papa kāinga or whatever or your marae. And I needed that but without having to travel four and a half hours. (Summer)

Kody had a similar whakaaro, with taonga pūoro offering her a sense of being at her marae despite being several hours away:

> It [the venue of the taonga pūoro session] obviously looks like a little marae. And it was funny because it was packed that night… And we were all in there… We're lying down and stuff. And then… When we woke up and he's like "oh come on whānau"… Everyone just didn't want to move, everyone was so relaxed they're just lying there. And he was like "oh you know whānau we can't sleep here". And then for a second I was like "shit, this feels like I'm at the marae"… I mean, I feel like I'm at the marae without actually being there you know what I mean? It gave you another sense of comfort… Especially… For us being away from up North, we're not from around here. So we're not just gonna be going to the marae all the time… Or our marae. So

> when we were there I was like “oh this feels nice, I’m like in the marae, but I’m in Auckland”. (Kody)

The ability of taonga pūoro to connect tangata to their ancestral homes through creating a marae-like atmosphere is an important feature as many Māori are dispersed around the motu and indeed the world.

Participants described taonga pūoro as linking them to their whānau members in unique ways. Adam described playing taonga pūoro for his daughters when they’re not with him, hoping they can figuratively hear him:

> I have two daughters. Miss them, longing for them. Playing in the kind of hope that they can hear, you know. Not in the literal sense but… Thinking about you. I’m missing you, you know. (Adam)

Richard and Kody shared how taonga pūoro has positively impacted their relationship and helped them locate a place of deeper understanding of one another:

> We've gone through in the past maybe year, we've gone through… Some rocky parts in our relationship. And I think without us even knowing it has brought us healing in our relationship. Without us even thinking about it or thinking that we're being healed or anything like that. Because there were some things that Kody used to do, and I used to get really pissed off. And then I had to remember “bro, she wasn't brought up like you… You were brought up in the country with kapa haka every single day, like la la la la”… And so I had to kind of pull myself up. Well, you know, sometimes I

> couldn't, but… Pull myself up and you know be like "oh Rich, you know, you guys weren't brought up the same… This is why this happened". And I think those things have kind of just gone away. And we just don't even think about it anymore. (Richard)

Connection was also seen to their wider whānau. Kody recalled her reclamation journey so far and how taonga pūoro has encouraged her to step further into te ao Māori in the hope of leaving a better legacy for her tamariki. She spoke of wanting to celebrate Māori traditions such as Matariki (Māori new year) in the future, that she herself had not been exposed to as a child. During an Oro Ātua session she described an experience that reaffirmed the direction she is moving in:

> After the latest taonga pūoro that we had… When I was flying away as an albatross I looked back and my family was on the beach. And they were… Reaching for me. And I was like "oh I'm sorry… I have to go". And then… When we finish I looked at Richie and I was like "I have to be the one" and he's like "what do you mean"… "I have to be the one that's going to leave my whānau", and like fully [step] into te ao Māori". (Kody)

Other participants spoke of their connection to tūpuna through taonga pūoro. This aspect was significantly present in their wairua experiences covered in theme three. However, the participants shared further insights into the link it facilitates to help Māori reconnect with their cultural identity. Ruth previously worked in a youth justice facility and suggested taonga pūoro would be healing in this space:

> Because 90% of them in there are Māori, they don't know any tikanga or any of that. Majority of them. It would be a good way for them to come back that way… To their culture… So when people say "I don't have the reo, I don't have the knowledge"… But our tūpuna did you know? And our tūpuna [are] in us. So, where the pūoro can access us to connect to our tūpuna… Then we become knowing of that. (Ruth)

The connection she speaks of also links to connection with te ao Māori. As has previously been proposed, to receive healing from taonga pūoro all that is required from participants is their presence. For tāngata who have had limited access to Māoritanga, practices such as this are a way for them to have a reciprocal interaction with their tūpuna and strengthen their identity:

> I think that having… Being… Finally feeling like I fit in somewhere… I had that sense of being like my first pūoro… When I had my first mirimiri done… The first thing that was presented to me by my tūpuna was that I'm protected, I'm grounded, and I'm guided… And that to me… Was me embracing pūoro for me to remember that… And I've got a connection to that because I wasn't feeling that anywhere else I suppose. (Anituhia)

Several participants suggested as Anituhia has, that their tūpuna presented taonga pūoro to them. It was intentional that they have found and experienced its healing. Being led by the knowledge that tūpuna are guiding you through life helps people to develop a deeper trust and relationship with them.

Many participants believed taonga pūoro had an ability to reconnect them more deeply to te ao Māori. Whitney articulated this "sometimes just experiencing it once can open up this sort of… Little journey of learning more about te ao Māori. You know, just immersing yourself further into te ao Māori".

Several participants spoke of a disconnection they had to their cultural identity and heritage yet te ao Māori kept presenting itself:

> I knew deep down that I was escaping wanting to be Māori and I was escaping who I truly was. It was always presenting itself to me. And it was just a matter of me listening you know what I mean? And fully embrace that… I have a connection to my rākau in my garden now. I have a connection to my whenua, you know… I take the time to give mihi (acknowledgement) to the rākau, to everything around me… But it took me so long to get there… That's what I love about pūoro because it has helped guide me in these areas of self-help because, you know… If my neighbours didn't think I was mad enough, they think I'm mad now (laughs)… And I had to let that go… I was letting the thought of what others in society had to say about my culture… In order for me to be healing in this space that I knew was the space for me. (Anituhia)

Taonga pūoro helped Anituhia to accept her whakapapa despite any perceptions that may be held by others. Once she acknowledged this, she was able to heal through practices that are uniquely Māori.

