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The highs and lows of sole parenting experienced by Wāhine Māori

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Abstract

Wāhine Māori and their experiences of sole parenting is an important field of study although it is under-examined in the field of research. The topic is common in literature that is related to political, economic and educational issues of children being raised by a sole parent. An examination of the experiences of wāhine Māori sole parents is the focus of this study and is an area with very little academic research.

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach relevant in exploratory research that focuses on experiences and perceptions of people, in this research wāhine Māori. A kanohi ki kanohi interview process enabled the voices of the wāhine Māori to be heard, prompting their detailed lived experiences. Kaupapa Māori, Māori-centred research and a Mana wāhine approach guided and influenced this research.

The findings from this research showed that wāhine Māori identified the importance of education, therefore completing academic studies and seeking employment. Essentially they became role models for their tamariki. A major contribution was the significant supportive role played by the grandfathers who had fundamentally parented them then went on to manaaki their mokopuna. Other 'good men' had made an impact with the tamariki for example mentoring them through sporting ventures. A recognition for the wāhine Māori as sole parents was they were successful in parenting their tamariki for their future growth and development and therefore strived for the same outcomes as others in society. Finally, these insights provide the basis for recommendations to improve social services for wāhine Māori and principles to guide their future development.

He Mihi

I te taha o tōku whānau
 Ko Tararua me Taranaki ōku maunga
 Ko Punahau me Waitara ōku awa
 Ko Kurahaupo me Tokomaru ōku waka
 Ko Pariri me Manukorihi ōku hapū
 Ko Kohutaroa me Owae ōku marae
 Ko Muaupoko me Te Atiawa ōku iwi
 Ko William Matipou Wall raua ko Erana Wall tōku tūpuna
 Ko Taha Waitere raua ko Kuini Wirihana Waitere tōku tūpuna
 Ko Te Manihera Matipou-Wall tōku papa, ka mate ia
 Ko Sally Wall tōku mama
 Tōku toru āku tamariki
 Ko Mara te mātāmua
 Ko Marty te tamaiti tuarua
 Ko Ashdin te mātāmuri
 Toku toru āku mokopuna
 Ko Emphacy, Ko Delyric, Ko Contrea
 Ko Ripeka Matipou tōku ingoa

Karakia

Whakataka te hau ki te uru
 Whakataka te hau ki te tonga
 Kia mākinakina ki uta
 Kia mātaratara ki tai
 E hī ake ana te atākura he tio
 he huka, he hauhūnga
 Haumi e! Hui e! Taiki e!
 Tīhei mauri ora!

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CHAPTER ONE: KAUPAPA

*Whiawhia ou ngakau, ou mahara, kia puta ki te whaiiao ki te ao marama
Your hearts and mind 'passions and intellect' can receive strength and direction
to fulfil your purpose 'enlightenment'*¹(Pohatu, 2004, p. 14).

Introduction

This thesis examines the experiences of sole parenting by wāhine Māori. Six wāhine Māori were interviewed to explore the roles and responsibilities they have played in their lives and the impacts sole parenting may have had on their tamariki. The wāhine provided personal insights of their lived experiences constructed from a number of years parenting alone. Single mothers play significant roles in nurturing well-adjusted children in a progressively changing society and provide resilient and liberated female role models for the twenty-first century (Todd, 2008). As stated by Durie (1994) single family households in the 1990s were proportionately more common amongst Māori than in the total population. This was in part due to pressure to survive in an economically driven society, increased separation and divorce amongst Māori and high dependence on state welfare benefits (New Zealand Public Health Commission, 1993).

Aims of research

This research explored and examined the experiences of sole parenting by wāhine Māori over the age of 30 years who have parented sole for five years or more. It endeavoured to answer the question, *'What are the impacts of sole parenthood on wāhine Māori and their tamariki'?* The objectives were to identify the roles and responsibilities of wāhine Māori whilst sole parenting in Aotearoa, New Zealand. A subsidiary aim was also to consider how their experiences have contributed to their future. The research sought to explore the impact sole parenting has had on tamariki and to determine how te ao Māori knowledge can contribute to the future aspirations of wāhine Māori sole parents. Six wāhine Māori were interviewed and the results were put into themes through the process of thematic analyses.

¹ Pohatu used this whakatauki to end his conclusion for his paper 'cultural worldviews to Māori today'. He obtained the above from a traditional karakia that underscores a central enduring, guiding and encouraging purpose of his paper. This has been used as a beginning in this study because wāhine Māori have gained strength and know their direction to fulfil their journeys, therefore it seemed appropriate to begin this kaupapa.

The methodological framework adopted to inform this research is a qualitative approach that outlines the framework and underpins the research process. The research focuses on the experiences of wāhine Māori. A kaupapa Māori and Māori-centred research are employed to ensure a culturally safe research process is used. This is to ensure the safety of the researcher and the participants. Qualitative methods are particularly relevant in exploratory research that focuses on the experiences and perceptions of people.

Definitions of sole parenting

The meaning of the word, 'sole' comes from the Latin word 'solo' meaning one, or single. Therefore, the terms single or sole will be used in this research, depending on the writer identified or literature gathered. A single parent is usually considered the primary caregiver. Sole parent families commonly occur through separation or divorce or the birth of children to single women. Death or imprisonment of one parent can also create a sole parent family (The Families Commission, 2014; Worrall, 2009). A single parent is a parent, not living with a spouse or partner, who has most of the day-to-day responsibilities in raising the child or children² (Families Commission, 2012a; Te Aho-Lawson, 2010).

Research justification

The term 'sole' was first used in Aotearoa/New Zealand legislation from as early as 1912 indicating that politicians of that time saw the need for political responsibility to care for children and meet the needs of women and their dependents (Goodger, 1988). An earlier alternative offered by Davies, Jackson and Pool (1993) is that sole parent families may be included within other household categories, such as their own parents, extended families, whānau or friends. The Families Commission (2012a) and Hutton (2001, p. 10) argue that sole parenting is a 'situation' not a 'status' described in this way as people transfer or move in and out of sole parenting.

There are different forms of family which have emerged as a consequence of social, economic, emotional and health life changes. A study by the Ministry of Social Development (2010, p. 11) says that older and younger sole parents come to sole parenthood with 'different expectations'. This information is important to this study because of the diversity and changes

² The kupu 'children' is used throughout this thesis in the context of historical writings. This is mentioned because the researcher writes the kupu in many areas of this thesis as tamariki.

that have occurred over generations and with the role of wāhine Māori and parenting changes that have occurred. Ministry of Social Development (2004) briefing paper outlines how complex family forms can be for example as described by the following list:

- *couples with children
- *sole parents
- *those that don't live with their children but are still involved in their lives
- *same sex couples (some that have children)
- *Māori tend to have children at a younger age than other ethnicities (there is a greater proportion of sole parent numbers in this group)
- *Grandparents and other whānau tend to be more involved in children's upbringing
- *Some families take care of their own childcare nurturing whereas others take advantage of day care facilities

Two significant pieces from the 2004 Ministry report were highlighted at that time:

“Today a European couple is more likely to be at the upper end of the reproductive span and to have had their babies at significantly later ages than did their parents. If they are working full-time and are over 30 years old, they may be childless. Whatever their employment status, a couple is likely to have fewer children than a generation ago.

If the couple is Māori or Pacific, they are likely to have fewer children than their parents, but are likely to have children at younger ages than European families. A significant minority will be sole parents, a more common family form among Māori and Pacific than European families. Many families will be stepfamilies or blended families, with children living with one adult who is not their biological parent, and some children will be being brought up by their grandparents, or other family members” (p.18).

A study by Ritchie (2007) showed that family structures have changed; women and men marry at a later age or else do not marry at all; families have fewer children, mothers are more likely to be in paid employment; blended families rear the offspring of previous relationships. A significant factor is that although the family structures may have changed one that has stayed the same is the high majority of sole parents amongst Māori and Pacific groups.

My personal journey

This topic area arose from my own personal experience of parenting my children alone and studying four areas during my time at Massey University that is health, education, social policy and Māori development. The topic of this study developed out of these papers. I grew up in the lower North Island and was a whāngai with my grandmother or nanny as I called her in the 1960s early 1970s. My worldview at that time was shaped by strong women, one being nanny. The focus on aspects of tikanga Māori was important to nanny, encompassing Māori tikanga for example waiata, karakia, whānaungatanga and manaakitanga. On reflecting on my younger years there was no such thing as sole parenting at that time because the make-up of our immediate and extended whānau ensured every child in the whānau were loved and cared for whether their carer's were their biological parents, or not. It was an accepted practice principle.

Further reflection years later I realised I had memories of the make-up of whānau at that time both Māori and non-Māori. I was not aware of any relationships when I was under the age of ten years that had broken down therefore the focus of my memories were on those that cared for us as children. There is nothing that compares with the love and care of your immediate and extended whānau. I can truly say at that time it is a reflection of what was looked at as the norm where children flourished and were encompassed into the everyday life of whānau as was observed during the time of my tupuna. During my early teens I had some friends in which parents had separated therefore leaving them without a father. I thought nothing more about those situations until I became a sole parent at the age of 21 years old when my first born, a daughter was 10 months old. I experienced it again after a failed marriage 14 years later, this time with my daughter and two boys. I ventured into this study with my eyes open as I wanted to know about 'others' experiences as I did find parenting alone hard and very challenging.

This interest in sole parenting was prompted by the papers I had taken at Massey University and especially at the end of 2013 when deciding what topic area I was going to do for this thesis. In reflecting again on my 'life' sole parenting for me was a long hard road that could have been made easier if I had allowed others into my life, but as a consequence of experiences I chose not to. I reflect now on the high numbers of those in sole parenthood whether male or female and always wondered how they coped. It is through my own personal experiences I grew an interest and passion in social work and currently the education area teaching adult tauira.

I cannot do anything to change my circumstances as a sole parent during the 1980s and early 2000s, but I can help others through this contribution to this study. There are so many variables that impact on wāhine Māori sole parents today for example financial, supports or lack of, trust issues, coping strategies, educating oneself to name a few. This master's thesis will be used to answer the research question in this study "*What are the impacts of sole parenthood on wāhine Māori and their tamariki?*"

Chapter outline

This thesis is made up of six chapters.

Chapter one outlines the research aims and the purpose of this research.

Chapter two presents the literature review that examines significant research pertinent to this topic area. Research is gathered from a variety of areas and key themes are identified. This provides a foundation that underpins the catalyst for this topic area. This discussion is divided into seven sections. It begins with information that encompasses traditional Māori society; the impact of colonisation on whānau Māori; Traditional English norms and colonisation impacts; Colonisation and urbanisation; Political change; Legislative changes and Māori protest and leadership.

Chapter three examines the methodology and research methods that have been employed in this research. A particular emphasis is placed on the role of Kaupapa Māori and Māori-centred methodologies within, and throughout the research process. The methodology is described as both Kaupapa Māori and Māori-centred throughout the discussion. Although all participants identified as Māori the majority of the research was carried out using the English language both in the methods and the written component. Only one of the participants is fluent in Te Reo. However, I feel strongly that the underlying goals, perspectives and intended outcomes of this research were embedded within a kaupapa Māori paradigm, with the focus being on improving the lives of wāhine Māori and their tamariki.

Chapter four introduces the findings of the participant's voices through six key themes including whānau support; policies; children and wāhine frustrations; violence in relationships and wāhine and their 'new light'. Sub-headings have been included under each theme to emphasise related kaupapa. Participant quotes are provided to support the themes.

Chapter five outlines the discussion and analysis explaining the themes in more detail. There is comparison and contrast with the current literature in this field.

Chapter six provides a full summary of the research. This includes key points made, reflections of the research journey, limitations and implications of the research, and recommendations for further research.

Conclusion

This introduction has outlined the background and premises for this study, identified the aims, rationale and the structure that this study will follow. The next chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of historical and current literature relating to the changing nature of societal and political attitudes towards sole parenting.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

E hara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini

*My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective*³

(Alsop & Kupenga, 2016, p. 117).

Introduction

This chapter looks at historical and current literature examining the experiences of wāhine Māori sole parents through exploring knowledge gathered by various writers over many generations. The literature discusses the changing nature of societal and political attitudes towards sole parenting. This chapter has been organised into Māori society and European society periods that identify the key themes of sole parenting that have been highlighted specifically in the areas of policy, health, education, unemployment, housing and overall wellbeing throughout the generations.

Part A: Māori society

Pre-colonisation

In Māori society there was a strong collective nature of the whānau group or tribes and they lived for hundreds of years in territorially based social units (Durie, 1998). There was an emphasis placed on relationships, kinship ties and collective arrangements which ensured a continuing growth and development of whānau, hapū and iwi (Ruwhiu, 2009; Walker, 1987).

Māori society historically was based on tribal affiliation or iwi and independent political units founded on whānau or whakapapa descent (Jackson, 1988; Moyle, 2013; Walker, 1990). The whānau principle can be described as one that is born into the fundamental building block of the system in order to be a member of a collective group (Mead, 2003). The importance here is birth inheritance rights and tangata whenua status as opposed to status in relation to gender. Therefore, any Māori born with high status or who has earned it could become a rangatira regardless of gender. This differs substantially from European norms, which is discussed later. Māori were members of particular groupings called iwi, then made up of smaller sections or

³ This whakatauki acknowledges historical and current literature gathered from a wide field of writers and researchers. Without this collective knowledge this kaupapa would have no substance.

hapū, who occupied a defined geographical area (Metge, 1976; Mikaere, 2002). Whānau or extended families were the central social unit that were in control of the gathering of kai and the building of whareniui (Walker, 1990). Strong kinship, manaakitanga and whakapapa ties ensured inclusion into the whānau, hapū and iwi (Mead, 2003; Ministry of Social Development, 2004; Te Aho-Lawson, 2010).

Pohatu (2008b) argues Te whakakoha rangatiratanga or relationships were instilled from an early age, and was the means of respect built on seniority of rank exercised by chiefs and kaumātua. Within this whānau, hapū and iwi society, children were not just cared for by their parents, but by the entire whānau community (Bradley, 1995; Metge, 1976; Ritchie, 2007). Makereti (1938 as cited in Treagus, 2012) and Pere (1988) go further indicating children were taught by all adults the features of life through the daily interactions by the telling of stories; the sharing of customs, reciting the links of whakapapa and relating this learning to their environment. Genealogies or whakapapa were important and very young children knew the close kinship ties they had with their whānau then and generations back. Jackson (1988) described the strength of the whānau system:

...."sharing of support, discipline and comfort for all members of the whānau. Its structure provided young people with their feeling of well-being"(p.76).

Part B: Impact of colonisation on whānau Māori

Whāngai

In the Māori world, the child would be taken in by either the mothers or fathers whānau, or the father of the tamariki if the parents had been living separate lives (Mead, 2003). It was an informal agreement between whānau members and through traditional practise a Māori child would become a whāngai. In other situations it is a term used where a child is raised by another relative to ensure whānau links are maintained (McCabe, 2008). This is further emphasised historically by Graham (1948) as he conveys this as a Māori custom being applied regarding succession to land and tribal rights. This is explained in this way to ensure retention of the whānau group, preservation and identity (Bradley, 1997). McRae and Nikora (2006) write that to whāngai a child is taking on a promise to provide an environment that will enrich the whāngai child's life. As Metge (1995) asserts it helps ease the stress in families. Newman (2011) 'Identity' study indicates that the literal definition of the term whāngai is 'to feed', with

the child being labelled tamaiti whangai (or feeding child). Ihimaera (1998) concurs with this definition. Mead (1997) goes further by describing whangai as “nurturing, educating, providing opportunities to grow up as a healthy individual with one’s mauri strong, one’s mana secure and one’s tapu intact (p. 209)”. Jenkins and Harte (2011) write that children, whether in whāngai situations or not, were the shared responsibility of the community and the wider whānau where ‘each adult had a responsibility to care for all children’. Reflecting on her childhood Pere (1997) writes:

“Every adult from my childhood community was involved with parenting as part of our social control and if I had difficulty communicating with my natural parents or grandparents, there were numerous others I could turn to for help” (p. 25).

Makareti (1986) epitomises the old Māori tradition by signifying that Māori did not turn any whānau away as all babies were treated as taonga. She explains it by stating there was no such thing in the Māori world as a ‘widow’ or tamariki left un-provided for. Mikaere (1995) states that whānau involvement in childrearing was a standard practice. Makareti (1986) gives an account of the Te Arawa customs from the point of view of a woman. She speaks of aspects of daily life. Makareti exemplifies the depths of women’s existence and the role women played in Māori society. Makareti expressed contempt towards the ignorant assumptions of many Pākehā ethnologists and therefore corrected them in her text. An example is in her writings she talks about traditional acquired knowledge and first-hand experience living the life of a Māori wāhine. She included many aspects of daily life, including child-rearing and family relationships, which were generally ignored or treated superficially by male writers on Māori society.

Makareti’s earlier writings reflect her self-awareness and that she was always conscious of her lineage and responsibility to her people:

“ when she listened to the genealogy and lore of her old people, and repeated them from memory, a memory taken for granted by the Maori, who had no writing or printed books, but a memory at which those who have had only a European training never cease to marvel” (Makareti, 1938, p. 21).