Kody's whakaaro was that taonga pūoro was the "*doorway*" to step through on her journey:

> For me not growing fully up in te ao Māori… It was almost the doorway for me to step into that… Like learning about it and then feeling it and knowing that. Because I always had this weird sense of… It wasn't safe to be in te ao Māori in a way. And then I don't know, it just opened up that door for me to be like "actually, it is safe in here. You're okay to be here". Yeah so then I've gone and signed up for te reo lessons. (Kody)

She went on to describe how taonga pūoro was an amazing "first step" for her delving into te ao Māori:

> I think it's such a great… Kind of first step type thing… Because… We've gone to te reo lessons before and things like that. And… Life just got in the way that we just couldn't keep up with it. And I guess the thing with… Listening to taonga pūoro and it being kind of a first step is you don't have to do anything. You literally just have to be… You just have to show up and be there… And be open to experiencing whatever you got to experience… And before, I've never ever thought I'd have a moko kauae. And like a couple of times now since then, like when I've been in it, I've seen myself with one. (Kody)

Many participants shared the understanding that it does not require a particular level of knowledge or ability to enjoy the reconnecting benefits of taonga pūoro. As Kody has gone deeper into her journey she has started to see herself with moko kauae, another Māori taonga depicting the whakapapa of the wahine. Kody's journey has been momentous from uncertainty to envisioning herself with her connection to te ao Māori worn proudly.

Richard reflected on Kody's journey and made an important insight:

> Even if it wasn't… I don't believe this. But even if it wasn't healing through sound, just talking about how it's brought Kody closer to te ao Māori, that's healing in itself. You know what I mean connecting people, having connectedness or connecting people back to the culture is healing in itself without even turning the sound on. (Richard)

Summary

The participants kōrero suggested taonga pūoro heals through reconnection to several aspects that are integral to our identity as Māori. Significantly, these connections were linked to tūpuna and te ao Māori. Colonisation has been detrimental to many Māori regarding connection to our culture, identity and practices. The participants suggest taonga pūoro can be healing to help us overcome this. Succinctly stated by Richard, taonga pūoro is "only a small piece to the bigger picture of te ao Māori. But it's an important one".

This chapter has provided a thorough presentation of the findings from this research. The following chapter provides a detailed discussion.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The intention of this study was to explore Māori perspectives and experiences of taonga pūoro and its potential as rongoā. This was examined through rangahau questions that investigated Māori understandings of taonga pūoro, Māori experiences of taonga pūoro as rongoā, and Māori perspectives of how taonga pūoro may be beneficial to hauora. This chapter begins with discussion of the findings constructed in the previous chapter and reflects on these in relation to the rangahau questions and existing literature. Following this, an outline of this studies strengths and limitations, future rangahau recommendations, and clinical psychology implications are provided. Finally, the chapter ends with a conclusion.

Māori Understandings of Taonga Pūoro

The participants descriptions of taonga pūoro were layered. Some began by explaining the whakapapa of their knowledge across their lifespan. This evoked childhood recollections where taonga pūoro were largely used for play, ceremonially, or within kapa haka. From these initial accounts taonga pūoro were positioned as Indigenous Māori instruments. The participants went on to highlight the natural resources these taonga are made from including kōhatu, rākau, shell, pounamu, wheua, and hue. All these elements from te taiao have previously been noted as a leading feature distinguishing taonga pūoro from Western instruments (Lodge, 2007). Despite participants considering taonga pūoro as instruments, there was little discussion of them for entertainment. Their use for entertainment is debated in the literature (Beatson, 2003; Makoare, 1998; Rollo, 2013; SOUNZ, 2020a), and it may have been omitted within the participants kōrero due to the focus of this rangahau.

Upon deeper reflection the participants characterised taonga pūoro more conceptually. Firstly, taonga pūoro were considered to personify Māori creation pūrākau notably the

narrative of Tāne breathing life into Hineahuone (Reilly, 2018). Utilising pūrākau to make sense of taonga pūoro substantiates existing literature that proposes our historical narratives offer us an explanatory framework through which we can perceive the world (Cherrington, 2002; Rangihuna et al., 2018). Despite these aspects of mātauranga Māori often being misinterpreted as "fables" (Pouwhare, 2016), these findings demonstrate their importance in the kete of Māori ontology and epistemology to help Māori understand the world.

Participants also characterised taonga pūoro through their innate connectedness to Ātua. They advocated the notion that taonga pūoro are intrinsically linked to Ātua via whakapapa. For example, a taonga made from a rākau was considered to whakapapa to Tāne, who ultimately is a descendant of Ranginui and Papatūānuku. This allowed them to also locate themselves as interconnected within the same whakapapa network. The participants conclusion of taonga pūoro as intrinsically connected to Ātua supports Flintoff's (2004) argument that taonga pūoro are best understood and appreciated when the cosmogenic narratives outlining their conception is known.

Taonga pūoro were also considered the personification of te taiao. The participants proposed any aspect of te taiao has the potential to be taonga pūoro, including the human body. Hence, tāngata not only assist the sounds of te taiao to be heard but can also use their physicality to be pūoro. Some participants suggested the wind brushing past our ears was pūoro. Or the sound of our heartbeat which mimics the heartbeat of Papatūānuku. Therefore, taonga pūoro was understood to be always available. This acceptance of te taiao as descending from the same genealogical line to tāngata is summarised well by Rangiwai (2018), "ko au ko te taiao, ko te taiao ko au (I am the environment, and the environment is me)" (p. 650).

Further acknowledgement of this union was highlighted by participants within taonga and tāngata relationships. The participants locating themselves in the same whakapapa line as taonga pūoro concurs with previous literature signifying this relatedness. For example, a participant in a study by Timoti et al. (2017) cautioned, "be watchful that you do not harm your elder Tāne" (p. 3). In this rangahau Adam noted "I came from the earth too. I grew from the ground. I'm a seed of Tāne too". Another participant highlighted how taonga pūoro in adulthood reminded her of her childhood belief that she was the guardian of Hineraukatauri's cocoons that she saw in her taiao. Participants also argued the necessity of building relationships with taonga as akin to that between humans. The mutual connection was considered a synchronistic relationship where taonga benefitted from having their reo heard and their mauri enhanced, and for tāngata their wairua and connectedness was enriched, corroborating past literature (Cattermole, 2017; Hodgson, 2018).

The overall pattern in the participants whakaaro demonstrated their conceptualisations of taonga pūoro were underpinned by whakapapa, the genealogical principle that provides order to the world through demonstrating the interconnectivity of all things. The findings imply Māori understand taonga pūoro as kin descending from the same primordial parents. This study offers a new contribution to the literature by describing everyday Māori understanding of taonga pūoro whereas previous research has centred on the perspectives of experts, exponents, and practitioners (Flintoff, 2004; Makoare, 1998; Rollo, 2013; Tamarapa & Tikao, 2017).

Māori Experiences of Taonga Pūoro as Rongoā and its Benefits for Hauora

To provide context to the following sections of the discussion it is important to outline the participants conceptualisations of hauora. Overall, their conceptualisations were holistic with

wairua, hinengaro, and tinana being most notable and less emphasis on whānau. Consequently, they were consistent with the existing body of research in this area with several participants directly referencing Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1998; Pere, 1982). Several participants proposed wairua as the most important aspect of hauora that must be addressed first in healing encounters. As Whitney advised, "*the wairua mahi, the energetic mahi, the unseen mahi is the tuakana, and then the teina is the physical*". This belief has been previously acknowledged in the relationship between Tohunga Wiremu NiaNia and psychiatrist Allister Bush who's therapeutic mahi is founded on the principle of all people being foremost spiritual entities (NiaNia et al., 2016).

This study demonstrates taonga pūoro facilitated transformative healing experiences. Participants were guided to these experiences through an eagerness to incorporate Māori healing into their lives; through whanaungatanga, with whānau and friends taking them to Oro Ātua or a similar healing session; or by chance after seeing taonga pūoro online through mediums such as YouTube and Facebook. A commonality was their experiences being cleansing, releasing, relieving, or comparative to a detox. This kōrero proposed the healing to be cathartic, allowing them to purge and release mamae held in their physical being, their wairua, their hinengaro, their relationships and other spaces. Their kōrero was similar to that of Jo'el Komene (2009) who spoke about his experience of learning to play kōauau in his Master's thesis. He described a particular overwhelming experience that saw "a release of old, deep-seated feelings, feelings that I thought had been resolved. The release that took place through this experience was life changing, and I felt as light as a feather" (p. 3). Many participants spoke of significant change in their wellbeing following the session with the profound healing benefits lasting long after. For some, their altered disposition was visibly and energetically noticeable to those around them. Ultimately, taonga pūoro provided healing

that shifted participants further away from the darkness of Te Pō and deeper into the light of Te Ao (Smith, 2019).

Wairua experiences were a key feature of the participants kōrero and these tended to have a visual element. These experiences involved:

- seeing and interacting with whanaunga (relatives) and tūpuna who have passed away
- receiving tohu and awhi from spiritual entities
- seeing themselves as children
- seeing colours around people
- seeing with their eyes closed
- experiencing a tūpuna memory or past event
- being transported to another part of Aotearoa
- interacting with others who were in the session within te ao wairua

Participants contemplated these experiences and concluded they occurred while they retained their conscious awareness but were not visualisations they were manifesting. Rather, the participants alluded to these experiences being related to taonga pūoro opening up te ao wairua therefore, allowing wairua experiences that are not easily explained in our physical realm to take place. For some participants who have had such experiences across their lifespan taonga pūoro was a space for them to nurture this side of themselves. For others this was their first time having a cognisant wairua experience. Some participants' experiences aligned with the literature that advises tohu wairua can manifest in our physical world and may be interpreted and used to guide our lives (Rangiwai, 2018). This contrasts with Western

psychiatric and psychological assumptions that would typically characterise such phenomena as markers of psychopathology (Taitimu et al., 2018).