Makareti’s family was *whare ngaro*, a ‘house of the lost’, as tamariki had died at birth in the whānau home. As Makareti’s life was very important to the Arawa Tribe, she was taken from

her mother soon after she was born. She was brought up by her great uncle and great aunt (her mother's father's brother and sister), Maihi te Kakau Paraoa and Marara Marotaua. It was from them for the first nine years of her life that she learned the genealogy and history of her people, and all the duties that she would be called upon to perform in life:

“When a woman married into another hapu, her parents or relatives would ask for one or two of her children, whom they would bring up among themselves. In cases like this the parents never interfered with anything arranged for them, even when they grew up. Often relatives belonging to other hapu would ask for a child to be given to them, either for a short period, or for all time. This was done hai pupuri i te aroha, to hold the tie of affection”(Makareti, 1938, p. 89)

Māori traditional values of whāngai is a vehicle focused on the nurturing, establishing and maintaining of relationships with kin therefore all tamariki were treated as taonga, whether they are whāngai or not. This links to the kaupapa of this rangahau as the wāhine Māori participants have shown how valued whānau supports had been during their sole parenting journeys. The breakdown of these wider whānau, hapū and iwi connections may lead to Māori children not being appropriately cared for according to Māori wellness. If the immediate whānau unit breaks down then there is the risk that as a result of colonisation, the wider safety net of the hapū and iwi are not in place. These traditional practices exemplify the importance of whānau connections and the shared responsibilities to nurture all tamariki. From a contemporary perspective whāngai could be seen as a positive intervention to help families in the raising of their tamariki.

Part C: Traditional British norms and the colonisation impacts in Aotearoa (1840-1960s)

In this time period there was a British influence in Aotearoa/New Zealand that was first introduced through immigration. In the 1700s whalers and sealers had settled. Many British settlers had entered Aotearoa/New Zealand via New South Wales which included escaped convicts, traders and missionaries spreading the good word of god and bringing the gospel to the ‘heathen’ (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2014). After the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840 British and Irish migrants established themselves in Aotearoa/New Zealand with the help of the New Zealand Company, they were dispatched to five settlement areas throughout the country. This was one of many plans to begin the systematic colonisation of

Aotearoa/New Zealand (Orange, 2004). During the period of 1847 to 1960 Aotearoa/New Zealand had assimilation policies in place which initiated whānau, hapū and iwi movement away from rural areas into urban towns and cities post the 1960s (Jackson, 1988; Libesman, 2004). Many young single Māori were encouraged to move to urban areas where job opportunities, money and a new way of life could be found. By the 1960s families had started to migrate in significant numbers. As detailed by the Hunn Report of 1961, the relocation of Māori became official policy (Hunn, 1961). This report made the existence of social gaps unambiguous in an official document for example as detailed in (Walker, 1990):

*“Poor health gave Maori a life expectancy fifteen years lower than Pakeha
There was a ‘statistical blackout’ of Maori in higher education
Maori unemployment was three times higher than Pakeha”* (p. 320).

Rural Māori families were encouraged by the government to move to the cities with the provision of accommodation, employment and general assistance in adjusting to a new life. By 1991 Māori constituted 13 percent of the population in urban areas which was a significant increase for Māori that had made the commitment to move away from their rural lives (Libesman, 2004).

Tennant (1989) identifies two cultural traditions that reflect the customs and values that European and Māori access and the types of support available to them. Tennant writes that in the 19th and 20th Century women of European origin were vulnerable to poverty if they became sole mothers because they were reliant on men for finances; were responsible caregivers of their children and were not skilled therefore would not earn much in their employment. In contrast, in New Zealand Māori women lived in tribal settings, therefore their dependency was provided for by their collective whānau. Obligations to children was a shared responsibility thereby falling on the collective group (Metge, 1995).

English values and belief systems

Goodger (1988, parag 10) discusses sole parenting in the 1800s happening as a result of the death of a spouse or through abandonment. There are clear signposts that in 1894 children who became fatherless or whom only had a single mother or whose parents could not care for them were ‘boarded out’, informally adopted or placed in orphanages. As indicated by Goodger, this

had been happening long before recorded information started to appear in newspapers and articles in the 1890's in New Zealand. By comparison, a hundred years later the 1980's and 1990's reflect positive advances in sole parenthood. According to recent estimates, close to one in two mothers experience sole-parenthood by the time they are 50 years old. Up to 40 percent of New Zealand children have lived in a sole-parent family for a period of time by age 20 (Dharmalingam, Pool, Sceats, & Mackay, 2004; Hutt, 2012).

According to Newman, (2014) the English colonists brought with them their own values and belief systems to Aotearoa. These were largely based on Christianity and strongly influenced the ideas of charity, which was current in Victorian England. Before 1834 in England, the cost of looking after the poor (classified as unemployed, fallen women, widows, beggars) was growing more expensive every year. This cost was paid for by the middle and upper classes in each town through their local taxes. There was a real suspicion amongst the middle and upper classes that they were paying the poor to be lazy and avoid work (The National Archives, 2008). Children in England could also find themselves hired out to work in factories or mines. This showed how society norms at this time undervalued men, women and children. In nineteenth century England poverty was seen as originating from poor judgments (Shave, 2013). For those in sole parent situations they had to subsequently fend for themselves. The following work comes from a book published in the United States but refers to institutions in England. This has been used in this research as the values and beliefs had been transferred when New Zealand became the new home for colonisers from England.

‘Homes’ for single pregnant women

Kunzel (1993) states that in the 19th and the first half of the 20th Centuries institutions that homed single pregnant women in England were very discriminatory towards them, as were their families. Single women were forced into these homes to have their babies and expected to give them up for adoption. These women generated what had been described as a ‘crisis’ in their families, therefore causing trauma. Families often felt humiliated because the family member was not married. They felt grief and shame and therefore distanced themselves from the women to the point where the only redemption for the women was at these homes and being out of sight. They were labelled as ‘fallen women’, which showed the undesirable attitudes towards pregnant women of that time (Kunzel, 1993). Over the next century considerable

changes and attitudes occurred for women socially, economically and politically (Goodger, 1988).

Changing role for women in Aotearoa/New Zealand

In Aotearoa/New Zealand in the 1890's, 18-19% of non-Māori children had lost a parent through death before they turned 16 (Carmichael, 1983). This was attributed to the poor living conditions, changes of diet from what was received in England and war over Māori land. Adding to this, by the 1900s non-Māori in New Zealand had a life expectancy of 30 years longer than Māori. Measles, whooping cough and dysentery had taken their toll on Māori, drastically reducing the population (Blundell, 2014). Between the 1880's and early 1920's wife desertion occurred during periods of high unemployment and the depression (Sutch, 1969; Tennant, 1989). The impact of World War One in 1914 contributed significantly to the new role women played as sole parents. According to Uttley (1994) 16,500 enlisted men were killed placing women into positions whereby they had to go out and find work to support themselves and their children. Pool et al. (1999) discussed fathers not always being central to family processes as they travelled seeking work or were absent because of the war therefore women were left to parent their children, alone most times relying on welfare.

The British influence was inevitable given British immigrants movements by the New Zealand Company to settle in Aotearoa during the mid 1800's. The settlers brought with them their own value and belief systems that influenced Māori cultural systems. The urban drift of Māori to the cities caused a move away from their Papakainga.

Part D: Colonisation and Urbanisation

Expansion and growth: the great urban drift

After the Second World War Aotearoa/New Zealand was expanding economically therefore an increase in unskilled and semi-skilled labour was required in parts of New Zealand. As a consequence of the war, many young families lost young men who would have otherwise been leaders and contributors to the prosperity of the Māori culture (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). Further to this, post-war migration of Māori to the cities was one of the fastest urbanisations undergone by any people in the world. Many Māori moved into the Auckland and the northern industrial areas of Wellington (Schrader, 2013). During the 1950s and 1960s the 'great urban drift' resulted in 85% of Māori living in urban areas by the end of the 20th Century. This was a mirror

image of the 15.6% who lived in urban areas a century before (Statistics New Zealand, 2004). Consequences for Māori moving to cities after the Second World War were dire. There was an obvious separation from their Papakaianga and their traditional support structures and there was also a fear that younger Māori would ‘lose their way’ in the cities. As the Māori language was not part of the school curriculum, te reo was one of the first things to suffer (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). Educational achievements for Māori was low therefore, many ended up as unskilled workers eligible only for low paid jobs. Landlords would frequently not rent housing to Māori because they did not want ‘others’ as in whānau staying with them (Consedine, 2007; Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2014).

During the 1970s period there was another migration move by Māori whānau to the cities, there were signs that cultural displacement was having a negative impact on Māori whānau. For example the move to the cities brought many Māori whānau to the attention of Social Welfare and Justice authorities’ resulting in Māori children being taken into care by the state in large numbers (Jackson, 1988; Libesman, 2004). Jackson (1988) points out that urbanisation in particular disrupted the balance between the individual and the collective groups resulting in a loss of cultural identity for many Māori.

Incentives proved disappointing

There were specific legislations from the 1970s that impacted on wāhine Māori and their care of children. Governments of the day provided incentives for example access to economic areas and employment, support for housing and Māori apprenticeship schemes (The Families Commission, 2014). This is in contrast to what had occurred during the urban drift during the 19th and early 20th Century as Māori in rural areas were neglected by any form of official policy. An example of this is Māori whānau did not have the same rights of access to medical treatment as Europeans (King, 1977). O'Regan and Mahuika (1993) claimed that during the Great Depression, Māori were not eligible for social assistance as policy makers assumed they could be self-sufficient living off their land. Noted writers have argued that Māori suffered from institutional racism, and disparities, and the consequential health outcomes supports this view (Harris & McCallum, 2012; Walker, 1990) . Puao-Te-Ata-Tu records that by 1975 the Joint Committee on Young Offenders had written that Māori were over-represented in lower socio-economic groups; it noted this status had remained unchanged for decades, and that Māori had

worse social, economic and health outcomes than Pākeha (Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare., 1986; Wynd, 2013).

The impacts of colonisation on Māori whānau, hapū and iwi have been devastating. By the mid 1860's legislation enforced the growing assimilation attitude, with the colonisers wanting Māori to be immersed into the new colonial culture with inadequate resources and living standards to do so. Their customs and traditions were compromised as the Māori language diminished. With the movement of Māori to the urban areas there was a breakdown of hapū and Iwi further dislocating Māori from their turangawaewae.

Part E: Political change-looking backwards to move forward

Welfare state

The welfare state in Aotearoa/New Zealand has changed considerably since the turn of the 21st Century, this will be shown briefly below. This was a new period of redevelopment, with the state taking responsibility for a greater number of areas of social need (Baker, 2012). Since European Settlement New Zealand was observed as one of the first self-governing countries in the developed world. Shirley (1993) and Smith (2010) state that this distinctive approach to social policy had led to its status as a 'social laboratory'. One example is that Aotearoa/New Zealand granted universal suffrage to women in 1893, and this allowed all women in Aotearoa/New Zealand the right to vote in parliamentary elections. This was an approach that other countries such as Britain and the United States did not predict until after the first World War (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2016). Adoption laws were first initiated by the passing of the Adoption Act of 1881, and again no other country had such laws in place (Gillard-Glass & England, 2002). Children with no one to care for them were sent to industrial schools, as were children who were 'uncontrollable' or who had criminal convictions (Else, 1991; Orphanages, 2015). The industrial schools in New Zealand were described as 'benevolent' or charitable institutions that housed both adults and children. Later more children were fostered or adopted (Tennant, 1989).

The welfare state in Aotearoa/New Zealand has seen some ground-breaking changes occur that has had either positive or negative effects on both Māori and non-Māori New Zealanders. Before the 20th Century there was no government support for families in financial difficulties. People who were unemployed or in need had to rely on relatives or charities. A pension for

widows with children was introduced in 1911 (Goodger, 1988). In the 1930s the first Labour government set up benefits for people who were unemployed or sick, and for low-income families. Employers were supposed to pay men a 'family wage' which meant money to support a wife and two children. A family benefit for low-income families with three or more children had been introduced in 1926, and in 1946 this was extended to all families with children. In the 1970s the divorce rate rose and there were more sole parents. In 1973 the domestic purposes benefit (DPB) was introduced to support sole parents, who were mostly women. According to Pool et al. (1999) family structures had changed, and most importantly sole parenting was definitely more frequent than it was in the past.

Fathers as fulltime caregivers/mentors

McCann's (1999) study on fatherhood outlines the changes that have occurred over many generations. He describes the model European father as being a stern patriarch and the norms he expected were passed onto the children. Women in contrast were governed by their passion of nurturing their children rather than with reason as the males did. When aligning this with indigenous Māori norms of nurturing there is no such responsibility put on one man but with many as seen with significant kaumatua to guide a child especially into adulthood. As argued by Pool and Hillcoat-Nalletamby (1999) fathers are essential in terms of their role in ensuring the well-being of their children. It can also be argued that other family members for example grandparents play an essential role in ensuring an extension to the nurturing and caring assumed by the parental unit. Blankenhorn (1995) describes the roles of fatherhood as irreplaceable caregiver, moral educator, head of the family and sole breadwinner.

According to Callister (1998) in 1981, there were just over 20,000 children under five in sole mother families, but by 1996 it had risen to nearly 58,000. In 1996, there were around 27,000 preschool Maori children, over 6,000 Pacific Island children, and nearly 24,000 "Pākeha/other" children in sole mother families. In comparison, in 1981 there were just under 2,000 preschool children in sole father families, and this increased to nearly 5,000 during the 1996 period. In this latter year, half of the children in these sole father families were Māori. Callister's study indicates that the number of children living with sole fathers is growing and the trend at this time was not yet well analysed or understood. Statistics New Zealand (2014) state that the 2013 census indicated that 17.8% of the Aotearoa/New Zealand population are still made up of sole

parents. The 2013 census had not distinguished whether these sole parents were made up of mainly women sole parents or men.

Father & Child Trust in Christchurch has released Aotearoa/New Zealand's first-ever study involving interviews with 13 sole fathers raising children by themselves, titled "Dependent on Dad" (Breiding-Buss, Smith, & Walker, 2011). The purpose of the study was to gauge what social needs both solo fathers and their children required and whether they had appropriate supports in place. The children were under eight years of age and mothers played a small part if any at all in their day to day care. Census data shows that in 16% of solo parent households the parent is male, yet virtually no attention is paid to this family type in the social debate or in social services. The Trust hopes to change this and challenges social providers and decision makers to pay better attention to these children and their parents (Breiding-Buss et al., 2011).

There has only been one other study completed on sole fathers in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This was a review of census data between 1981 and 1999 by Judith Davey. She found that the proportion of male solo parents remained almost constant, between 15 and 17% (Davey, 1999). Davey indicated there were about 5,500 children living in solo father households.

The late Laurie O'Reilly raised the profile of fathers and children while Commissioner of Children from September 1994 to January 1998. He believed strongly in the importance of fathering. 'Fathering for the future' project in 1997 resulted in two forums in 1998 from which one paper will be discussed. Pool and Hillcoat-Nalletamby (1999) paper presents a broad overview and identifies trends in family structure and father involvement. Major issues are challenges and barriers faced by some New Zealand fathers in being positive and involved parents. The authors identified two key principles and what they called the O'Reilly ethos. They summarised that the investment in children and family must play a key role, as was termed a 'complete family'. It is important to note that the authors argue that critics of current family structures and family values throw blame at two groups, the sole mother and the absent father:

"The central point in this paper is to ask whether the family of today is equipped to carry out this role, and if not, whether it is because of endogenous reasons that the family is frequently not complete; or because of exogenous factors, that society has limited the family's capacities to meet its responsibilities. Here we must sound a warning that there are powerful groups in the society who are reversing

O'Reilly's logic by pointing an accusing finger at changes in family structures and family values as the prime causal agents for what they perceive to be symptoms of the breakdown or at least dysfunction of western society" (p.13).

"As far as the absent father is concerned, if he has abandoned his family capriciously we can invest no sympathy in him, and even fewer excuses. But we must recognise that many absent fathers may be the saddest of all men who, in the face of unemployment and grinding poverty, have crumpled under the intolerable burden of meeting the role that society expects of them, to be the family breadwinner" (p.13).

Teen Parenting

A study undertaken in 2001 involved single teenage mothers, this was then subsequently followed up in 2010 to see if their lives had changed over the past seven years (Collins, 2010). The purpose was to validate factors associated with resilience. The earlier study initially interviewed participants regarding their experiences of teenage motherhood. Their ages ranged from 18-29 years with 10 identifying as Pākeha and three as Māori. Only 13 of the original participants were located and agreed to partake in the 2010 study. Findings acknowledged the importance of family and whānau support. From those that attended a teen parent unit, they were able to continue with their education and to have good skilled interventions with other adults at the unit. The other five that had not attended the unit found community based services to provide the same type of support. Other findings indicated that most are in paid employment and others are self-supporting. Although this study is about teen parenting this study is included in this thesis because of the similar factors that relate to the supports that wāhine Māori had accessed.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is one of New Zealand's most serious social and humanitarian human rights issue. One in three women in New Zealand have experienced abuse from their partners at some time in their lifetime (Moayyed, 2015). There are a number of initiatives in place for example; the Domestic Violence Act 1995 is currently under review with the government looking at court processes as well as the way domestic violence is classed as a criminal act. A pilot programme headed by Women's Refuge is running in high schools in an effort to educate

young people about healthy relationships and attitudes towards women. Ruth MacIntyre the Youth Development principal advisor for media and relationship at Women's Refuge specified that abuse in young people's relationships sets a precedent for a life-long pattern of violence. In Aotearoa, the majority of the perpetrators are men (victims are female). 80% of those arrested for domestic violence are men; 76% intimate partner violence related deaths were perpetrated by men during the period 2009-2012 (MacIntyre, 2015) .

In 2016 Justice Minister Amy Adams and Social Development Minister Anne Tolley initiated sweeping reforms to the Domestic Violence Act 1995 (New Zealand Law Society, 2016). Some examples of changes discussed as stated by these two Ministers are putting safety of victims at the heart of bail decisions; making evidence gathering in family violence cases easier for Police and less traumatic for victims. Statistics at this time indicate that there are 110,000 family violence call outs to police per year and that children are present at nearly two-thirds of these call outs:

"New Zealand's rate of family violence is horrendous. It has a devastating impact on individuals and communities, and a profound impact that can span generations and lifetimes" (New Zealand Law Society, 2016, p.1).