This rangahau supports the growing body of literature related to wairua. Rangahau by Lindsay et al. (2020) identified six categories of wairua experiences amongst their participants: īnoi/karakia (invocations), ngā mea o te ao wairua (non-material entities), tapu (spiritual restrictions), matakite (extrasensory perceptions), te wehenga o te wairua me te tinana (disembodiment), and tohu (guidance). Some of the wairua experiences described in this rangahau are not captured by these categories. An additional category can summarise these experiences:

- *Freedom to move within te ao wairua*. Taonga pūoro opened space for some participants to move in te ao wairua. These experiences included interacting with others who were in the taonga pūoro session in te ao wairua and the ability to move, travel and visit parts of the whenua their physical being was not in.

Wairua is widely accepted as fundamental to Māori wellbeing (Valentine, 2009; Valentine et al., 2017) and this notion was endorsed by the participants. Despite this knowledge, "mainstream" or non-Māori mental health services in Aotearoa fail to adequately incorporate and attend to wairua in practice (Valentine et al., 2017). There is potential for wairua experiences to be incorrectly determined as psychopathology (NiaNia et al., 2016; Taitimu et al., 2018), and treated accordingly thus failing to adequately address a person's distress. The current findings propose taonga pūoro to be a wairua strengthening practice that provides healing and evolution on a level that is not accessed in traditional psychology and psychiatry. Mahi a Atua, a Māori approach to healing mental distress, is a great example of how

mātauranga Māori informs a contemporary mental health approach that allows healing distinct from "psy" practices. Through encompassing an interconnected understanding of health and informed by the belief that wairua is intrinsic to people (Kopua et al., 2019), Māori can experience an approach to mental distress that is inclusive of all aspects of te ao Māori that are not found in traditional "psy" practices.

The findings advocate taonga pūoro also heals on a hinengaro level. A predominant pattern in the participants kōrero was taonga pūoro allowed a meditative experience. Many participants had sought the healing benefits of Eastern meditation practices in adulthood yet found a deeper, more meaningful meditation experience through taonga pūoro. This may have been related to the shared whakapapa tāngata and taonga pūoro have. It could also be linked to participants reconnecting with the practices of their tūpuna allowing a deeper connection to culture and oneself. There is a scarcity of literature on Māori and meditation practices, yet it has been proposed "for Māori, mindfulness practices for healing and wellbeing enhance the connection to te ao wairua and te ao turoa" (International Conference on Mindfulness, 2019, as cited by Ketu-McKenzie, 2019, p. 98). This interpretation suggests meditation promotes connectedness to multiple realms. As aforementioned, the participants proposed taonga pūoro exist in multiple realms therefore, these interplaying factors may enhance the overall experience. Ketu-McKenzie's (2019) doctoral rangahau found a culturally enhanced mindfulness therapy protocol to be effective at enhancing mindfulness, gratitude, awareness, and positively influencing psychological distress with wāhine Māori who had experienced childhood aversity. The culturally enhanced protocol included tikanga and was led by a Māori theme. This current study indicates the meditative aspect of the completely Māori practice of taonga pūoro healed participants hinengaro through facilitating mindfulness, stillness, clarity, focus, and self-reflection. It also had a positive influence on awareness

through the participants experiences of awakening to greater ways of knowing and being, self-evolution, self-compassion, acceptance, and inner peace.

Some participants spoke of experiences with mental distress and diagnoses, "psy" professions and the mainstream mental health system. Their kōrero revealed taonga pūoro offered healing of their hinengaro-related mamae not adequately addressed through talking therapies or psychopharmacology. This may be due to taonga pūoro provided a healing that is culturally congruent with a Māori worldview. This may have allowed participants to be naturally aligned with the practice rather than adapting to an imported therapy. Alternatively, it allowed connection to Māori culture, their tūpuna, and themselves. This may have enhanced their strength and resilience in relation to feeling secure in themselves. By healing their wairua first and foremost, it allowed them to find a level of wellness from which healing of other hauora dimensions could flow. The participants did not situate psychology, psychiatry and taonga pūoro in opposition. Rather, they explored the notion that each practice has benefits and could work together collaboratively. Mental health inequities for Māori are well acknowledged (Browne et al., 2006; Gassin, 2019). Although Māori leaders have advocated for Māori approaches towards this issue (Durie, 1999; Kingi, 2017), there is an ongoing lack of inclusion and recognition of Māori healing practices in mainstream mental health services. This study supports literature that illustrates the importance of culturally congruent approaches to mental health (Benish et al., 2011; Griner & Smith, 2006).

Another aspect of the participants experiences with taonga pūoro as rongoā was oro. The participants tended to perceive something occurring in their tinana during the healing session however, this was difficult to articulate. Some participants regarded taonga pūoro as influencing the cells and wai within the tinana. This allowed blockages and mamae in the

body to be cleared and released. These experiences all indicate taonga pūoro heals holistically. Similar to rongoā rākau , it does not serve to mend only one particular ailment (Kerridge, 2016; Mark et al., 2019). Rather it enhances the overall mauri of a person to contribute to wellbeing and balance. It also heals on different levels simultaneously, as seen on the wairua level, hinengaro level, tinana level, and on a cellular level through oro and ihi rangaranga (vibration). Durie (2009) argued Māori healers historically sought to restore harmony between the various realms of hauora. Taonga pūoro exemplifies how Māori healing practices go beyond Western notions of healing to provide therapeutic benefits interwoven with the whole self. It enhances wellbeing within the dimensions Māori deem important.