Part F: Legislative changes

Domestic Purposes Benefit 1970

The introduction of the Domestic Purpose Benefit (DPB) in 1973 represented a major shift towards public responsibility for financial support for sole parents (Goodger, 1988). With previous legislation unmarried women had to get acknowledgement of paternity from the father or enforce the agreement order through the court to seek maintenance. The 1973 Act mitigated these difficulties therefore enabling women of all ethnicities to apply for welfare support if they were the sole carer for a child born within or outside of marriage (Patterson, 2011). Patterson also indicated that attitudes towards marriage and the traditional image of the nuclear family began to change, statistics indicates a rise in the number of sole parents and partners living together outside of marriage.

Pūao-te-ata-tū Report 1986

The Minister of Social Welfare Ann Hercus appointed a Ministerial Advisory Committee to investigate and report on the current situation of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and

its dealings with Māori people. This was instigated after societal awareness of injustice to Māori and inherent institutional racism in New Zealand's government agencies. Māori forums that were held gave voice to their frustrations and their tino rangatiratanga aspirations (Love, 2002; Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare., 1986; Moyle, 1998). The findings of this report were that racism existed within the DSW and the roots of dependency were traced to the extensive history collected of the colonisation process the Committee examined through history reports and oral korero by Māori whānau (Belgrave, 2012; Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare., 1986). This report was the first official government document that acknowledged Māori social work methods and recommended their use (Hollis, 2006). Two significant recommendations that required immediate attention were cultural racism and eliminating deprivation (Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare., 1986). Pūao-te-ata-tū legitimated Māori processes of working with whānau therefore representing the aims of Article two of the Treaty: the self determination of Māori whānau, hapū and iwi (Bradley, 1995). The 13 recommendations were never fully implemented although many social workers that worked within the Department of Social Welfare in the 1980s and the wider Māori community utilised them in community social development initiatives therefore leading to some positive changes (Hollis, 2006). With respect to developments that had occurred Moyle (2015) argues that *those in power did not want to share power* and that in the 30 years since, *nothing has changed for Māori* (Parag 10), she went on and stated in a matter of fact way *they remain unacceptably over-represented in all systems-systems that are fundamentally eurocentric and mono-cultural, not bicultural.*

Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 (CYP & F)

Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 objectives are to empower families to work in partnership with the state and to bring stability to the needs of the children with the strengthening and maintenance of families (Connolly, 2004; Doolan, 2006). Further to this Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare. (1986) advised that the Act directs that all decision making will involve the extended family and that family relationships will be strengthened and maintained. As shown in Connolly (2006b) an example is the initiation of the Family Group Conference (FGC) instigated by the Pūao-te-ata-tū report recommended whānau/families to have an input into the decision making processes of children and young person's lives. According to Sorrenson (1996, p. 63) the

initiation of the FGC signalled that New Zealand considered that as a society it was comprised of collections of families as opposed to children of the state or a collection of individuals. Other significant changes were Iwi social services and an increase in frontline Maori staff (Connolly, 2006a; Hollis, 2005; Love, 2000).

The three Acts discussed briefly have made significant changes for sole parents. For example the DPB gave solo mothers and their children some protection from failed relationships/marriages that were potentially harmful and recognised that not all relationships were made up of a nuclear family (father, mother and children) (The second wave., n.d.). Puaote-ata-tu report recognised the racial discrimination of whānau Māori and is one of the few policies that accurately represents whānau, hapū and Iwi aspirations for their own social development. The changes as seen in the CYP & F Act are significant to this study because Māori wāhine and their whānau deserve to have integrity shown and the ability to self-determine their destinies, relationships and contribution to their own health and wellbeing.

Part G: Māori Protest and leadership

During the late 1960s there was a growing awareness of the impact of colonisation processes on the health and well being of Māori. The start of this was seen with the urban drift of Māori from their rural homes to the cities to seek employment and what was initially thought, a better life. Māori protest movements such as Tamatoa (the young warriors emerged) who fought for Māori rights and Te reo Māori language (Metge, 1972). These protest groups were made up of mostly urban Māori, in the 1970s focusing on loss of land and culture (Walker, 1990). The following sections discuss examples of such initiatives.

Māori land march

In 1975, led by Dame Whina Cooper, thousands of Māori from all over the country walked with her the length of the North Island to Parliament to protest about ongoing land alienation and to present a petition with 60,000 signatures (Gill, 2011; King, 1983). Dame Whina believed in her people inferring about Māori “*if they were landless, they were cultureless*” (King, 1983, p. 207). The land march unified and allowed for a platform for Māori to have a collective voice and to air their grievances. The group that lead the march was Te Roopu o te Matakite with Whina Cooper at the front. Nga Tamatoa, a university based activist group, also participated (Protest, n.d.). This march opened future channels for Māori protests focusing on Tino

Rangatiratanga (King, 1983). Since the march, government has introduced a number of policies and Acts that gives recognition to the importance and significance of Māori language and tikanga being an integral part of Māori social development and well-being (McMurphy-Pilkington, 2001). The Race Relations Act (1971), Equal Pay Act (1972), the most significant being the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975, established the Waitangi Tribunal as an ongoing order of inquiry to hear issues regarding treaty breaches (Ministry of Justice, (n.d.)). The launch of the Treaty of Waitangi Act set against the backdrop of the land marches became a significant milestone for Māori. Although the land march gained media attention the Pākehā journalists reported the wrong reasons for the march. This showed the breakdown in communication between the two cultures (Protest, n.d.).

Bastion point

One other significant occupation was the 1978 Ngati Whatua Peoples occupation of Bastion Point in Auckland. The tribe had been evicted from the bay in 1951, after continuing alienation of their land by the Crown from 1870. The government announced plans for a housing development initiative on this land (Protest, n.d.). In January 1977 the Orakei Māori Action group led by Joe Hawke occupied the land at Bastion point. After 506 days in occupation police evicted the protestors. Ten years later the Waitangi Tribunal endorsed the return of the land to the Ngati Whatua people (Walker, 1990).

Māori Womens Welfare League

The Māori Womens Welfare League was established in 1951 with its aim to support and politically lobby the State in delivering and addressing areas in health, education, welfare and housing for Māori. Seven years prior to the leagues beginnings a First Nations women's Indian Homemaker's Club attended a cultural and political activity convention in Canada celebrating eight years of their existence. The two women's groups the League and the Club represented their people by addressing assimilation, integration, and citizenship, discussed and debating welfare issues within their communities (Harris & McCullum, 2012) . The league's first president was lead by the late Dame Whina Cooper. Miraka Szaszy held the secretary position and Princess Te Puea Herangi became the patroness (King, 1977). Since its establishment the league had advocated for improved health and well-being for their people for example better living conditions, health care providers and services (Hill, 2009). Both the League and the Club have continued to contribute and shape Māori and Canadian Indian societies through their

political advocacy for the advancement of well-being and social development of indigeneity. This strategy paved the way for other Māori based initiatives within this country for example the opening of the first Kohanga reo in the early 1980s followed closely by Kura kaupapa Maori bilingual units and whānau ora in 2010. These major initiatives was the awakening, preservation and maintenance of Te reo and the inclusion of the Māori language into the school curriculum (Cox, 1993).

Wāhine Toa

A Māori kuia Nora Rameka of Ngati Rehia, Takou, Mataatua waka and Napuhi Iwi was interviewed on Waka Huia (see appendix 1 for the full interview). She talked about leadership and the roles of women. She emphasised how leaders were nurtured by their elders. She is the kaitiaki for their lands and encourages her whānau to look after what they have. She states “*I don't like it when people are arrogant towards females, I've seen it a lot. I've had it said to me 'Im the boss you're just a woman. I didn't like that'*”. She responds in this way because she often finds herself *swimming against the tide* in a male dominated arena. She wants to see education and employment opportunities for her people (Wakahuiatvnz, 2015, May 18). This passage is included in this research because her story is inspiring, she often referred back to her tupuna and the nurturing that was passed on from generation to generation. The relevance to this kaupapa is Māori wāhine show strength and determination from those they were brought up with and although they may have had difficulties along the way with their future partners they want the same positive opportunities for their tamariki. While the research is focused on Māori wāhine as transmitters of their experiences, their journey shared will inspire and influence other women to make decisions regarding their destinies.

Wananga battle for education rights

In 1989 a claim was made by Rongo Wetere on behalf of Te Tauihu o nga Wānanga Association that represented three claimants (Te Wānanga o Raukawa, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiarangi) (Walker, 1990). These Māori Wānanga were established as tertiary education institutions under the Education Act 1989. The claim concerns the failure of the crown to recognise the right of Māori, in terms of the Treaty of Waitangi, to receive capital funding from the Ministry of Education (Waitangi Tribunal, 1999). Two of the claimants Te Wānanga o Raukawa and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiarangi were at risk of financial collapse, and Te Wānanga o Aotearoa was also struggling financially.

During the 1990's funding was provided by the Ministry of Education to Polytechnic's in Northland and the Wairarapa but failed to provide the same financial assistance to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa citing budget constraints. The tribunal found that the Crown had breached the Treaty in failing to honour its obligations of equal treatment and to protect Māori rights to tertiary education (Walker, 1990). The claim was paid by the Ministry allowing the three Wānanga the funding needed for the businesses. One of the primary objectives of Rongo Wetere at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa was to increase Māori participation in tertiary education. This goal was met during the 1990's and subsequently up until the mid 2000s. In 2001 fulltime enrolled students increased to 6,118 and in 2002 trebled to 20,768. In 2003 enrolments increased to 24,000 students and rose significantly to 30,000 (Te Wananga o Aotearoa, 2002). However, the Ministry put a cap on the number of equivalent full-time students it would fund citing rapid expansion might put programme quality at risk and that Te Wānanga o Aotearoa was taking students away from mainstream, both concerns were unfounded. This kaupapa relates to this research because a significant number of wāhine Māori sole parents engage in education throughout a number of programs at Te Wananga o Aotearoa.

Conclusion

In summary political changes and the impact on Māori whānau has been significant since colonisation processes were first implemented in the early part of last century. An analysis of pre-colonial Māori society and whānau norms provides the researcher with a foundational understanding of parenting, whānau relationships and societal structures, which helps in the interpretation of whānau in contemporary times. The discussion of British values and norms provides an understanding of the impact of colonisation on tangata whenua and on whānau norms and social structures. Following years of colonisation, urbanisation and assimilation, Dame Whina Cooper and other Māori activists have layed the path for a better future for Māori although it is known the battle for autonomy will continue. What started off as land right marches in the 1970s and 1980s gathered momentum to enable education, health, unemployment and housing political changes to occur. This has shown that for wāhine, and significantly sole parents, political and societal changes, and movements can occur that allow women the authority and autonomy to contribute as capable and confident members of society. The development of the methodology now follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

*Research is a process of seeking explanation and meaning*⁴ (Williams & Ormond, 2010, p. 1).

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology used to inform this research and the methods used to complete it. A qualitative approach outlines the framework that underpin the research process. Qualitative methods are particularly relevant in exploratory research that focuses on the experiences and perceptions of people, in this research on wāhine Māori. Because this research focuses on the experiences of wāhine Māori, kaupapa Māori, Māori-centred research and a Mana wāhine approach guides and influences this research. The research process is outlined and presented in this chapter.

Qualitative research

Qualitative research focus is on gathering detailed descriptions and concepts from participants and contextualising them. In this type of study it allows for the views and experiences of participants to share and discuss their life experiences with researchers (Mason, 2002). Nash, Munford, and O'Donoghue (2005) emphasise that qualitative methodology of subjective experiences are valued. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2009; Nash et al., 2005). Qualitative research has the potential to empower by taking account of views of the participants, their owned perspectives, their opinions, prejudices and beliefs (Tomlins-Jahnke, 1996).

Qualitative research has caused considerable debate by researchers as it uncovers truths and realities of participants' world views (Mason, 2002). This is a way of understanding the particular worldviews of the participants that will be interviewed and the views of the researcher. As Gluck and Patai (1991, p. 19) have indicated, it allows those being interviewed to freely express their views and experiences in their own way. A qualitative approach was

⁴ This whakatauki demonstrates the methodology and explains in detail the intrinsic reasons for these processes used. This is the foundation and core that are utilised by other researchers.

chosen because it allowed (with consent) wāhine Māori voices to be audiotaped and their stories transcribed for accuracy. The advantages of this type of research is that the researcher receives ‘first hand’ experiences from people about why things are the way they are and the focus is on small groups or individuals as this study is based on individual interviews with wāhine Māori. This differs from quantitative research as this type of approach gathers data and statistics and begins with a set hypothesis (Walker, 2010).

Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative interviewing refers to in-depth, semi-structured or loosely forms of interviewing, where data collected then is analysed, sometimes the term unstructured is used. Quantitative research in contrast uses numbers as data and analyses them using statistical techniques (Braun & Clark, 2013). This research will use qualitative data as there is more interaction and reflection involved with participants and during the research (Bouma & Ling, 2004).

Mason (2002) negates unstructured forms of interviewing, he describes it as a “misnomer because no research interview can be completely lacking in some form of structure” (p. 62). The semi-structured interview according to Galletta (2013) ‘can be structured into segments, moving from full open-ended questions toward more theoretically driven questions as the interview progresses’ (p.24). Barbour (2014); and Bouma and Ling (2004) defines interviewing as ‘eliciting individuals’ narratives’, as a method of data collection that involves researchers asking participants open ended questions and recording what they observe . It is a focused system of conversation involving a two-way interpretive level of interaction that involves openness and honesty between the researcher and the participant. These methods make it possible to make visible the voices of the wāhine women being interviewed, to generate information and answer the research questions. Patton (2002) says “...*the purpose of interviewing is to access the perspective of the person being interviewed*” (p.161). The semi-structured interview technique is favoured by feminist academics, for the participatory, interactive, and inclusive nature between the researcher and the researched (Westmarland, 2001).

Galletta (2013) asserts that semi-structured interviews offer ‘great potential to attend to the complexity of your research topic’ (p. 24). What is meant here is the researcher and participant may build up a rapport over more than one session therefore allowing reciprocity and the

creation of space to probe for further clarification of questions. With the interviews being semi-structured interviewing with pre-established questions it endorses the move to digress from these during the interview. This approach is favored by qualitative researchers because of salience to participants than the more structured approaches which command the direction of the interaction (Barbour, 2014).

Individual interviews were chosen because of the personal nature of the topic and the differing perspectives that the participants may share. Therefore, importance is placed on ensuring the integrity of the kaupapa at all times by the researcher. This method fits with a Māori-centred approach where clear philosophies, principles, and practices are always respected and employed for example through whānaungatanga processes (Pohatu, 2008b; Walker, Eketone & Gibbs, 2006).

Kaupapa Māori theory

Utilising kaupapa Māori frameworks developed from Māori thinking, knowledge, wisdoms and applications is crucial to ensuring an appropriate cultural Māori framework is incorporated into this research. Kaupapa Māori research is about a *Māori way of thinking and a Māori way of doing things*” (Smith, 2003, p. 188). It also refers to “*Māori struggles to claim research as a space within which Māori can also operate*” (Smith, 2012, p. 202). Pihama (2001) is emphatic that transformation is one of the driving components of kaupapa Māori research and says it is determined by “*How that transformation is defined and brought is determined by how the issues are understood, theorised and engaged*” (p. 102). Smith (1999) as cited in Moyle (2014) describes kaupapa Māori as a ‘home grown’ form of critical theory that focuses on emancipation. Kaupapa Māori is a way of accepting and clarifying how Māori know what they know and gives affirmation to Māori to be Māori (Mahuika, 2008; Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002). Kaupapa Māori informs practice, research and policy within the disciplines of education, health, justice and social services and mainstream in which Māori groups are operating (Cram, 2009).

One of the reasons and advantages for choosing to research sole parents is to explore the impacts on participant’s lives, opportunities and that of their children. This is why capturing the lived experiences of wāhine Māori in these interviews through concentrating on their experiences and views is essential to this study (Smith, 2012). Therefore, an important element

is in gaining an understanding through interviews of the depth of experiences of wāhine Māori. This is highlighted by Nepe (1991) stating that Kaupapa Māori is the conceptualisation of Māori knowledge and is validation from a Māori world view. Bishop and Smith, (cited in Moyle, 2014) emphasised that “*kaupapa Māori refers to a framework or methodology for thinking about and understanding research by Māori, with Māori, for the benefit of Māori*” (p. 30). This was further highlighted through the writings of (Barnes, 2013; Hudson, Milne, Reynolds, Russell, & Smith, n.d).

And as Cunningham (2000) states kaupapa Māori research and Māori-centred research show similarities as both have a high degree of involvement of Māori at all levels. Bishop (1994) goes further by identifying a number of questions that define kaupapa Māori research:

Who initiates the research?

Who is going to design the work?

Who is going to do the work?

What rewards will be there?

Who is going to have access to the research findings?

Who is the researcher accountable to?

Who has control over the distribution of the knowledge?

These questions remain important indicators of the framework location of a research project.

Kaupapa Māori and Critical theory

Critical theory was developed by a group of sociologists at the University of Frankfurt in Germany in 1923 by scholars Habermas, Marcuse, Benjamin, Horkeimer and Adorno. Their work endorsed critiques of social, financial, estrangement and corruption within communities and changing societies (Antonio, 1983; Corradetti, n.d.). Critical theories aim is to seek to challenge and transform oppressive structures (Eketone, 2008). This is illustrated by Mahuika (2008) that the process of criticism, however, is not without its problems, “*the challenge for Māori to be necessarily self-critical in the development of theory and practice has different implications than for their non-Māori counterparts*” (p. 6). Mead (1996) comments on this idea, stating that “*writing can be dangerous because sometimes we reveal ourselves in ways which get misappropriated and used against us*” (p. 45). Kaupapa Māori theory is a vehicle through which contemporary constructions of resistance is expressed for example within “*all those researchers who are attempting to work with Māori and on topics of importance to*

Māori” (Smith, 2012, p. 192). This research focuses on providing an opportunity for wāhine Māori to share their experiences of sole parenting their children and the transformation processes that have occurred for them. Critical theory sanctions Māori to ‘story’ such experiences in this forum to be heard and acknowledged.

The interview approach through the use of conversation fits with my own personality and friendliness with which interviewees may find comfortable and put them at ease. The years I have spent in social work experience in the community and teaching with both groups and individuals has given me the skills in interviewing and facilitating. This learnt and personalised engagement and collaborative approach enables me to work appropriately with people. This approach adheres to the kaupapa Māori research principles (Pihama, 2001).

Māori-centred theory

A Māori-centred approach is very similar to kaupapa Māori research as it involves Māori as significant participants and the main researchers (Cunningham, 1998; Hudson et al., n.d). Māori-centred theory was developed out of a philosophical view that the future development of Māori knowledge must consider current Māori worldviews and acknowledge the diverse nature of contemporary Māori society (Durie, 1994). Williams and Ormond (2010) emphasised research development that enhanced Māori research stating *“any research using the kaupapa Māori method must have the research issue identified by Māori who connect to the community through whakapapa and/or residence. It should also be led by Māori researchers”* (p. 2). This implied the research is fully concentrated on Māori traditional practices and associated to that community as this type of research does and participants are wāhine Māori. The intention therefore is for transformative praxis to be identified through them telling their stories.

Māna wāhine theory

Mana wāhine is about intellect; it is about how we define ourselves and the space and limits we place on that definition (Hutchings, 2004). Mana wāhine theory evolved and was influenced by Western feminism and kaupapa Māori. Western feminism focused on the inequalities between women and men (Cheyne, O'Brian, & Belgrave, 2000). Mana wāhine is about making visible the narratives and experiences, in all of their diversity, of Māori women (Johnston & Pihama, 1995). Mana wāhine theory within this research guaranteed the enriching of Māori

wāhine to transpire and places importance on their wealth of knowledge and positioning in their lives as evidenced in the interviews in chapter four for this kaupapa.

Mana wāhine has grown out of wider cultural and political struggles of which Māori women have often been at the forefront (Johnston & Waitere, 2009). There has been significant wāhine Māori women such as Te Puea where her leadership grew from the trauma caused by colonisation and the oppressive struggles of her people. Dame Whina Cooper leading the Māori Women's Welfare League in 1951 after Mira Petricevich assisted by Rangī Royal launched it. The significance of this league was they became a 'voice' for their people and became an important political forum for the "*expression of Māori views on health, education, welfare, crime, and discrimination in employment and accommodation*" (Walker, 1990, p. 202). Smith (2012) points out, the ideals that white feminists have in characterising 'dark skinned' indigenous women globally. She argues that the oppressions of global indigenous peoples require their own voices to be heard at international conferences to enable them to contribute to the development of policies. Smith provides evidence that indigenous communities in developed nations argue persistently about the impacts of colonisation. Irwin (1992a) sums it up by stating that Māori don't require others to provide or speak on behalf of Māori about who or what they are or want to be. This is further evidenced from the interviews held with ngā wāhine Māori who speak openly and concisely about the positive futures they journeyed towards for themselves and their tamariki. Therefore, this research is guided by kaupapa Māori theory, Māori centred theory and Mana wāhine theory.

Overarching Māori principles (Takepū)

Takepū are used in everyday situations and in different contexts by Māori. They are treated as applied principles, bodies of cultural knowledge, key strategic positions, and are multi-featured. Takepū contribute to the growth and wellbeing of people and have been included in this research as a transformative potential to guide and inform future generations. Pohatu, (2008a) states these principles hold implicit attitudes, behaviours and values with their associated messages.

The researcher first met Pohatu (affectionately called mātua or koro) at the beginning of 2005 at a work hui where he first introduced takepū principles. He said to grasp the takepū from the external first to get an understanding of it; then utilise it 'within' yourself, to own it and live it

prior to externalising it to others (T. Pohatu, April 5, 2005, personal communication). At that time and for the next five or so years regular hui including noho were held to build onto and encourage staff in their use of these kupu. His wāhine whaea Hariata, often accompanied him to hui and she has been his constant hoa haere in developing these principles. These principles are used in this research with wāhine Māori to show for example the building and nurturing of positive and successful engagements with the old and new relationships they have added in their lives; it shows that they can work through positive and negative relationships and that they can go on to lead productive and successful lives. Takepū provide Māori preferred ways of engaging with others and them with us (Pohatu, 2008a).

TAKEPŪ (PRINCIPLED APPROACHES)	
Āhurutanga	Create and maintain quality space to ensure and promote the pursuit of best practice in any kaupapa.
Te Whakakoha Rangatiratanga	Recognition that successful engagement and endeavour requires conscious application of respectful relationships with kaupapa and people.
Tino Rangatiratanga	The constant recognition of absolute integrity of people in their kaupapa, relationships, positions and contributions in any context.
Taukumekume	The recognition that the ever-presence of any tension in any kaupapa and relationship, positive or negative, offers insight or interpretation.
Kaitiakitanga	The constant acknowledgment that people are engaged in relationships with others, environments and kaupapa where they undertake stewardship purpose and obligations.
Mauri ora	The constant acknowledgment that at the core of any kaupapa and relationship is the pursuit of wellbeing.

Māori ethical principles (Takepū and Āta)

Pohatu (2005) introduced Āta principles to the social services as a transformative approach for Kaupapa Māori initiatives. Āta principles are key elements to ngā takepū (principles) or unique bodies of knowledge used by Māori as a theoretical and behavioural strategy for entering,

engaging and exiting relationships appropriately with people (Pohatu, 2005, 2008a). Therefore, these principles are used together in different situations. These principles are deliberate and show a willingness to engage with different cultural realities at all times through ethical integrity with respect to research in a collaborative partnership.

As a practitioner, the usage of Āta principles is considered a vital cultural tool created to shape and guide understandings of relationships and wellbeing and how they can be safely navigated and contributed significantly to the development of this research. There are 13 Āta phrases defined by Pohatu in brackets below. I have provided personal interpretations of how each principle actively guided me through this rangahau journey.

Āta haere: *(Be intentional, deliberate and approach reflectively, moving with respect and integrity. It signals moving with an awareness of relationships, their significance and requirements).* This principle reminds me to be aware that participant's worldviews may differ therefore approach with the utmost respect and integrity throughout the research process. Be intentional and with purpose keeping the integrity of both researcher and participant intact.

Āta whakarongo: *(To listen with reflective deliberation, this requires patience and tolerance and to giving space to listen and communicate to the heart, mind and soul of the speaker, context and environment. It requires the conscious participation of all senses, the natural inclusion of the values of trust, integrity and respectfulness).* This principle refers to having the essential skill of patience, showing humility and listening attentively to the participant as what they have to say is important. It requires the conscious participation of the researcher's senses of hearing, seeing the expressions and observing so that everything is heard and taken in. To capture the heart, mind and soul of the participant is certainty that what is being spoken is what is being heard and understood.

Āta Korero: *(To communicate and speak with clarity, requiring quality preparation and a deliberate gathering of what is to be communicated. This is to ensure a quality of presentation (Kia mārama ki te kaupapa), to speak with conviction (kia pūmau ki te kaupapa), to be focussed (Kia hāngai ki te kaupapa).* This principle relays the message that communicating openly and being fully prepared for the research process ensures the participant is informed through every step of the process.

Āta Tuhi: *(To communicate and write with deliberation needing to be constantly reflective, knowing the purpose for writing. Consistently monitoring and measuring quality is implicit).* This principle is focused on the translation of the transcripts. Āta tuhi allows you to

continuously be reflective and ensure you have gathered the appropriate information. To always be mindful that the researcher has received a tāonga, lived experiences of participants therefore treat as such.

Āta mahi: *(To work diligently, with the conviction that what is being done is correct and appropriate to the tasks undertaken).* This principle is about the researcher ensuring continuous responsibility and ethical behaviour throughout the research process. The contract and consent form provided provides clarity about where the research journey is heading. By what means refers to participants being fully informed of and involved throughout the process.

Āta noho: *(Giving quality time to be with people and their issues, with an open and respectful mind, heart and soul. This signals the level of integrity required in relationships).* This principle is about the time spent with participants during the interview process, a time for whānaungatanga to take place, a time for rapport building. A high level of integrity is required in relationships between participant and researcher as they will be sharing their lives, their heart and soul with the researcher.

Āta whakaaro: *(To think with deliberation, allowing space for creativity, openness and reflection. The consequence is that action is undertaken to the best of one's ability).* This principle allows for the researcher to negotiate a time and place that best suits the participant. As a Māori researcher I am aware of tikanga therefore an hour interview may turn into three hours to allow for whānaungatanga to occur, then kai. Although as a researcher a specific time is set for the interview there is always the possibility that the participant will determine this 'time'.

Āta whakaako: *(To deliberately instil knowledge and understanding. There are clear reasons why knowledge is shared: to the appropriate participants, in the required manner, time and place).* In relation to this research this principle allows for the sharing of important stories by the participant to enable this kaupapa to reach fruition.

Āta tohutohu: *(To deliberately instruct, monitor and correct, grounded knowledge being a constant and valued companion).* This principle refers to any corrections that may be required by the researcher (to ensure accuracy) when the information is transcribed therefore allowing the participant to edit the information.

Āta kinaki: *(To be deliberate and clear in the choice of appropriate supports to enhance positions taken).* This principle refers to allowing supportive relatives or friends to be present during the interview process.

Āta hoki mārieri: *(To return with respectful acknowledgment of possible consequences).* For the purposes of this kaupapa this principle refers to possible changes that

may occur where the participant may withdraw during the interview, or the participant may decide after reading the transcript they want to change some information.

Āta titiro: (*To study kaupapa with reflective deliberation*). This principle refers to the literature review that informs the questions that will be asked during the interview process. Can I understand and see beyond what may be said by the participant during the interview? I am aware I need to ask for clarification of specific points if I am unclear about what has been spoken and recorded.

Āta whakamārama: (*To inform with reflective deliberation, ensuring that the channels of communication at the spiritual, emotional and intellectual levels of the receiver are respected, understood and valued*). This principle refers to kanohi ki kanohi (face to face) interaction with the participant. At all times be respectful, openness and honesty will be shown towards the participant by ensuring what is said will be valued as it is their story, their truth.

Ethical considerations

The importance in ethics in research is it plays a specific role in guiding key behaviours, processes and methodologies. The Massey University human ethics process applied for involved an in depth and thorough ethical process ensuring the foundation for this research were in place and appropriate. Ethical principles including Māori ethical processes involves care being taken for the protection of participants by way of confidentiality and anonymity, and in accessing participants. The safety of the researcher is also a priority therefore all legal, moral and ethical obligations of the research process are a requirement to ensure ethical integrity and competence are taken into consideration. A Massey University contact is provided to participants if participants become concerned. Mitigating factors are reduced as documentation pertaining to the entire research process is disclosed to participants. Formal approval from the Massey ethics committee was given 27 August 2014 (see appendix 2).

Supervision-risk of harm

Since embarking on this role as a researcher I have received formal supervision from Massey University staff. The four supervisors are qualified in research. We met to discuss progress, recruitment of participants, ethical and any research issues that may have arisen. The supervisors provided advice and guidance and allowed me to stay focused on the research goals. Another form of supervision I accessed was peer supervision through my work place

and externally. This type of supervision enabled me to discuss some key components of research to get a different view, advice and sometimes guidance.

Information sheets and Informed consent

Information sheets and informed consent is important because participants need to be fully informed about the study and about their rights. Information sheets were provided to wāhine Māori who showed an interest in taking part in the research. The information sheet provided a comprehensive explanation of the research and rights of the participant (see appendix 3). An informed decision was then made by the wāhine whether they wanted to participate. The researcher's email address was provided for those who wanted more information prior to agreeing to participate or decline. Questions and queries during this process was encouraged, at any time. There was an importance placed on gaining written and verbal consent from the participants based on full disclosure of the research and of their rights. A consent form was provided with the information sheet (see appendix 4). Participants signed a consent form once they decided to sign up to participate in the research. Smith (2012) states that "*consent indicates trust and the assumption is that the trust will not only be reciprocated but constantly negotiated*" (p. 137).

Confidentiality and securing privacy

At the beginning of each interview the researcher asked if the participants wanted pseudonym names instead of being identified and they all agreed. It was left up to the researcher to choose their names. This ensured confidentiality of the participants. Any content that identified the participants for example names of tamariki, other relatives, area of residence or other identifying features were removed. Whilst editing their transcripts participants were again given the opportunity to remove information they did not want in the final write up. Once they had read and in some instances edited the transcript a release of transcript form was signed allowing for the release of their information for inclusion in this thesis (see appendix 5).

Conflict of interest

Tauira and work colleagues were excluded from participating in this research so that the researcher's position as a colleague, academic and researcher was not compromised. In saying this, a couple of colleagues and a tauira did ask, it was explained to them why they could not be part of this research. There was the possibility that participants that responded to the

advertisement may be known by the researcher. It was not an issue because of the understanding of my role as a researcher, rather than a friend although this would be a strength because of the rapport we have got. I understand how vital their information is and it would be treated confidentially and with integrity.

Equipment

An audio recorder was used during the interviews. I ensured it was fully charged at all times prior to attending the interviews. Its purpose was in capturing the participants' voice and story. I decided to transcribe myself. For the six participant interviews I used a more reliable audio recorder as with the first audio recorder I had to use two laptops, one to hear the recording and the other to type the transcript. The audio taping during the first and second interviews taped very well although when I went to transcribe the second audio interview I realised I had to use two laptops. The recorded information would not minimise down so that I could open a word document to write up the information as I was hearing it. There was some anxiety initially therefore I decided to use a second audio recorder that has a USB download therefore allowing for the minimising and write up on one laptop.

The recruitment of participants

The preliminary criteria for the research participants was:

1. Wāhine Māori over the age of 30 years and have parented sole for five years or more;
2. Locality of participants from the Horowhenua/Manawatu areas and
3. Be willing to talk about their experiences.

The sampling technique was non-random volunteer sampling (O'Leary, 2011). This was to reduce bias because the first six participants contacted and whom fit the criteria were to be selected. This was the most appropriate form of sampling for this research because the criteria are specific and relating to ethnicity.

It was anticipated that the research would include six wāhine Māori participants. They were accessed through numerous means of advertising. I initially made phone contact with seven social service areas speaking to persons in management roles and two receptionists to gain permission to advertise on their website and noticeboard. After gaining verbal consent from the proposed social service areas I sent through an advertisement by email outlining the

researcher's whakapapa, topic area, criteria and email address. The advertisement was emailed through to the services January 2015 (see appendix 6). It was expected that wāhine Māori would make contact directly in response to the request for research participants. The services indicated they would pin copies on their noticeboards and send to professional social work women they believe may be interested in participating. Some of these women had forwarded the email to other friends, relatives that worked at other services. Four people responded to this approach. All of the wāhine met the criteria for the research and therefore became participants.

I received an email from one of the services a day after the advertisement was sent from an interested participant. After a conversation I emailed through an information sheet, interview schedule and consent form to read through. If the wāhine agreed with what they read, they would make contact with me and we would arrange a time and place that suited. This process was followed for all the other interested participants. A question sheet was included with the information sheet (see appendix 7). The advertisement noted six wāhine Māori required for the research interviews. Although there were many that had indicated their interest I received four that made direct contact therefore interviewing six altogether.

There were nine that had registered their interest to be interviewed, two declined because of work commitments, another two I sent emails to did not respond, three more were interested but I had to decline them even though they considered themselves as sole parents as their army husbands were often away and the other two were sole fathers wanting to partake. Unfortunately, as a consequence of the focus of this research being on wāhine Māori I reluctantly declined their participation.

Initially I was going to base the findings on the five already interviewed but was advised by the two supervisors I needed a sixth participant to ensure I was fulfilling the Universities regulations regarding content and interview policies. I approached a wāhine I knew who worked full time as a social worker and had sole parented her son for a number of years. I explained the research kaupapa and provided her the information sheet and consent form. She thought the kaupapa sounded exciting and agreed to take part in this research.

Pilot interviews

Prior to recruiting, a suggestion was made by my supervisor to test the questionnaire by interviewing me as a sole parent so that the experience of being interviewed could take place. The questions could be considered from the perspective of an interviewee and interview techniques considered in greater depth. “(Piloting) will give you much to think about in terms of your phrasing of questions, their order, the usefulness of the questions, and the structure of the interview” (Galletta, 2013, p. 49). During the pilot interview what was significant was the reality of experiencing being on the other end of an interview and what that can invoke for those receiving the questions. The kaupapa could potentially unearth some very distressing information for the participants. This could show up the vulnerability of any individual especially when confronted with their past realities.

Following this pilot interview, I undertook a second pilot interview with myself as the interviewer, with a professional that I have known for many years and whom I had invited to participate in this research. Through an initial conversation between the second pilot interviewee and the researcher it was agreed that although the interview is looked at as a ‘pilot’ it was to be used to test the process and she would essentially be the researcher’s first participant. The formalities of the information sheet, consent form and release of transcript form were discussed. The advantages of completing this second pilot interview was that I was able to test my research interviewer skills, the equipment reliability and to see if the questions needed changing or altering. The process could be reviewed regarding length of time and overall movement of the process. Barbour (2014) says that piloting helps to validate the questions being asked, the data required is gained and the progression of the interview suits both the interviewee and interviewer.

We began with a period of whanaungatanga during which time we shared kai and ‘caught up’ with the past happenings of our respective tamariki and our own life journeys over the past 10 or so years (Pohatu, 2008a). This process appeared to have relaxed both the participant and the researcher as the conversation tended to flow naturally.

This interview was a good base for reflection on my role change from interviewee to research interviewer. Although I had a personal relationship with the participant I had to continually keep myself in check through internal reviewing of my positioning as the researcher throughout the interview process. My experience in the first pilot interview made me very aware and cautious about the wellbeing of the participant through this process.