Furthermore, this rangahau revealed barriers that tāngata Māori might experience to accessing healing through taonga pūoro. These barriers linked to previous research that highlights how colonisation has influenced the legitimacy of Māori healing practices, knowledges, access and awareness to such practices, and disconnection to culture (Broughton & McBreen, 2015; Durie, 1998; Tohunga Suppression Act, 1907). Participants noted colonisation has created an environment where some Māori may not accept taonga pūoro as rongoā due to a lack of exposure or knowledge of it. This is reflected in the literature as Māori scholars have not always recognised taonga pūoro as rongoā. For example, Durie (1998) argued five classes that make up Māori healing: 1. ritenga and karakia 2. rongoā Māori 3. mirimiri 4. wai 5. surgical interventions. When looking to apply taonga pūoro to this framework it could be considered a form of rongoā Māori, however, Durie defined rongoā as healing practices involving herbal remedies (such as rongoā rākau). Taonga pūoro could be considered ritenga, although it is a fluid practice that is not prescriptive or ritualistic. There are different reasons for taonga pūoro not fitting into these categories. Perhaps our kōrero has

shifted since Durie's assertion. Arguably this is the case, as mātauranga Māori is fluid and as such, responds adaptively to current needs within wider social, historical, and generational contexts and is "dynamically infused with surrounding cultural influence" (Le Grice et al., 2017, p. 88). Another potential explanation is that taonga pūoro was not widely practiced as rongoā for many generations, so it was not generally acknowledged for its healing qualities. Other Māori practices, such as kapa haka, may also not fit well into any of these categories but rather sit within all of them (Pihama et al., 2014). This is the nature of Māori healing practices; they are inherently holistic and interconnected. Colonisation has undermined taonga pūoro for generations and its legacy has left unique difficulties for its application as rongoā today.

Notwithstanding, participants had an overarching belief that taonga pūoro can overcome the barriers to its utilisation as rongoā that colonisation has created through its ability to promote reconnection to a multitude of areas including te taiao, whenua, whānau, tūpuna, oneself, and to te ao Māori. The recent He Ara Oranga Inquiry (New Zealand Government, 2018) reiterated the generational alienation from culture that colonisation has caused. Overcoming colonial trauma requires reconnection to te ao Māori, and for many Māori this is a difficult challenge to overcome (Gilchrist, 2017). However, despite this Gilchrist (2017) advised there are "enduring threads of connection" (p. 75) that Māori inherently possess related to wairuatanga, whakapapa, and whenua that keep them connected. In this rangahau much of the participants kōrero suggested that taonga pūoro helped to reawaken those threads of connection.

Connection to Māori culture or "cultural efficacy" has been associated with greater psychological resilience and has a protective function against mental distress for people who

identify solely as Māori or Māori who also hold other cultural affiliations (Muriwai et al., 2015). Cultural efficacy has other implications for Māori including lower levels of depression, fewer depressive symptoms, and greater perceived wellbeing (Williams et al., 2018) and self-esteem (Matika et al., 2017). The current events in the world highlight an even greater need for tools to help connectedness. Lack of connection was highlighted in rangahau by Houkamau et al. (2021) as the area of Māori wellbeing most significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated lockdowns. Their findings suggested Māori missed their whānau who were outside their "bubble", experienced sadness, and social isolation. Taonga pūoro can be accessed from home through YouTube, Facebook and Spotify and may be able to alleviate some of this mamae through reconnecting people to the areas they are struggling with. Māori rates of mental distress, particularly mood and anxiety disorders, is increasing (Ministry of Health, 2020) and taonga pūoro can help settle peoples mauri, allowing them to return to a state of mauri tau (relaxed, deliberate). The current findings contribute to the body of literature endorsing "culture as cure".

Strengths of this Rangahau

A key strength of this rangahau is its kaupapa. When undertaking the literature review the paucity of research into taonga pūoro became apparent and rangahau of this practice as rongoā was particularly scarce. However, anecdotal and experiential knowledge suggested significant holistic healing could be found through taonga pūoro. The strong response to recruitment substantiated this along with the need and want by Māori for this rangahau. Consequently, this study has positive implications for Māori through contributing to tino rangatiratanga by advancing our self-determination through the promotion of mātauranga Māori and a Māori healing practice. There is a necessity for Māori solutions to Māori issues

and allowing these solutions to be found within our ancestral knowledge bases. It also contributes to ongoing revitalisation efforts of taonga pūoro.

Additionally, the Kaupapa Māori methodology that underpinned this rangahau was a critical asset. Kaupapa Māori theory provided the foundation from which this study could privilege Māori knowledge, voices, and stories. It allowed culturally safe processes to guide each step of the process and has resulted in a unique contribution to the existing body of literature. The implications of undertaking a Kaupapa Māori approach to this study was a strength as it ensured the research was undertaken with respect, integrity, and ensured the generously shared knowledge of the participants was protected and acknowledged.