After the pilot interview and in consultation with the participant, it was agreed that one question be altered slightly as she found it a little confusing. However, the interview schedule remained essentially the same. In the first pilot interview with the researcher and supervisor the main purpose was to test the equipment and experience what participants may feel when confronted with the interview questions.

From this interview, themes emerged that aligned with the questions. These are similar to what is contained in the findings chapter.

1. Intergenerational trauma
2. Partner relationships
3. Life choices (Freedom, independence and trust)
4. Supports (Attitudes (historical/contemporary))
5. Children and frustrations (Employment and childcare)
6. Worldview (Laws and social policies)

Conducting the interviews

The interviews were to be conducted over an hour period. Three interviews were held in the homes of the participants, all on separate days. Two were held in their office at their workplace, and another in the researcher's office. These days and times suited participants as they chose the days and times for the interviews. The interviews were private and largely undisturbed. At one of the interviews we were briefly interrupted by the participant's colleague requiring something out of the office. This did not interrupt the quality or flow of the conversation. The evening interview followed a kaupapa Māori framework as I was aware because the participant was an old friend and immersed in tikanga Māori and te reo therefore it was fitting that a whanaungatanga and manaakitanga process of 'catching up' should occur during the process of kai. Mead (2003) used the kupu '*kanohi kitea*' indicating that kin members need to be seen and the bonds of whanaungatanga kept strong.

The individual semi-structured interviews had open-ended questions presented as prods. All the interviews were conducted *kanohi ki kanohi*, were all audio recorded and transcribed, with transcripts returned to participants for editing and approval for use. Kaupapa Māori research methods were utilised although I did initially mihi to them prior to starting I gave them an option whether to open the hui with a karakia. I provided a koha at the end of the interviews. The interviews were interactive and participatory and participants had the option of having a support person attend with them "*ensure that support is in place for participants...and*

researchers” Bogolub, (as cited in Guthrie, 2010, p. 105). The researcher had monthly supervision with Massey University supervisors and accessed peer support regularly and external supervision when required. The interviews were conducted during the period November 2014 and June 2015.

Thematic analysis

Analysis of data was qualitative, looking for themes and areas of agreement or discrepancies while distinguishing between individual beliefs and that the data may differ from one participant to another. Galletta (2013) indicates that data analysis:

“Demands ample time and reflection. From conducting the interview and reviewing the data, often through the process of transcribing and audiotape or videotape and ensuring the accuracy of the transcription, each step draws you more deeply into the participants’ lived experience” (p.120).

This outline appeared to the researcher to be an appropriate method to follow because it suggests a process for systematically organising, managing and presenting the data or patterns, themes and categories from the data (Patton, 1990). During this process continual reflection accompanies the interpretation and the search for significance. To take into careful consideration the differing cultural meanings behind specific words and experiences and to carefully scrutinise, plan and ensure accuracy of the information is interpreted and recorded. To transcribe is to make speech readable, transcribing requires vigilant listening, careful note taking and sensitive interpretation (McIndoo, 2012).

While reading through each transcript, a letter and number identification process was executed, P1 to P6 in the order participants were interviewed. A colour coding process by identifying key words and statements was then instigated through using six different coloured highlighters. The colour coding specified different meanings:

Orange:	Support/financial
Red:	Circumstance
Yellow:	Family/whānau
Green:	Adversity

Blue: Choices

Purple: Environment

This coding process was repeated for each transcript. The key words and statements helped to identify themes. According to Mason (2002) you need to have a sense of what it is that you are sorting and organising before you start. The responses of each participant regarding each sub theme were then grouped according to the research questions asked:

Section 1: Journey into sole parenthood

Section 2: Whānau support

Section 3: Tangled with the system

Section 4: Children and wāhine frustrations

Section 5: Violence in relationships

Section 6: Wāhine and their 'new light'

Working simultaneously with each question, a different highlighter colour was used that identified key points including issues, experiences, concerns, understandings as they related to each section. This coding process was continually repeated until all the data was coded. Subsequently, Section 5: Violence in relationships emerged as a theme which were significant experiences by three of the participants and was not covered in the other five sections.

All the data was collated into a table, then comparisons were made across all six areas. This was repeated a number of times to ensure the researcher captured the key material. Working with the tables across all the areas, a reflective analysis occurred looking again for issues, experiences, concerns, understandings and recurring themes attributed to their experiences. A re-read of the responses ensured they were grouped under the relevant section. An analysis of the themes identified would then be undertaken to see if less themes could be gauged. The aim of this categorisation process was to create a framework for describing, presenting, and understanding the topic of interest. Galletta (2013) describes this as a “very time consuming task” (p. 121). Content analysis involves drawing out key themes from each participants data, coding these themes then placing them in categories (Patton, 1990).

According to Mason, (2002) researchers who intend to sort and organize their data must know what it is that constitutes data in the context of their research. While substantial attempts have been made to achieve a thorough analysis, it is likely as Walker, (2010) indicates that:

“Processing qualitative data often involves seeing what themes emerge from people’s words. Usually, we try to do this in a way that develops new insights and theories, and so we try to let the themes emerge, rather than try to confirm a theory” (p. 20).

Mason (2002) talks about being ‘objective’ and that researchers make judgements about what to write or record and what they think it means (p.77). She says that data analysis can be derived in three ways literal, interpretive or reflexive. This is to ensure the data analysis interpreted by the interviewer is carefully considered to ensure balancing occurs. The researcher should be aware of the necessity to question what it is you want to capture when videoing or audio taping. Bouma and Ling (2004) raise the issue of accuracy in the recording and interpretation of information, they indicate the need to take care and be considerate towards those you intend to study.

Reflections on the research journey

Many wāhine Māori I spoke to individually during the recruitment process were excited about the pending study. On reflection I do not think holding an open forum or seminar to introduce the kaupapa would have been as effective (given the personal and sensitive nature of this kaupapa) because they would be strangers to each other. Realistically, who talks to just anyone about their personal and private business in public? One of the wāhine Māori disclosed at their interview that this was the *first time ever* she had spoken to anyone (outside of her whānau) about her life therefore was very nervous and very teary.

On reflection, what I did not expect during the interviews was to hear the traumatic experiences of three of the wāhine Māori. This was so unexpected but I did manage to keep myself in check during the interviews by not visibly responding. When listening to and transcribing the audio tapes again it had an effect on me. I accessed counselling for a few sessions which was very worthwhile. I made sure that the wāhine could access counselling/support afterwards if needed.

Email advertising, I believe was successful, although on reflection it would have been preferable to have gone into the services to speak with management *kanohi ki kanohi* instead of phoning for permission to advertise. Potential participants when making contact with me had heard about the study from colleagues in other rohe.

This study only reflects the views and experiences of the six wāhine Māori. It was only a very small sample of participants. For the purposes of this study I was only able to interview six. Initially when I first started the recruitment process I would have liked to have held a couple of focus groups but given the time constraints and limited number of participants allowed for this research and the University rules governing this Master's thesis, this was not possible.

Dissemination of information

The participants will be the first to sight the research findings after the thesis is examined. This will be an excellent way of re-engaging with the participants and getting feedback and critique of the research through a hui or wananga process. A small brochure or pamphlet outlining the main findings may be a way to disseminate information to the community as it is a summary of the data and easier to read than a whole research paper. It takes into consideration those that do not necessarily deal with large pieces of written work.

Conclusion

In concluding, this chapter outlined and provided discussions regarding the methodology and methods used in this chapter. Significant key considerations are factors here in utilising a qualitative approach, and informed by kaupapa Māori methodologies and the deliberation of ethical standards. Ethical considerations lead off the participant recruitment process. The next chapter introduces the results of the interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

E mōhiotia ana a waho kei roto he aha

*One cannot know from the outside what is contained within-unless one can see inside*⁵(Riley, 1990, 55-1).

Introduction

This chapter describes the results from the six interviews with wāhine Māori and celebrates their stories and honours their voices. The participants were asked a number of questions based on their early growing up years, their transition through to adulthood and then parenting their tamariki alone. These questions were formed after extensive literature analysis. The views and voices of the participants are presented in italics. Participants have pseudonym names to protect their identities. The presentation of these key themes provide a clear understanding of their true experiences of parenting their children alone.

Participant profiles

All the participants have childhood experiences that involved varying degrees of changes in their lives for example, adult and child separation, physical, emotional and sexual abuse; self-esteem issues and the death of a parent. All these areas identified had significant lifelong impacts on them as individuals and their families. The participant's ages range from 31 years through to 60 years old.

Elaine works in management and had a good whānau orientated upbringing with both her parents and her siblings. She has four teenage tamariki of her own and three step adult children. Jane is a health kaimahi with one adult child and a teenager. She was a whāngai for her first five years prior to living with her parents, her parents parted when she was 13 years old. Penny has two adult tamariki and is a health kaimahi and describes her mum as her best friend who passed away when she was 20 years old. Jenn has one young child and works with young people. Her parents separated when she was an adult. Donna has one young child and works voluntarily. Her mother left her father when she was 16 years old. Lena has one adult child; she also works with young people, her mother passed away when she was 16 years old.

⁵ This whakatauki signals the 'voices' that will be heard through the process of interviewing. What is shared will be reciprocated in the results.

Out of all six participants Elaine's parents remained together in their relationship. Jenn's parents separated when she was an adult; Jane, Donna and Lena were brought up when they were tamariki by their father. Penny was a young adult at 20 years old when her mother passed away.

Key themes

Six key themes emerge from the interviews; some are divided into sub themes. The first theme explores the journey of three participants to sole parenthood. The other three participants are included from the second theme because their journey into sole parenthood differed significantly and involved violence. The second theme highlights the importance of whānau support. The third theme discusses policies, education and employment. Theme four explores children and frustrations, advantages and disadvantages of parenting alone. Theme five was a new development due to the stories that unfolded and shared by three of the participants during the interview process. This theme enters their world views and is about violent relationships. These are important stories to tell because of the devastating content which delves into childhood survival and adult violence. Theme six finishes with advice to other sole parents.

Theme One: Journey into sole parenthood

This theme reflects on the participant experiences of being raised by a single parent, two in particular by their Dad and their own journey into sole parenting. Jenn, Donna and Lena reflect different beginnings as sole parents. They shared their very private moments about relationships lost.

Jenn was an adult when her parents separated; she had a close relationship with them and her brother. She was 16 years old when she fell pregnant. Jenn and her partner were together a year and a half before separating:

“Her [my daughters] Dad was good, he didn't do a runner or anything, he was very supportive and a good father. We were together at that point, yeah. We were sharing the care, it would be ok because it wasn't just going to be me...When I separated from her father we were both single co-parenting...when I couldn't communicate with her father his mother and my father would talk by default. I would say [to her own father]

'Dad I can't talk', I'd blow up or something like that would get bigger than it was so I would ask him to mediate. As we got older and time went by, time was a healer so we [her child's father] are back to being all good now'.

Donna stated being in a relationship and having a mother and father for her child meant a great deal to her because as a young teenager her mother had left her father and she remained in the care of her father. She reflected on her own experience:

"When I met his father I wanted to give my son the whānau he needed, in my head mum and Dad. When I got into my pregnancy I started to see his father's true colours, he had quite a reputation which I didn't know about. And he took off and left me when I was pregnant, so that's ok I don't need you anyway. I never had another relationship".

Lena lost her mother to illness when she was 15 years old and was brought up by her father. She was with her partner for two years. When talking about this time in her life she became very emotional giving indications of the hurt she felt about him [her partner] leaving her and being left to parent her child alone as illustrated in this comment:

"I was fortunate to have a father [Lena's father] that adored [her son], he was a man who the sun rose and set on his grandson...[her partner] found out I was pregnant and left me when I was 3 months pregnant so I have been a single parent raising my son on my own his entire life...My heart was broken and I just thought nah I don't really believe in love, that sort of love. It's nice when I see it but I don't think it's for me. I don't think I'm built for that or made for that. I am happy I have to say, I am happy with that decision".

Theme Two: Whānau support encompassed by te ao Māori

Whānau and friends played a significant role in supporting all the wāhine Māori in this study. These supports varied with some participants such as with Elaine whose immediate whānau surprised her as she was not expecting to be *embraced* when disclosing her own abuse. Jane found a new mum in her son's father's mother; her own father was a great support to them. Penny had the support of her whānau and some friends. Jenn had always had the support of her close knit whānau. Donna had the support of her mother and close friends. Lena had the support of her elderly father and some friends.

Elaine describes how she felt *whakama* about her abusive situation because she did not think it happened to anyone else in her whānau. She did not tell her mum or dad about the abuse because for her the script was *you made your bed you lie in it*, she had always believed that, therefore was surprised when her father found out and said:

“I gave my treasure to [her partner] I gave our family taonga, you to that man in trust. He doesn’t want you or can’t treat you like the princess you are, I claim you back”. My immediate whānau were really supportive although I couldn’t quite believe it except when they started talking about these other abuse situations...I was embraced by the whānau. Like their home was my home, it was a multi generation home”.

Jane experienced real whānau or parental love and caring when introduced to her partner’s mother:

” she taught me how to cook and she taught me how to run a home and one of the best lessons she gave me in life was children don’t need material things they just need you and love and that’s what I brought my kids up with. I never knew that, I never knew what love was, how sad is that? She was there for the birth of both my kids and she continues to be there today for them. I am very lucky, it’s like I have a second shot at a parent”.

A turnaround for Jane’s relationship with her father came when her father chose to support her when she was institutionalised:

“Right, do the mahi, how long you in there for” I said 2 months. He said do that mahi give it everything you got, throw yourself at it cos that’s the way it’s going to work. When you come out I will be here...Dad was on board, he was a great support. I had a Dad, my life actually had a Dad, and he was great to be around. I just acknowledged his 21 years of sobriety last year in December”.

Penny talked openly about having parents and grandparents and other extended whānau that loved her and her tamariki unconditionally, their values and beliefs were very strong:

“I have a wealth of good friends and whānau support that I know”. People say to me “gosh, you know a lot of people” I say yeah I do, you must have a lot of friends: I know a lot of people, yep, but I see my trusted friends. I can count them on my two hands because they are the ones when you are in trouble in the middle of the night you can ring them up, they don’t ask any questions they just say where are you?”

Jenn had a very good relationship with her father, mother and extended whānau that she treasured while sole parenting:

“My key support when raising her [daughter] was my Dad so she considers him the most, the best person in her world like from when she was six months he was visiting and taking her on trips and he was that person that was roaming with her I suppose”.

Donna’s only immediate supports were her mother and her brother. Her Dad had died 12 years previous, Donna described him as a grand man and he parented her from the age of 17 years old, her brother left with her mother. She did have one friend that lived up north that she rung occasionally for connection and support. She idolised those families that are solid:

“Just mum and my brother...When Dad was alive we had a lot to do with each other [referring to her father’s whānau who were Māori] ... my mother said to him one day I want a divorce as she thought the grass was greener on the other side... There is still not a lot of people I share with. You have your friends; you have the different ones that you talk to about things. I have one who is very close, one that I bare my soul to. But unless she rings’ me to say what’s been happening otherwise I still don’t know why I can’t ask for help.... if they have been a good solid family I notice the kids now at my age with their husbands still and I admire that. I am pretty sure that comes from a good grounding, good foundation and good aroha”.

Lena had whānau support from her father when he was alive and her maternal uncle. She had several friends and one in particular she was close to:

“I had a lot of support in the sense of two really good men, [her father and uncle] it makes a huge difference. I have got really close friends, my oldest friend who happens to live with me and it is our sons that arebest friends”.

In contrast, Elaine and Jane talked about paternal and maternal whānau in their lives that were not very supportive of them or their situations:

Elaine:

...” she was never a very maternal woman and she didn’t use to say give me that mokopuna she just wasn’t like that. She would say I’m into my life we are off to do our stuff, you two look after yourselves and your baby.... She wasn’t a kuia oriented person and probably not very much of a mother either”.

Jane:

... “how dare you do this” and you know the family name and all the rest of the crap that went with it. So we went to her and [she] didn’t take it too well and kicked me out and I was pregnant, 16 with a child.

Much later when her older son was very young Jane became unwell therefore sought professional help. This comment came from Janes’ mother referring to her being institutionalised after being raped:

“...get out of there, here’s another thing you’re tarnishing”

Overall it appears that whānau and friends played a significant role in supporting these wāhine through difficult times. Having whānau involved in their lives was important. A couple of wāhine shared the lack of support or understanding received from paternal and maternal grandmothers to the tamariki. Interestingly, four of the wāhine were parented by their fathers. Although Jane’s father was violent towards her mother he stepped in to support Jane to get through the challenges she faced. Jenn had an excellent relationship with her father and although her parents were separated her father played a significant role with her and his mokopuna. He advocated for her when dealing with issues between herself and her ex-partner.

Theme Three: Tangled with the system

In society today and historically policies have played a major part in affecting the health and wellbeing of whānau and how wāhine Māori live in their day to day lives. The wāhine talked openly in a very matter of fact way about their experiences.

Elaine shared she did not have to *tangle* with the system because of the huge whānau support she received. She was aware of the stories about mothers in urban and rural areas that had no supports and struggled to make ends meet as she explained:

“I used to feel slightly embarrassed about getting my payments from DPB...you have no means to support yourself. It meant that we could get our whare out at the beach with a 2.5% deposit.....Dad he would kill sheep and lambs and that so there was always meat...I always had people staying with me and if I couldn't pay any board they would help with kai or in other ways”.

Jane was supported by Work and Income (WINZ) through her education and daily living. One turning point for her was obtaining a full time job as a nurse and WINZ saw this as an inspirational success story that they could use. To get to this stage of her life she had to overcome hurdles that the service created. She reflected on the challenges of managing multiple responsibilities:

“Every time you'd say I had an appointment, and I said I couldn't because I had a tutorial or lecture you people would always say you would cut my benefit, well that was my lifeline for me and my kids and if I didn't come you would cut my benefit. How am I going to feed my kids? How are we going to survive? We are already secondary tax, how the hell are we going to survive? So I'd come, I wasn't good at theory but you people put up the blocks to me so why would I want to do that? I said no way not doing it”.