Another strength of this rangahau related to the shared whakapapa and relationship I have with Jerome Kavanagh. Firstly, it allowed the kaupapa to be conducted in a tika way and ensured there was someone in the research whānau who could act as an expert advisor. In my interactions with the participants, this relationship potentially allowed them to trust me and open up more easily with their kōrero. Some non-Māori see whakapapa and whanaungatanga as a limitation in research, particularly from paradigms that value the pursuit of objectivity. However for Māori, these concepts increase the integrity of the rangahau and acknowledge subjectivity. Through processes of reflexivity, I was able to ensure my role in the rangahau, and the participants kōrero, was interpreted through a critical lens at each stage of the research. Therefore, whakapapa was perceived as an asset here.

Furthermore, there were several strengths of the method employed. Firstly, reflexive TA has theoretical flexibility therefore it was able to fit well within this Kaupapa Māori study. Secondly, there was a significant amount of literature and resources available about reflexive

TA meaning it was accessible for use as a new researcher and within the timeframe of this rangahau. Another strength of reflexive TA is that it produces results that are easily disseminated for wider audiences. As a study that seeks to give back to Māori communities, the data needed to be accessible to the public and produced in a timely fashion. Although the results are easily disseminated, they are the result of ongoing reflexive, critical engagement and kōrero with my supervisors.

Limitations of this Rangahau

One limitation that arose early in this study was the paucity of existing literature relating to taonga pūoro as rongoā. As a new researcher this created challenges when trying to build a strong theoretical knowledge of taonga pūoro. Several strategies were employed to overcome this challenge. Firstly, being immersed in the kaupapa was vital. This involved attending Oro Ātua sessions with taonga pūoro expert Jerome Kavanagh and spending time to kōrero and learn from him. This also included utilising several videos he has online discussing taonga pūoro. Secondly, other healing knowledge and practices were drawn from to inform the researcher including tohunga, rongoā rākau, karakia, waiata, and kapa haka. Finally, Te Whare Tapa Whā was employed to frame the section of the literature review that focused on taonga pūoro as rongoā. This provided a theoretical framework to make sense of the existing literature. This limitation reinforced the need for rangahau in this area.

Another potential limitation relates to the recruitment process. Participants were recruited through a pānui created by the researcher and shared by Jerome Kavanagh on his Facebook page. Following this many, but not all, participants had experienced their taonga pūoro healing with Jerome at an Oro Ātua session. This is important to note when considering the scope and generalisability of the findings. Future rangahau may include gathering participants

with broader experiences from more practitioners. As this rangahau contributes to an area of literature still in its infancy caution should be applied when situating these findings within the larger Māori community.

An additional limitation might be the researchers limited ability with te reo Māori. Some participants with greater Māori fluency may have benefitted by undertaking the kōrero in Māori. While the researcher's ability was noted in the participant information sheet this could have still presented a barrier. The information sheet advised if participants wanted to kōrero in Māori that arrangements could be made however none requested this. Some participants mentioned they had difficulty in describing their whakaaro in English, yet they did not have enough knowledge of Māori to explain it either. With greater fluency of te reo Māori there may have been deeper kōrero as many Māori concepts and emotions are difficult to translate adequately into English.

Another limitation was the researcher's inability to kōrero with all participants kanohi ki te kanohi. Some of the participants indicated a preference to meet via Zoom, although some indicated they didn't mind yet travel to their rohe was not possible. While Zoom is a useful tool, particularly at this current time while navigating COVID-19, it presented a barrier to deeper whanaungatanga and manaakitanga. Attempts to ameliorate this included spending time making connections and becoming comfortable with one another before the kōrero. Time was also spent following the kōrero as led by the participant. Zoom interviews also allowed more flexibility. For example, some participants were parents and interviews could take place later in the evening after their tamariki were asleep. The implications of doing some interviews by Zoom means that people may not have felt as comfortable as they would in person, which may have impacted their kōrero.

One methodological limitation in this study is the flexibility of the method used. This was a disadvantage as a large range of potential exists within the interview data, therefore the findings produced were reliant on the researchers subjective positioning. As a new researcher the analytic flexibility was challenging at times when decisions about what aspects of the dataset to highlight had to be made. The iterative process with my supervisors helped to overcome this and to acknowledge researcher subjectivity, a description of my subjective positioning was given to provide deeper context of how the results came to be.

Future Rangahau Recommendations

This rangahau provides an initial overview of Māori perspectives of taonga pūoro and its potential as rongoā for Māori. Future Kaupapa Māori Research is necessary to continue developing the literature in this area. Initially new rangahau could narrow the focus to specific realms of hauora allowing deeper analysis in these areas. The findings of this study imply taonga pūoro primarily influences Te Taha Wairua and Te Taha Hinengaro indicating these areas should be investigated first. The interactions of taonga pūoro and te ao wairua were a notable aspect of this rangahau and future studies might examine how this could be applied more formally as a therapeutic practice. In relation to Te Taha Hinengaro, studies may focus on the meditative aspects of taonga pūoro or how it assists people who are currently receiving psychiatric or psychological treatment. Future rangahau might also examine taonga pūoro as a tool for Māori who seek to become more immersed and connected to te ao Māori. Disconnection and alienation from culture has been damaging for many whānau and reclamation can be a difficult journey. Exploring taonga pūoro and the role it may have in this journey is important as it can be experienced by all Māori no matter their cultural efficacy.