Jane talked openly about the stigma of being on a benefit and how her and her tamariki coped:

The disadvantages are the welfare system, the public criticism and having to live from day to day. You can't live from week to week, you have to from day to day...There were times when you went without food to feed your kids which was a regular occurrence and it didn't worry me because as long as they were fed.

Penny worked for 10 years prior to having her oldest child and did not go on the unemployment benefit when moving from one part of the country to the other. It became a different story though when becoming a single parent:

“I just knocked on doors and asked for a job...The hardest thing for me was to go to Work and Income when I became a single parent. I heard about it and thought I don't need to go down there, I'm okay. Hullo! Now that was challenging simply because of the people that worked there. I don't want them to be single parents but I want them to have some kind of understanding about life. When you have case managers who are 20 years old and others that have been there for 25 years and just wanting to see their pension out yeah not good. And so every time I went there I felt it was a chore. You might strike one good one in the mix and you might not and then you end up going “Oh my lord”. You just keep going, get the paper work, get back there and get it done. You need somewhere to live, to put food on the table”.

And even more so when Penny began studying and learning about policies and legislation:

“When you are studying and you learn about all those things and a lot of the papers I did I sat up and paid a lot of attention to all of it, I thought “Really!! Are you for real”. You start to become fully alert to what was happening because of the environment I was in. The lecturers I had and the mates I had met to me as a single mother probably the stigma of people thinking that a solo mother was a dumb useless person who just wanted to have babies to push them around in prams so that they can get a benefit. For me, I wanted to not be a part of that I wanted to be the flip side of that. It's not that people ever made me feel bad about that but I was more aware about those types and differences around single parenting”.

Jenn had been on a training benefit for 2 years since the birth of her child. Prior to her child starting school she studied for a year then went into fulltime employment as she explained:

“The reason I have stayed in employment is I don't know how people can survive and raise a child on a benefit...I don't think the government puts enough support in for sole parents. I know that work and income for them it's about, for lots of people there are so many barriers in order for you to progress. There's always red tape here, there....I

think people are more accepting of sole parent situations...there is a lot of blended families...people separated and remarried”.

Donna was grateful for being able to support her son and not have to work through his early years as she was receiving government support:

“When you have a mortgage and insurances it takes a chunk. We can live on it, I pride myself that I am very good with his nutrition. We can live on the DPB, I am a good bargain shopper”.

She continued by referring to the Domestic Purposes Benefit:

I am grateful for that, Hell, be up the creek without a paddle...No, I don't think it (the benefit) is sufficient at all. I think I was very fortunate to have had my son when I had him because everything was a lot cheaper than it is now...I think the cost of living now outweighs what they get on a benefit.

Lena talked about having always worked and always believed money for working was better than not working and she had a child to support. She did not believe in taking, what she called ‘charity’ from the government and there were too many restrictions when she was on a benefit. She sees it is important to teach your children a good work ethic and a sense of responsibility.

“I wasn't solely reliant on a benefit it didn't impact on me as much as it might have with others. And because I knew if I was on a benefit it was only for a short while. It didn't really impact on me as much...My Dad worked, all my family have worked, and we have never been one to take the benefit unless you have to. I think it is good to teach children that and they learn that I think primarily from what their parents did, they model their behaviour on what their parents did”.

“I have also seen people say or made comment about this man saying “Oh look at that man he's raising his children because his wife took off and left him for another bloke”. I have never once heard anyone say look at that wonderful woman raising her children because her husband took off and left her for another woman. So I think there is a real

negative connotation towards single mothers in New Zealand. Single fathers on the other hand I think they actually have it a lot easier”.

Financial circumstances for these wāhine Māori could have been dire but for their determination and strength to support their children. Their continual support from whānau and friends contributed to them coping. Financial assistance was sought in some shape or form often from Work and Income. It was a means to an end for the purpose of survival and for most it was a temporary measure to get them through until they could stand on their own feet. What was significant with each wāhine Māori was their pride and where and how they positioned themselves in society today.

Education and employment

All six wāhine were asked about their education. Elaine went to university when much younger and as a young sole mother was teaching. She is very proud of her three boys who are all at university now. She had followed the advice of women whom advised her to talk to other people:

...” look for good men to be influences in your sons’ lives’ ...I think I did although not overtly I know a lot of the men that had a bit of an influence with the boys are men from a very early age I have said Hi I am ...mum I understand you’re their coach. I look back and think they are probably the men that made the difference for my sons and my father was another reassuring influence for them cos he was always quite straight up and not scared to take roles and stuff”.

Jane at 15 years old of age worked in a child care centre for eight months prior to becoming pregnant at 16. After the failure of her second relationship with her younger sons’ father she continued to work part time to provide for them and to study. This was extremely challenging as she described:

“There was no money left over for anything and there was a long period of time when I was by myself and we lived on nothing. I was studying full time and working on the weekend. Every ounce of money had to go in to pay Housing New Zealand, petrol for the car and groceries. There were times when you went without food to feed your kids which was a regular occurrence and it didn’t worry me because as long as they were fed”.

“When I came to the end of my training, I did mine over 5 years because I had two kids and I still had to feed them. When I started my nursing training my oldest son was 17, my youngest son was 9 so he was able to watch him during the day or at the weekends when I went to work. I was a care assistant at the hospital while I was training to be a nurse so I had exposure to things because I am a hands on person. I am not a theory person; I struggle with theory”.

Penny referred to her parents as being hard workers and sometimes having three jobs to support her and her siblings as they were all into playing sports. Growing up in a whānau that passed on a good work ethic Penny was determined to do well in education and employment for herself and her tamariki. Much later, she went on and graduated with a double Degree:

...” they [her parents] never asked for anything in return. They just wanted us to be happy and have fun and certainly apart from giving birth to my children they were memorable years of my life and I wanted to replicate that for my own tamariki... What that did for my children is it enabled me to get capped at the town hall by Sir Paul Reeves and they [her children] might like to be like mummy one day”.

Penny gave a supportive message to her daughter about her future. Her son had received a scholarship for rugby and was at the time boarding at a high school:

“I have told my daughter I didn’t have her until I was 32 so you go out there and enjoy the world and so at 21 she has the possibility to do that... He got a scholarship for rugby but I keep telling him I know all about your sporting abilities, this is about your academics’ mate. He is in a great place... Whether or not he chooses to go down that pathway he’s given himself the best shot and in the meantime whatever else comes along on the sports field is a bonus”.

Jenn studied when her daughter was under five. Once her daughter turned five and went to school she gained full time employment and has remained in employment since:

...” the early years for your child are the developmental years for children, to give them the best start within the school system because that’s the way they have to go. Education is important, well I feel for you in order to move forward. Even though like I would

have loved to have gone to University but obviously I didn't make that choice when I left school. I figured that my time is coming after I put her through because otherwise...I think how awesome for these mums that are studying and getting an education and also bringing up their children. I couldn't imagine anything worse than being on a student loan. I decided I would work then when she leaves or after college then I would do something for myself".

Donna from the age of 16 years had been involved in full time work for 15 years in a government job and working in an office, overall 25 years. She was on a sickness benefit prior to the birth of her son and has since gained a Degree:

"I'd worked 25 years next minute I'm sitting here looking out that window. It makes you so depressed because you need to be needed. I needed to be in a position and I ended up when...was born going part time for a place, I loved it.

Now I feel I have got my Degree now and I'm back down that road again sitting waiting for the job to come knocking on my door. I wasn't working during my Degree and of course now he is 13 the mouth is bigger. I don't know why I have...I know the answers. You got to be persistent, totally consistent and I think where I slacked was during my Degree just being me and him, his Xbox and iPad became my babysitter while I was doing my mahi. And now I am trying to pull back the reins and he is fighting me on it".

Lena had always worked at various jobs over the years. She had gained a trade certificate in the catering industry. Other positions she had held were in manufacturing industries, shearing and retail. After gaining a Degree Lena now worked for a government department:

"I have always worked because I have always believed, one: the money for working was better than not working and I had a child to support so you do what you have to there. And two: I am quite proud I don't really like taking charity from the government and there are so many restrictions with being on a benefit not only the limited income but you can't travel unless you tell them you are going overseas and I just didn't like that. And three: I think that it is important to teach your children a good work ethic, a sense of responsibility".

Prior and after having children the wāhine had good work ethics and had continued with this even in the most stressful situations. It was clearly identified that for all these wāhine education and employment played an important role in their lives for their very existence and as future role models for their tamariki. No matter what situation they were in the major determinants for the future wellbeing of themselves and their children was education and employment.

Theme Four: Children and wāhine frustrations

The six wāhine talked about the frustrations expressed by their children and themselves. Elaine begins this section. She lost her second partner and father to her three boys to a terminal illness when their youngest was three years old. She said when she first started seeing him in a serious relationship the biggest impact was she did not trust herself for a long time. If there was a man she thought was good looking she would think *“oh no that must be all the wrong stuff because I chose the wrong one the first time”*:

“I didn’t trust my judgment of what I thought a good man was. And even with...I use to think oh no there must be some big flaw here there must be something wrong for me to like him, not trusting my judgment...I use to always think and worry that he would wake up, see the light and leave me. I thought he might think I wasn’t good enough. It’s that first failure partnership and sort of dreaded I would fail again as a partner. I winged it with [her daughter] because I’m a woman but now I got boys. How the hell am I going to give them what a father could give their sons, I can’t”.

Jane had built an excellent trusting relationship with her two boys as she described:

...” grew up in it and it was really scary for him. He has seen things that no nine or ten-year-old should see in their lifetime. But he’d seen it and he’s talked about it and we been honest about it and I’ve said yes that happened. I’ve never had denial or kept the truth from him, always been straight up with each other. I think that’s why my relationship between me and the two boys is so good on so many levels that’s why one thing we all stuck to was let’s be honest with each other”.

Penny ended the relationship with the father of her tamariki quite a few years ago because of being *bashed, abused and emotionally torn*. Penny’s tamariki don’t often see their father but

when he does visit he has stayed at their home whilst she stays elsewhere. Penny tolerates him for the children's sake:

"I knew he didn't have the tools to lift himself...I picture that one or two hours he is with you both or one of you will be crying. And it is normally my girl".

"Mum, why does Dad do that? He doesn't see you all the time and thinks he still wants that control of you and try and make things better. He wants to take over and be dominating instead of asking the kids how they do it. You have to deep breath. That stuff you do to the kids when they are little he still continues to do that now even though his daughter is nearly 21. I just keep saying to him, she's a young lady, at 18 I have really no say in what she does. Now with her in Auckland she is saying "thanks mum, he won't have to come here". I acknowledge him for being their father, but that's about it. I said to my son after that performance there will be no next time because this is my house, he replied "I promise mum I won't ask again".

Jenn was very conscious that her daughter always noticed when she played sports with her friends that both their parents arrived to watch them and only she would be there for her:

"She would notice her friends have two parents and there was just me...I mostly connected to the single mums".

Donna discussed in detail the continual frustration her son expressed because he always wanted contact with his father. She was very hard on herself and lacked confidence in her abilities to parent her child and to find someone for herself in the future. She struggled with her sons responses:

..." the last few years he hasn't seen him [his father] and the disappointments been overwhelming. We suffer the consequences of that because...gets so frustrated and angry, you take it out on those closest to you. He might come out with every now and then, my Dad's a dickhead...I go you have every right to say that if that's how you feel because when his father use to let him down saying he would see him and he didn't. I would say you tell Daddy how you feel, [response was] "you're not allowed, too

scared'. But, I thank god at the moment that he leaves us alone especially while he's unwell".

"I reckon I have trouble parenting, that is something that deters me too because meeting somebody else, who in my eyes is going to come up to scratch to even come close to being a mentor to my son. He's desperate for male company. He goes to me "I'll put you on a dating site', he hasn't but that's what he says to me. The thing is he doesn't realise he's got me all to himself for ever. And what's it going to be like if he has to share me with somebody. I can imagine how that is going to play out".

Lena provided well for her son although she knew the male element was missing and that her child was sometimes embarrassed about their living circumstances:

"There were times when...would see his friends going out with their fathers and that and I would see a look of sadness in his eyes. That is not easy for a mother to cope with...I had to move to a smaller housing New Zealand place in a not as nice area. That impacted more on [her son] than me because he used to feel ashamed really about being so poor because even though I was working we weren't rich but we always had money for food and that and to pay rent. But he used to feel embarrassed because a lot of his friends their parents owned their own home, they had flash cars, we never had those things. So it impacted more on him and I know when I lived in one street that wasn't very flash, we lived there for a long time, he hated it and he couldn't wait to get out of it".

Advantages of parenting alone

When asked this question about advantages and disadvantages all of the wāhine had similar or varying responses. This question was asked because of their experience parenting alone and the responses so far from these interviews showed there were quite a few highs and lows for example the everyday decision making rests with you or there is only one income coming in and worst of all you are judged by society. Elaine relished the freedom of being independent and being away from violence and having the full support of her whānau:

... ” free from him because I was scared of him. He was a big man, pretty nasty. It was freedom from that relationship...I now control the destiny of my baby with the support of my whānau, quite empowering aye”.

Jane was clear about ensuring her sons developed good values and morals when around women:

... ” your children grow up to be good young men when around women and you teach them morals and values of life”.

Penny had always relied on whānau support when making decisions. This appeared to be key to her success with her tamariki. She could always depend on the supports that surrounded her:

“I have been allowed to make the key decisions for their lives and their pathways on my own with the support and advice of whānau and friends that have the same outlook on life as myself”.

Jenn had a really good relationship with her child’s father. She shared she could do whatever she wanted in terms of not having to check in or whether she is doing something right. She was free to make choices and they had a shared care arrangement:

... “She wouldn’t have to go through the courts or anything, we could still communicate...I could do whatever I liked you know in terms of not having to I suppose check in or whether I am doing it right. I was free to make those choices and the arrangement with her father was that when she was younger she could go every second weekend”.

Donna expressed the love she had for her son. She described it as reciprocal love although because there was only the two of them sometimes he had a *gutsful* of her and her of him:

... ”24/7 usually here, that love. There is no other love like that”.

Lena and her son had always been very close because there was just the two of them:

... *"it was always him and me, we trust each other and he always knew I was there for him"*.

Disadvantages of parenting alone

The responses to this section vary as seen with Elaine who bases the teachings of her kuia and kaumatua as being the key to successful relationships.

Elaine had been hard on herself and felt she had failed her womanhood because she couldn't handle the hard times in her abusive relationship. She had made a comparison with her old aunty that had parented many tamariki, including her husbands' nieces and nephews. When speaking to her aunt about men pushing women around the response from her aunt was *that's just part of a woman's lot*. Inferring that you take the good times with the bad and you get on with it:

"There was always that sense that maybe I hadn't been strong enough to carry that, I should have been able to handle that and go back and actually be more of a woman than what I'd been".

... *"that first period of sole-hood I was being judged by some of those old kuia who I had a lot of respect for and maybe I was being judged by some of my old uncles. So there was that sense of not giving that child the full experience of man parented for better or for worse"*.

"Occasionally getting hit on by uncles that want to look after you and couldn't understand that you weren't returning their affections. They think they are doing you a favour you know but you don't want to go there".

Jenn spoke openly about a lot of judgment and stereotyping in society about sole parents:

"The stigma that comes with it, I'm not really sure. All I know is there's a huge amount of people that are parenting alone. You don't want to choose that, who wants to parent alone, I certainly didn't. It is just something that happened and you just get on with it".

“I don’t think they (WINZ and those in society) have any idea of what it is like, what life is like without any money. And I suppose until you have been in those situations you can’t really say too much unless you have been there”.

Donna suffers from anxiety therefore was always hard on herself. She talked about there being no such thing as a perfect parent and that if you believe it then you set yourself up for failure. She wants the best for her child but does miss out on socially interacting with other adults therefore for Donna at this time there is limited opportunity to partake with others:

“Yeah, and I didn’t do him any favours, I suffered myself with anxiety...people would say “you should be grateful, you got what you always wanted, a child”. But that’s saying you think that people would want to hear. I am grateful, I try, I pray for him that he would be everything that his father is not. And everything I wasn’t as a kid and you want him to stand strong like I said before he is a beautiful natured kid just at times we clash and I think what is my problem...I am happy to be home but I am not mixing with adult company”.

Lena talked about the financial disadvantages to the point where she indicated that you do what you have to do and that this is your life and you work with what you have:

...it is always easier when two people are bringing home an income rather than one. It was sometimes hard to discipline a boy because he was a very strong willed boy and he still is. When you haven’t got the support of another parent or another adult really that’s right with you and there is only you continually saying no and growling and all of that it can be a bit hard and a bit tiring I think.

Although there were frustrations amongst the wāhine Māori they coped by utilising their whānau support systems. Some, not all are able to overcome frustrations by moving forward with confidence and to trust in themselves although for some it has taken longer.. This has played a major role in how the wāhine Māori viewed their future or in their abilities to succeed in parenting their child alone. There were other challenges they faced for example when relationships failed and feeling guilty because of no male model in their children’s lives. This though was overridden by the fact that they had freedom, they were able to teach their children good morals, values, trust and honesty and to give them opportunities. The wāhine did not

dwell on the past; they moved on for the sake of their children. One wāhine Māori summed it up by saying *you do what you have to do*.

Theme Five: Violence in relationships

This section commences with Elaine, Jane and Penny detailing the negativity surrounding their partner relationships when physical, emotional and sexual violence impacted in their lives. Their individual stories are illuminated under the following three sub headings whānau intergenerational violence; children and resilience and all grown up. When talking about their partner relationships these wāhine described in detail the violent experiences that eventually lead them towards ending the relationship with their partners. These experiences played a significant part in determining the futures they wanted for themselves and their children, free from violence. The following stories unfolded during the interview process. These are important stories to tell as it shows the devastating effects that occur and are allowed by whānau to continue through generations. It shows the brave, the courageous and the determined to set themselves and their children free.

Whanau intergenerational violence

When talking to Elaine about her up-bringing including her journey and how she became a sole parent, it was shared that their whānau had experienced intergenerational trauma as a result of family violence. Elaine heard such stories from kuia and kaumatua soon after she became a sole parent. This is an important story to include in this study as it shows the sheer stamina, courage, acceptance and determination endured by her to oversee her own inner battle for righteousness as a wāhine Māori.

Elaine began the discussion on intergenerational trauma when she described how prevalent family violence was within her wider whānau. She described the experiences of her Nanny's sister (she calls her Aunty), secondly another Aunty and her Uncle and how other family members treated it:

“The old man, the one that had knocked her around would come back to get her cos he would sober up and get over himself and the korero that the oldies used to say to him “oh you come back for your dog, take her”. It was that thing: you made your bed you lie on it”.

Reflecting on the attitudes of that whānau, Elaine said they would always take her Aunty in. The whānau perpetuated the violence further by allowing her to return back to her husband fully knowing it will occur again. In doing this they gave him ‘whānau permission’ to continue the violence:

...” when her husband turned up for her sober and being a nice man again I guess in our days the equivalent of our turning up with chocolates and hearts and that she would be sent back with him ...everyone knowing he would do exactly the same thing again”.

Elaine continued to describe how family violence was common throughout the family, although it wasn’t something that was openly discussed by her father:

...” he had also had a sister that had been abused, they never actually stopped the abuse ...she went on in that abusive relationship.it was never visible to us and I didn’t know until my own abuse and when dad talked about it...it wasn’t spoken about”.

She further explained how the whānau would romanticise stories about the abusive whānau member, often omitting the reality of the abuse and trauma:

...” all the stories I had heard about him were always slightly romanticised. He was a bit of an old rogue, had an eye for the ladies and drank a bit but the other real abusive stuff was never a part of the stories about that man. My Uncle got quite jelly when she looked beautiful but they [whānau] never spat out the next bit which was he was physically abusive towards her”.

Elaine described the stigma of how the older generations in her family had particular expectations around the role of wāhine, which endorsed the view that family violence was a ‘normal’ element of family life. A clear example of that was another Aunt’s comment about *men pushing women around was a part of a women’s lot*. This affected the way Elaine viewed herself and the role of wāhine:

....” Aunty was always having babies and for her that was just part of wāhine’s thing, to carry...I had that respect for her it was like you felt you had failed your womanhood because you couldn’t handle the hard times”.

Elaine's view of herself in comparison to her Aunt's situation of her role as a woman made her feel she was not strong but weak. This affirmed their abuse by belittling herself and thinking they were right and that she was wrong in how she dealt with her situation:

...” they have had hard lives and have brought up all their kids and fed them even if their hubby's weren't bringing home enough money and all that sort of stuff...I should have been able to handle that [being abused] and go back and actually be more of a woman than what I'd been, weird aye”.

The values of Elaine's older family members influenced her understanding of what being 'strong' meant through showing respect for those experiencing violence, while also making her feel less valued for not staying in the violent relationship:

“That's how I felt it was that first period of sole-hood, I was being judged by some of those old kuia's who I had a lot of respect for and maybe I was being judged by some of my old uncles. And seen as too soft, not being able to take the knocks and just get on with life”.

Elaine viewed sole parenting as a disadvantage because it drew unwelcome advances from Uncles. Although Elaine did not say so directly there was the implication from the comment made that there was the potential for sexual abuse or incest to occur, therefore protecting her baby and herself was a priority:

...” occasionally getting hit on by uncles that want to look after you and couldn't understand that you weren't returning their affections. They think they are doing you a favour you know but you don't want to go there”.

Elaine remained adamant that having a male in their lives was beneficial for her baby but not at the risk of their safety, integrity and her role as a mother. Being a party to the abuse within the whānau was not an area she was willing to go down. There was the sense from her Uncles that *man parented for better or worse*, this was not an option for her:

...” you are doing it alone and thinking that you are bringing that child up without a father figure they are wondering whether you can handle that responsibility probably.

And knowing that you couldn't give them everything a male cannot or bring to that child's life".

Elaine had married and left New Zealand for a short time. She described how a violent verbal threat was used against her unborn child:

"He gave me a hiding here before we left to go to another country while I was hapu. The hidings got a hell of a lot worse when I was over there, he was pretty nasty...He did that you know throwing himself at my feet and stuff and when I said I don't trust you he said, "If you leave me you won't be leaving carrying our child". So he threatened to kill my baby if I tried to leave him. When you are newly hapu it's not something you contemplate aye so I stuck by him".

She explained further by saying that after her baby was born she contemplated killing him to keep her baby safe:

"He use to get shitty when she was crying and stuff like that he started doing a couple of things like picking her up and chucking her across the floor that kind of thing and so at the time I was thinking about killing him. He had a shot gun that he taught me how to use a big 303. I actually fantasised about killing him to keep baby safe".

Two years later Elaine returned home to New Zealand to her parents for a holiday with her almost two-year-old toddler and she ended up staying:

... "it was supposed to be a holiday coming back but ended up an opportunity for me to escape a really violent relationship".

Five years after her last relationship ended she met her second partner, he had three older tamariki from a former marriage. Together they raised seven tamariki. When he passed away due to an illness she was alone again:

"I'm here again solo parent and for God's sake after all these years all the stuff I'd been through and having the guts to have another relationship and everything and bugger me I was sole parenting again".

Intergenerational trauma shared by Elaine indicates that violence appeared as a common norm accepted but also kept hidden by her whānau. This insight into her whānau after her own abuse was disclosed made her challenge her own values to the point of making her feel inadequate and less valued. She had become captivated in a relationship where power and control ruled her life. Then she met her new partner and had three sons but sadly he passed away and her life since pertained to mothering her children to young adulthood with the support of whānau and friends.

Children and resilience

This section focuses on Jane's childhood upbringing around violence, alcohol, drugs, physical and psychological abuse. There were siblings older and younger than her (she was the third oldest) living in their home with their parents. Children and their resilience to abuse highlights the extent children will go to in order to ensure their own safety.

Jane was very descriptive about her early years living in her home with her parents and siblings. Her parents fought regularly, this was fuelled by alcohol and drugs and instigated by her father towards their mother. She never indicated that any of her siblings or herself were hit by their father:

...." home it was very dysfunctional there was alcohol, there was violence. There was physical, psychological abuse going on...You could hear the violence, you running away from the violence the screams and the yelling...God knows what the neighbours thought of us, and that was my childhood".

Children are encouraged to participate in society by playing sport therefore meeting new friends or mixing with their current friends and some excel in these endeavours. Jane and her siblings trained at night and into the early morning She explained this as...*escape plans*...literally running to take them away from the violence:

"We coped to be survivors, that's how we coped from a young age. We were good runners at school us kids because it used to be an ongoing joke between us when we were growing up that we did our training at 10, 11, 12 o'clock, sometimes 1 o'clock in the morning...that's when the violence started".

The children had an Aunty who lived a couple of houses away from them that they would run to at night, they called her home their safe house. Jane indicated there was nothing they could do to *save their mother*; and she was the one telling them to run; and to them this was their norm; they knew no other way. As soon as they heard the male voice (their father) come into the house they were on alert, and then voices rose:

... " You made sure that you were safe and you knew the escape plans out of the house and the safest way to get out...you knew the warning signs. It was like we actually slept with our ears open and on alert...windows were open and we were ready to run and there were no qualms about it we just all jumped out the window, got everyone out and ran to the 'safe house' on the other side of the pub...we couldn't do anything to save our mother".

When Jane turned 13 years old her mother left them. Her mother wanted to stay and look after her and her siblings but her father made it hard for her. The two younger siblings were put in welfare care. Jane and her younger sister remained with their father. The three older teenagers moved out. You would think that given her parents had parted that the violence would stop:

"No the violence didn't stop, just shifted just one of the people, the game players changed...he [Dad] would come home and smash the house up because he couldn't deal with knowing his wife had left him...Me and my sister were still running to get away from it down to our safe house".

Jane's father continued to drink alcohol and other women entered their lives briefly:

.... "me and my sister still talk today about how we could name how many women were at the kitchen table in the morning, it was always a different one".

Her father did not ever consider his children's safety. She described him as:

..." stuck in his own world of self- pity at the time that it just didn't register at all. Nothing registered to him just that this woman [her mother] had left, I have alcohol and I could do anything I liked".

Jane discussed how the violence had shifted to something else. She described it as *scary and there were things that happened that should never have happened*. She had asked her father about a visitor and he had mentioned he was with him down at the pub earlier in the night:

“It was nothing for us to have knives in our doors and sleep together to keep each other safe.... Instead of a mother there were two young kids and people knew we were in that house by ourselves. Stay silent, yes it was horrible. I remember waking up and finding a strange man standing at the door and saying “I’m looking for your Dad” but he’d been drinking with our Dad...it was actually relatives that were doing the abuse”.

All grown up

Jane had two children to different fathers. The first partner she met when she was 15 years old and she left him when she turned 19 years old. They had one son together.

“I left actually it was a case of having to because his lifestyle wasn’t a lifestyle you wanted to bring a child up in. There were things that were scary and that, it really hurt me to swap one alcoholic (her father) for an alcoholic drug addict and it was crazy”.

She was single for about 18 months and consequently the only reason she allowed someone to enter her life was to get the first partner out of her life. Prior to this happening he would verbally threaten her as he ‘ran’ with a local bike gang by making comments such as:

...”it only takes a phone call to get rid of you”

Jane felt let down by the Justice system as other times when police were called his friends would hide him and he would stay out of the public eye. He would let the situation calm down then re-surface. The only reason a trespass order was granted was because she had the evidence of a huge bite mark on the side of her face:

“he just came up to me seen me in public came up and bit my face, just latched onto it He lent to whisper in my ear, that’s what people thought he was going to do, then grabbed my cheek and bit it, latched onto it”.

Jane was raped and attempted suicide when she was 20 years old. She had a tense conversation with her mother who had said “*you made your bed you lie in it*”. Her mother told her partner where she was:

....” That was my mother’s favourite saying, she told him where I was...Nothing parenting, he didn’t want that, sex, drugs and alcohol basically but for him it was sex drugs and violence...I was bashed and raped for 24 hours by him at knife point. My son remembers that because he remembers the knife at his throat by his father”.

Jane further stated:

“Back in those days you ring the police they never came, they say, it’s a domestic, let’s just leave it at that...From the night that I was raped I carry a scar on my arm where he stabbed me and I was holding my son. When that happened, and the police still did nothing. I carry that scar as a reminder of where I came from instead of looking at it and thinking of it as something ugly”.

The second partner she was with for eight years. He fathered a son to her and there is nine years between her two sons. She described him:

“He was a good Dad...He wasn’t violent, just a drug addict and lived off the benefit of a woman”.

This next section is about Penny’s life in an abusive relationship. Penny lost her mother through an illness when she was 20 years old. She described her mum as her *best friend*. She has had three long term relationships during different periods of her life and all three partners were involved in drug taking and two were gang members. Her children were fathered by her partner in her third relationship:

“I got pregnant with my daughter, for four years she was the apple of her father’s eye before her little brother arrived. Then everything turned to custard really, I believe it’s a cultural thing.... My girl saw a lot more than she needed to see and I didn’t want them to see any more of that you know violence, not great and drugs and alcohol”.

Penny sees the ‘badness’ in people and she wants to fix them:

“Quite often we go through life and we think we can change people and when you love someone you think that’s a good thing like children come along and sometimes they are not factored into the equation but they arrive and none the less they are our taonga so I took a big step to become a single mum”.

“I couldn’t take care of my tamariki if I was getting bashed and abused and emotionally torn, I wasn’t used to that. I had no understanding of that. When I challenged that I thought “come on honey, pull out something from your puku, get outta here”, this is not how it is meant to be. The more you think you can change them, yeah, nar”.

When relationships are controlled by physical, emotional or sexual violence as seen with Elaine, Jane and Penny it can cause life time affects. They each utilised by their own means survival and coping skills to keep safe from the violence they were subject to.

Theme Six: Wāhine and their ‘new light’

This theme deliberates on wāhine worldview or ‘new light’. The lives of the wāhine Māori had been affected by many factors for example their background experiences, life situations and values. New attitudes have developed. Some are shared views whereas other parts may differ for each individual. It was interesting that this theme was drawn from quotes nearing the end of their interviews. What it says very clearly is we are going to be alright, we have journeyed, and we have the future to look forward to.

Elaine managed to bring up her children regardless of what she was carrying emotionally inside. During the interview this stood out as anxiety because her young remaining children were sons and she had coped relatively well when it was her older daughter’s health and wellbeing. Her tane had died from cancer and she was afraid whilst parenting her young boys that they would be left without her if she became unwell. What she exemplified was trusting in herself and the supports she had:

“I actually managed to bring up those kids alone essentially although I did have all those supports I actually managed to mother these kids and they have all left home, they

are all intact nobody committed suicide or anything terrible has happened and I have a moko and it is alright.... I actually managed to get my kids out of the nest and they are young adults and I have done my bit. Now if I get cancer it doesn't matter".

Jane and her boys triumphed over their journey to the point where celebration was undertaken through this process. The celebration examples were spending quality time together talking about the good times and the bad they had experienced and reminding themselves they had accomplished much during their journey. Their memories have made them stronger and they do not hide from them they talk about them:

"Things like those memories, or memories of lying on the trampoline that night looking up at the stars and we star gazed... in New Zealand they are bright so we all still do that, we lay out on the trampoline. I would have one child under each side of me we would star gaze and pick out different pictures, name stars and yeah we still talk about that. We have some really good memories and the ones that aren't so great we talk about".

Penny decided very early on in her traumatic relationship that her children were the priority. Instilling positive parenting that her parents had done with her and her siblings helped her parent her tamariki with the same values. They have turned out sociable, loving young people:

"Because of the way I am and the way I have been brought up I have no regrets...if I had of decided I would lash out and retaliate and all that bullshit over those first 7 years of that separation that my children wouldn't be well grounded like they are now and wouldn't be socially loving people and would have on going issues from their childhood and their upbringing".

Jenn's values stem from her supportive whānau environment she grew up in. She has continually maintained these values and although still single her daughter is her priority regarding future aspirations to strive for:

"Values of instilling getting an education in my daughter. That is something I support for her to achieve and to support her with anything or whatever she needs to do because

I don't want her to be in the same situation as myself. I just want to give her opportunities”.

Donna's continual love for her son even under the toughest circumstances showed how enduring and courageous she has been under even the most trying conditions. 'Beautiful ahua' only she can portray towards him and really feel it:

...” if anyone had said if I was enjoying motherhood, I was so frightened. Because I had been so hard on myself after my fiancée's suicide years before. I thought what makes me think I'm going to hang onto this kid, he could be taken from me [referring to death]. Now and then I let that thought come in to my head but it is not as strong, ooh yeah mothers love. I know as a mother it is something you can explain, you feel it. I am glad my little man has a beautiful ahua about him”.

Lena is very strong in her values and beliefs. She portrayed very matter of fact that you don't have to be in a relationship to succeed. Her world is her son, her uncle and friends, that is all that is important to her:

“I am in a loving relationship I have a wonderful son, a great uncle and amazing friends and I am actually genuinely happy. I don't know if my life could be any more enriched if a man became involved, I don't know if I could”.

Wāhine advice to other sole parents

All six wāhine were asked what advice they would give to sole parents. This was an important question to ask as it determined lived experiences of their world. This concept was discussed in the closing stages of the interview. The following short responses reflected these lived experiences:

Elaine:

...you have to have absolute faith in yourself that you have the ability to look after your own.

Jane:

We have some really good memories and the ones that aren't so great we talk about. It was a journey, and it is still a journey... " Tell it like it is".

Penny:

...It's not just about single mums it's about absent fathers. Our tamariki need to know it is not their fault because when they keep thinking it's their fault we are in trouble.

Jenn:

...who wants to parent alone, I certainly didn't. It is just something that happened and you just get on with it.

Donna:

The love, the reciprocal love that cos there is only the two of you as much as he has a gutful of me sometimes and I of him 24/7 usually here, that love. There is no other love like that.

Lena:

...be true to yourself and treat people as you want to be treated yourself.

In summarising, the sheer determination of these wāhine Māori to succeed in whatever they set their mind to do for the sake of good health and wellbeing for themselves and their children is inspiring. The messages that come out of this theme are very positive as their journeys travelled has grown stronger, more vibrant and for ever courageous with wāhine immersed in their love of life and their children.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to present the results of the interviews that took place with six wāhine Māori, their voices have been heard. This was an opportunity for them to share their stories and what their futures looked like now. The results were presented in six different themes that included sub-themes. The wāhine Māori have endured major challenges in their lives that they had managed to overcome. As written in the participant profiles adult and child separation; physical, emotional and sexual abuse; self-esteem issues and the death of a parent were common factors to them that this study discloses. It is disturbing that Aotearoa society would blindly allow the mistreatment of wāhine and children in this way.

In parenting their children alone, the wāhine Māori had freedom as the main decision makers for themselves and their children, this also included freedom from violence. Whilst parenting alone; they were able to teach their children good morals, values, trust and honesty and to give them opportunities such as in education and employment. Two themes that stood out was five out of the six fathers to the wāhine played a major role in the wāhine upbringing, this continued as support when mokopuna came along. Immediate and extended whānau support which included friends was another important area that remained significant with all the wāhine Māori. For some, these grandfathers played a more significant and supportive role than the children's fathers. Another area that stood out is how society views single mothers negatively. The DPB provided income and inadvertently created a haven for them to be criticised in society as noted in the literature review, as 'bludgers'.