Implications of this Rangahau for Psychology

This rangahau reinforces the importance of exploring the potential of Māori healing approaches for tāngata whaiora who may be experiencing mental distress or for enhancing Māori wellbeing. While not specifically focused on taonga pūoro as rongoā for mental distress, this rangahau does imply its ability to enhance wellbeing and release mamae held in multiple dimensions. The findings also corroborate previous literature outlining Māori perceptions of hauora as holistic and that wairua is foundational to wellbeing. This is pertinent in Aotearoa as the New Zealand Psychologists Board (2018) core competency guidelines stipulate psychologists must demonstrate knowledge of the importance of different cultural approaches to intervention and to actively include others' understandings into intervention design. These findings have implications for the ways Māori mental health is conceptualised and treated.

Western psychology does not place as much importance on people as spiritual beings, yet it is vital for psychologists working with Māori to recognise this and work with tāngata whaiora accordingly. In typical encounters within psychological practice, it may be difficult to conceptualise and treat wairua issues. Taonga pūoro could be a useful resource to work towards overcoming this. This is particularly relevant at this time during the COVID-19 pandemic when Māori are experiencing heightened psychological and social distress.

Conclusion

This rangahau explored taonga pūoro and its potential as rongoā through the perspective and experiences of 14 Māori. The findings indicate Māori perceive taonga pūoro through the explanatory framework of whakapapa. Through this interconnected understanding they

experienced profound healing that often resulted in a significant shift in their overall wellbeing. The interconnectedness of the healing on multiple hauora dimension is also seen in other Māori healing practices and is reflective of the philosophical concepts that underpin te ao Māori. Despite barriers to taonga pūoro being utilised the participants overwhelmingly considered its potential as rongoā through its ability to promote reconnection to multiple aspects of te ao Māori. Previous literature has proposed "culture as cure" (Muriwai et al., 2015) and taonga pūoro can support this endeavour through promoting Māori mātauranga, values, and tikanga. As a practice it contributes to decolonisation and the strengthening of Māori ways of being.

Jessica, a participant in this rangahau and a taonga pūoro practitioner, graciously began and ended our kōrero by sharing the reo of her taonga pūoro with me. Our kōrero was my first as a researcher and her actions helped me to settle and ground. Through this process I started to imagine a space where disciplinary boundaries could be more fluid and taonga pūoro could work alongside clinical practices. Encouraged by Moana Jackson's (2011) assertion that Kaupapa Māori Research allows us to dream, I imagined an Indigenous psychological practice in Aotearoa that was not only inclusive of Māori cultural processes, but also Māori healing practices.

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Appendix A

Ethics Notification

humanethics@massey.ac.nz Inbox - Google 30 April 2021 at 11:42 AM
Human Ethics Notification - 4000024092 Details
To: Abigail.Cashell.1@uni.massey.ac.nz, Pikihuia Pomare, Cc: humanethics@massey.ac.nz

HoU Review Group

Ethics Notification Number: 4000024092
Title: The healing potential of taonga puoro.

Thank you for your notification which you have assessed as Low Risk.

Your project has been recorded in our system which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.
If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director (Research Ethics), email humanethics@massey.ac.nz. "

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish require evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to complete the application form again answering yes to the publication question to provide more information to go before one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

You are reminded that staff researchers and supervisors are fully responsible for ensuring that the information in the low risk notification has met the requirements and guidelines for submission of a low risk notification.

If you wish to print an official copy of this letter, please login to the RIMS system, and under the Reporting section, View Reports you will find a link to run the LR Report.

Yours sincerely

Professor Craig Johnson
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Director (Research Ethics)

Appendix B

Interview Guide

Research question 1: How do Māori understand taonga pūoro?

- Can you explain in your own words what taonga pūoro is?
    - What settings have you experienced taonga pūoro in?
    - Is listening to taonga pūoro different to listening to music?
    - How are taonga pūoro different/similar to non-Māori instruments?
- How would you explain taonga pūoro to another person, such as a whānau member or friend who has never heard of it?

Research question 2: What are Māori experiences of taonga pūoro as rongoā?

- When were you first introduced to taonga pūoro?
    - Was it intended as healing, entertainment, as part of a ceremony?
    - When did you first experience it as healing?
    - How often have you experienced it? When was the last time?
- Think of a specific time when you have experienced taonga pūoro when used as healing. Can you tell me about this experience?
    - What was your intention when you attended?
    - Was it in a group or individually?
    - If it was a group was it just tangata whenua? Were there tamariki?
    - Do you recall how you felt going in? How you felt during? How you felt after? E.g., emotionally, spiritually, physically.
    - Were other Māori traditions included e.g., waiata, sharing of pūrākau?
- What happened after?
    - E.g., did you spend time with other attendees or the practitioner?
    - Did you share kai?
- If you've experienced more than one taonga pūoro healing can you talk about the different experiences?

Research question 3: How is taonga pūoro beneficial to hauora?

- What does health and wellbeing look like/mean to you?
- What do you perceive as the most important aspect to health?

- How might taonga pūoro contribute to your health and well-being?
- Will you go to further taonga pūoro healing sessions? Why or why not?
- Would you recommend taonga pūoro to your whānau or friends?
    - Why/why not?
    - Who do you think would benefit from taonga pūoro?
- Do you perceive any barriers to people engaging with taonga pūoro?

- Is there anything else about your experience that I may have missed and you'd like to share with me?

Appendix C

Recruitment Pānui

Are you Māori and have you experienced taonga pūoro as an approach to healing?

Are you interested in taking part in a kaupapa Māori research study?

If you answered yes I'd like to hear from you.

Kia ora, my name is Abigail and I am of Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāti Kahungunu descent. I'm doing a rangahau/research project to gain insight into Māori perspectives of taonga pūoro as an approach to healing and wellbeing.

Gathering these insights will involve an informal kōrero at a time of your choosing. The kōrero will take approximately 45-90 minutes. Following this I would like to offer you a koha as a token of appreciation for your time.

You are welcome to participate if you are Māori, 18 years of age or older, and have experienced taonga pūoro when used for healing. If you're interested in participating or learning more about this rangahau please contact me via the details below.

Ngā mihi nui,

Abigail

Researcher: Abigail Cashell

Email: Abigail.Cashell.1@uni.massey.ac.nz

Appendix D

Participant Information Sheet

NGĀ KUPU WHAKAMĀRAMA / PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Taonga pūoro as an approach to healing: Tangata whenua perspectives.

Tēnā koe,
You are invited to participate in this rangahau/research project. Before deciding to participate, you may wish to think about it and discuss it with whānau or friends.

He aha te kaupapa o tēnei rangahau? What is this research about?
This research aims to explore the whakaaro, thoughts and perspectives of Māori who have experienced taonga pūoro as an approach to healing and wellbeing. While there is anecdotal evidence of taonga pūoro for healing, there is very little written about it and it is largely from the perspective of practitioners. Gaining insight into tangata whenua perspectives of taonga pūoro will contribute to developing understandings of how our traditional practices may be used to enhance Māori hauora/health today.

Mā wai e mahi tēnei rangahau? Who is doing this research?
Ko Abigail Kahurangi Cashell tōku ingoa. I am of Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāti Kahungunu descent. I was born and raised in Tauranga and more recently have lived in Te Waipounamu. I'm a student at Massey University - Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa enrolled in the Master of Science (Psychology) programme. My academic supervisors are Dr Pikihuia Pomare from the Albany campus and Mr John Pahina from the Manawatū campus.

Ko wai ngā tangata e whai wāhi ana ki tēnei rangahau? Who can take part in this research?
If you are Māori, 18 years and older, have experienced taonga pūoro and wish to share your thoughts you are welcome to participate. I will be recruiting participants through word of mouth, advertising on social media and in community spaces.

He aha āku mahi mā ngā kairangahau? What will I be asked to do?
I'm interested in speaking with you to explore your perspectives of taonga pūoro. Our kōrero will ideally be kānohi ki te kānohi/face to face and arranged at a time and place of your preference. If this is not possible, we can organise to kōrero over the phone or online. I anticipate our kōrero will take between 40 – 90 minutes (however long suits you) and will be audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Following our kōrero I would like to show my appreciation for your time by offering you a koha of a $40 voucher.

He aha āku mōtika? What are my rights as a participant?
Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You are only asked to share what you feel comfortable sharing. If you wish to kōrero in te reo Māori please let me know and we can make arrangements for this. You may take a break at any time during our kōrero. If

you require further assistance or support that will make the process more comfortable for yourself, please let me know. If you have any concerns throughout this process my academic supervisors overseeing this research are available to speak with you. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

He aha te mea ka pā ki āku kōrero kua whakaratohia? What happens to my information provided?
All information collected will only be used for the purpose of this research and will be stored in a secure and confidential manner. To retain anonymity, nothing that can personally identify you will be used in any reports. Within the report you will be given a pseudonym name, unless you prefer your real name to be used.

Mēnā he pātai āku, mā wai aku pātai e whakautu? Who can I contact about the research?
If you have any further pātai, queries or concerns please get in touch with me through my contact details below.

Researcher contact information:
Abigail Cashell, Masters Student
Massey University Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa
Email: Abigail.Cashell.1@uni.massey.ac.nz

Academic Supervisors contact information:
Dr Pikihuia Pomare, Kaupapa Māori Lecturer
Email: P.Pomare@massey.ac.nz

Mr John Pahina, Senior Clinical Psychologist
Email: J.Pahina@massey.ac.nz

Appendix E

Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Taonga pūoro as an approach to healing: Tangata whenua perspectives.

- I have read the ***Participant Information Sheet*** for this research project and have had the details explained to me.
- Any questions I had about the research have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand I may ask further questions at any time.
- I understand my participation in this research is voluntary and I am free to withdraw myself at any time.
- I understand my participation in this research is confidential.
- I understand and agree to the interview being audio recorded.
- I know how to contact the researcher if I have any further queries.

I agree to participate in the research under the conditions outlined in the ***Participant Information Sheet***.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name (printed): _____

Age: _____ Iwi: _____

_____

Please indicate if you'd like to receive a summary of the research: yes/no

If yes, please provide an email or street address you'd like the summary sent to:

_____

_____