The wāhine Māori had previous good work ethics therefore were being harshly judged as a consequence of becoming sole parents. It became apparent that the wāhine and those that supported them for example close friends or their own fathers contributed to wāhine playing significant lead roles. A consequence of this initiative was their children and themselves received education that lead to wāhine obtaining full time employment. These wāhine Māori are inspirational as they fought with determination; with strength and sheer courage through their individual journeys for the right to freedom, choice and justice. I say to them 'time has been a healer and under the harshest conditions the mana of wāhine continues to stand tall and proud'.

The next chapter draws together the analysis of the results with the literature. These results will now be analysed alongside the literature to highlight similarities or differences with the narratives of those interviewed.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Kia mau ki te tumanako te whakapono me te aroha

*Hold fast to hope, faith and love*⁶(Alsop & Kupenga, 2016, p. 154).

Introduction

The aim of this research is to examine the experiences of sole parenting by wāhine Māori. Six wāhine Māori were interviewed to explore the roles and responsibilities they have played in their lives and the impacts sole parenting may have had on their tamariki. The wāhine provided personal insights of their lived experiences constructed from a number of years parenting alone.

This chapter will discuss the data that was collected with the literature provided in order to answer the research question “*What are the impacts of sole parenthood on wāhine Māori and their tamariki?*” The seven themes to be discussed are similar to those previously used in this study as follows:

- Journey into sole parenthood,
- Hurt and despair
- Societal views of sole mothers,
- Whānau support,
- Fathers as significant carers/grandfathers as mentors,
- Freedom to make decisions,
- Resilience in the face of adversity.

The literature review provided an historical and current account of sole parenting in Aotearoa New Zealand. The topic is common in literature which relates to political, economic and educational issues of children being raised by a sole parent. The literature discussed the changing nature of societal and political attitudes towards sole parenting. Linking the data gathered in this study with the relevant literature will provide a vigorous analysis in terms of the experiences of wāhine Māori and their unique insights.

⁶ Life can be a very complex process further complicated by stresses of unhealthy relationships. There are many rivers, creeks, streams and gorges to cross to reach mauri ora. This whakatauki depicts that support and respect from others are required.

The wāhine Māori interviewed have childhood experiences that involved varying degrees of changes in their lives for example, adult and child separation, physical, emotional and sexual abuse; self-esteem issues and death.

Journey into sole parenthood

Literature on sole parenting gives differing descriptions and in many forms (Te Aho-Lawson, 2010; The Families Commission, 2014; Worrall, 2009). The discussions appear contentious given the differing views of the authors, the commonalities in the literature being that sole parenthood or families are a consequence of separation, divorce or birth of a child to single women. Up to 40 percent of New Zealand children have lived in sole-parent families for a period of time by age 20 (Dharmalingam et al., 2004; Hutt, 2012). It has also been estimated that one in two mothers experience sole parent-hood by the time they are 50 years old. This fits in with the age ranges of the participants and their journeys were significantly different. The 2013 census indicated that 17.8% of the New Zealand population is made up of sole parents (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). This is relatively high although the percentage rate has dropped since 2001 (12-year period) as then it was 18.9%. What is not shown in the data is the separate rates of Māori and non-Māori percentage rates. For this updated period the census showed that 56.1% of sole parents had one child compared to 38.1% of couples with one child. Three of the six participants sole parented one child.

Hurt and despair

It is relevant to mention from the findings chapter that some participants had trust issues in the relationships that they had experienced from the fathers of their tamariki. One participant indicated hurt and anger, two others never entered into another relationship again. Another participants' relationship had soured therefore causing her to feel distrust, anger and hurt about their separation. Harris (2012) asserts that communication skills are critical to maintaining successful relationships. How interaction is initiated for example through trust, commitment or intimacy affects our ability to develop and maintain lasting marital friendships.

Donna wanted stability and security for herself and her son, making the decision to end the relationship with her partner, this caused insecurity in her life. Johnston and Pihama (1995) discuss in the literature making visible the narratives and experiences, in all of their diversity, of wāhine Māori. Donna has an environment where her home is stable and secure. The literature

consequently could be interpreted as one expressing views more openly to whānau and friends that can be trusted. Pohatu (2008a) in particular stresses the importance of Te tino rangatiratanga whereby the constant recognition of the absolute integrity of people in their kaupapa, relationships and contributions in any context may develop into mauri ora. Therefore Lena appears “*happy about her decision*” and has positive and productive relationships in her life.

Separation and grief are significant incidences that had momentous repercussions for the journeys wāhine Māori and their tamariki endured through their lifetime. The choices they made were not easy ones to make (Centre for Relationship Development, 2011). Pohatu (2004) discusses the importance of Te whakakoha rangatiratanga in regards to maintaining good relationships; Tino rangatiratanga, building and maintaining trust and āhurutanga respecting others and self and having or showing integrity and respect. These cultural principles are the platforms that have assisted the participants to reach their current positions in life. Jenn is at a time in her life where she is employed as a professional and her daughter is doing well with her education. Jenn’s relationship with her ex-partner is as she explains “*as we got older and time went by, time was a healer so we are back to being all good now*”. Donna takes on the feelings of her son with his disappointment about his father not being in his life. What complicates Donna’s life is her lack of confidence in herself. This was from her upbringing and being put down constantly. Her first love (not her child’s father) had died years earlier, she never got over his death. Kubler-Ross (as cited in Centre for Relationship Development, 2011) explains that separation and grief issues are the stages of grieving therefore, chronicles how a person feels and copes during a relationship breakup.

Societal views of sole mothers

There were varying comments from the wāhine Māori about sole mothers receiving a benefit or relying on a government ‘hand out’. Five of the six participants had been on a benefit at some time during their journey; one is still receiving the DPB to support her and her son. All the participants acknowledged there was a stigma about beneficiaries, especially sole mothers. Some of these opinions stemmed from old attitudes for example being labelled as ‘fallen women’ (Kunzel, 1993). What has stood out during these interviews is the determination of the wāhine to move on in their lives, to improve their lives and to break down barriers.

Fergusson, Hong, Horwood, Jensen, and Travers (2001) discuss the economic well-being of families as being a significant component of general well-being; it includes the physical and psychological health of people and those important to them, and the wider social domain. The wāhine Māori were aware of those that stigmatise beneficiaries and fits in significantly with the situations experienced by them. As discussed in the findings chapter the wāhine Māori surrounded themselves with whānau that continued to support them. Families Commission. (2006) reports that better support and less judgement from society would make family life better. They describe how beneficiaries face negative stereotypes on the basis of their income, marital status or receipt of a benefit which would further push them down in society (ibid).

All six wāhine Māori stressed the importance of improving their lives. One of the many mechanisms that enabled this to occur was accessing the DPB in order to put kai on their tables, to pay for utility bills and upskill themselves through the training incentive allowance. Todd (2008) argues how sole parents are more positive about their situations in parenting and providing for their children than critics think they are. Todd explains this as balancing a single parent load with their own personal well-being. Five of the wāhine Māori worked full time when their tamariki were young, this helped supplement their benefit (for those that were on it). Having to do that was not easy given the responsibility of their household and tamariki. Todd (2008) holds that combining parenting and paid work can be extremely difficult and exhausting.

Penny mentioned that the stigma of people thinking that a solo mother was a *dumb useless person* is wrong. She managed to surround herself with positive people as she knew she could do well in education and wanted to prove to especially herself she could succeed. Paterson's (2014) study on sole parents exemplifies the strength and courage it takes to stay positive and well whilst providing for your whānau, running a household and working either full time or part time to supplement the weekly income. The negative attitudes she describes as 'harsh'. Jenn had always worked whether part time or full time and could not comprehend how anyone could survive on a benefit. She had always been aware of the hurdles that beneficiaries had to contend with. Paterson simultaneously indicates that what critics don't realise is single parenting is the best choice than staying in an abusive relationship or a relationship full of conflict.

“People “choose” to be a single parent for a myriad of reasons – whether the “choice” was made for them, or whether they chose to parent separately for the sake of their own health and wellbeing and that of their children” (Parag 4).

Donna understood that life circumstances determine what pathways you travel down therefore when she found herself relying on a benefit to support her and her son she was grateful mainly because they had to live and eat. She did not find the income adequate and prided herself on being a good budgeter. Donna’s understanding of societal stigma about beneficiaries is more around individual moral lines and the choices they make and how they want to live their lives and then deal with consequences. Lena had an excellent work ethic gained from her upbringing and showed pride about modelling positive behaviour that reflected on her future as a mother. Although she had to access a benefit for a short time she knew this would not last for ever and therefore this did not impact too much on her life. Stigma about sole mothers in comparison to sole fathers she saw as being rampant in the attitudes of people in Aotearoa/New Zealand society. This is based only on personal experiences of people she knows of that have shared their views. The Families Commission (2010) indicates that:

“signals that mechanisms for improving the economic situation of sole-parent families are broader than just welfare, and include housing, employment, tax, education and childcare policies” (P. 2).

Welfare reform is certainly one key mechanism for resolving the economic issues that sole-parents face even though the participants were somewhat reluctant to engage in this mechanism, especially if they had alternative means of support.

Looking back in history

The effects of colonisation are evident in the historical examples of urbanisation, land, language and general cultural loss which resulted in the slow fractionalisation of Māori in New Zealand society (Broughton, 1993; Consedine, 2007; Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2014; Statistics New Zealand, 2004). Stereotypes of single mothers as identified in Todd (2008) study mirrors what participants have said about their experiences. Stigma about sole mothers stems back to 19th Century days inherited from Christian values and beliefs systems and influenced by ideas of charity and the poor laws brought by colonists from England to New Zealand

(Newman, 2014; Shave, 2013). In March 2010 the New Zealand National-led government signalled significant changes to the administration of the benefit system in New Zealand. This was based on the assumption that people were 'better off in work' (Gray, 2016). Other qualitative studies have highlighted the concerns regarding these changes. The significant barriers include gaining employment in areas that allow them the freedom to continue to parent their children; long distances from work to day-care including extra fuel costs incurred and types of employment gained versus financial stability for survival (Cook, 2012; Cook & Noblet, 2012; Duncan & Edwards, 1997; Edin & Lein, 1997; Seccombe, 2007).

Whānau support

One common theme was the significant role whānau and friends played, although these supports varied with each participant. Additionally, the participants identified and discussed some specific examples of whānau support. Māori society historically was based on tribal affiliation or iwi and independent political units founded on whānau or whakapapa descent (Jackson, 1988; Moyle, 2013; Walker, 1990). Discussions of whānau support epitomises that having a strong collective nature of the whānau groups or tribes ensured a continuing growth and development of whānau, hapū and iwi (Durie, 1998; Durie, 1994; Ruwhiu, 2009; Walker, 1987).

All participants in this study valued whānau support and had seen it as necessary to ensure their health and wellbeing and thus providing an environment within which certain responsibilities and obligations would be maintained. Elaine had strong links with her whānau, hapū and iwi in the traditional sense. As long as she could remember they had always interacted with their wider whānau on the marae atea for tangi and whānau gatherings (Mead, 2003; Makareti, 1938; Ruwhiu, 2009). Metge (1995) asserts that to whāngai a child helps ease the stress in families for example, Jane's mother had older children and the likelihood was she may not have been able to cope with an extra mouth to feed. Penny, Jenn, Donna and Lena all accessed support from their immediate or extended whānau in the parenting of their tamariki. These examples suggests that the participants gathered their understandings from their life experiences and consequently from their own whānau (Bradley, 1995; Metge, 1976; Ritchie, 2007).

The support participants received was also crucial in balancing any difficulties or problems during this time. Elaine remained in an abusive relationship because she thought she would not

get support from her whānau. Pitman (2008) says the greatest change that occurs in people is the change in the women when they educate for liberation. Citing that those that leave violence duly changes the lives of others around them, *“You cannot change the world but you can change your world and in changing your world the world must adjust to the changes you make”* (p.72).

Jane found solace and support in her partner’s mother after her own mother rejected her when she needed help. Her mother then endangered her life by telling Jane’s partner where she was, he raped and beat her badly, and she subsequently had a breakdown. When this happened her father became very supportive with her and her boys. Jackson (1988) describes the strength of the whānau system as the sharing of support encompassing the feeling of wellbeing. Penny and Jenn also found whānau supports unconditionally. As a consequence of Donna’s partner leaving her and his son she has trust issues. To compensate, she puts all her time into her sons’ care. The person she did trust wholeheartedly was her father, she described him as *a beautiful man, a gentle man*. Her support since he died are her mother, brother and some friends. Lena had no interest in finding another partner as she was badly hurt from being left alone by her then partner and pregnant with her son. Her father was a great support. The statements written by the participants supports the work of Ruwhiu (2009, p. 35) who clarifies that:

“Connections back to whakapapa whānau were complex given that many of these families were now living in urban cities, and/or removed from their traditional support systems, like their grandparents, marae and extended whānau”.

The key beneficial features of sole parenting according to the participants were of sustaining a strong support system. This consisted of parental love and caring, unconditional love, being embraced, being accepted, and allowing for emotion through listening, learning to trust in others, and especially having a solid whānau foundation, freedom of speech, being advised and undergoing counselling or therapy. Pohatu (2008a) explains this as:

“Each new time to reconsider guidelines for kaupapa, informed by our aspirations, thinking, rationales, actions and experiences. In this way we knowingly engage in the practice of influencing boundaries and standards by which we measure the quality of performance in our kaupapa and relationships” (p. 4).

However, risk factors identified by participants were the feelings of whakama by not sharing concerns with others because of old beliefs and holding onto the certainty that ‘they’ can be ‘fixed’. As shared by Eileen when she did not disclose to her parents about the abuse, she and her siblings had been told ‘otherwise’ to sort it out. As reflected in the literature Moayyed (2015) says that one in three woman in Aotearoa/New Zealand experience abuse from their partners in their lifetime and many women do not seek help until much later.

In today’s society the role of the whānau has changed as seen in the early 20th Century as there was an obvious decline in the makeup of whānau, hapū and Iwi groups as the urban drift caused a breakdown of traditional Māori society. Māori moved away to urban areas to cities offering employment (Durie, 1998; Jackson, 1988; Libesman, 2004; Ruwhiu, 2009; Walker, 1987). The impact of policies of assimilation and integration as those advocated in the Hunn Report (1960) acted to increase alienation and reduce opportunities for Maori (Thomas, 1994). This discussion relates to the participants because three of the six participants moved away from whānau to build a better life for them and their tamariki. In the findings chapter Elaine moved away from Aotearoa/New Zealand with her abusive partner for a couple of years.

One commonality five of the six wāhine Māori shared was the loss of their mothers through separation or death when in their teens. One of the five was 20 years old, two had separated and two lost their mothers through death. Edelman (2014) writings on loss acknowledges women to understand and learn from the changes that have occurred as a result of the early loss of their mother. One of the greatest things Edelman passes on is that women can be good role models for their own children in creating a strong family and friend network of their own. Edelman says that as a result a lot of the grieving is in the relationship lost that they grieve for, it’s the relationship you could be having now that is important to ensure a good fulfilling future.

Fathers as significant carers/grandfathers as mentors

This theme was significant and unexpected as four of the participants were parented by their fathers when they were young. Jane, Jenn and Donna’s parents had separated. Lena’s mother died when she was very young and Penny’s mother died when she was a young adult of 20 years. Although Elaine has not been mentioned as falling into this category her father did play a significant role by embracing her back into the whānau when he found out she was being victimised. During the interview with the wāhine they talked openly about their fathers playing

a major role in their lives as children and then with mokopuna. Davey (1999) states that in the 1990s it was less common for a father to be given sole custody than for a mother to have this status, and the courts at that time favoured some form of joint custody wherever possible. From the information shared by four of the participants they were parented by their fathers as a consequence of death of the mothers or separation. It was interesting to note that in the traditional whānau unit it was the grandparents that had the greatest responsibility and influence for guiding the rest of the whānau (Makareti, 1938). They were responsible for the learning and development of the young and youth until adulthood. Edwards, McCreanor, and Barnes (2007) exemplify the grandparent's importance in the traditional and contemporary sense by describing them in this way:

“The world views of this time reinforced the life experiences, patience and wisdom of elders as educators, mentors and role models for healthy youth development” (p. 6).

As detailed in the findings the grandparents (mainly male) played significant roles with their daughters and then mokopuna when they came along.

There have not been many studies undertaken on sole fathers as information written by Davey (1999) had noted that more up to date research was required for the period of the 1980s and 1990s when the trend of sole fathers started to surface. Two significant studies completed do stand out as written by (Breiding-Buss et al., 2011; Davey, 1999):

“The fathers were moderately positive about their capability as male solo parents, but a significant proportion was somewhat unhappy with the situation. Half of them ‘would not want to be a single dad if there was another way’ and the same number felt that their children ‘miss out because I don’t earn as much money as a father should’. For both these statements fathers with older children (4-8) were significantly unhappier than those with younger ones (0-3)” (Breiding-Buss et al., 2011, p. 3).

Davey (1999, p. 114) poses some interesting information for further study as there is more that needs to be known about sole fatherhood in New Zealand in relation to their lives, living circumstances and attitudes of the children and the men who live in sole father families,

particularly Tane Māori. The information contained in this study could answer some of the questions Davey posed in her paper. One of her questions that is particularly relevant is ‘Why are there more Maori and Pacific Island children, especially very young children, living with sole fathers than Pakeha/other children and why is this disparity increasing?’ The key message here is fathers do take a lead role in many single parent families according to the experiences of the participants with their fathers.

Freedom to make decisions

Maori people have proved that they have the capacity to survive over time and that they are very resilient (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1978). As seen with the retrieval of the Māori population from the trauma of colonisation after the turn of the century this was matched by cultural revival (Walker, 1989). This compares significantly to the experiences of wāhine Māori as some had survived abusive relationships or extenuating circumstances during their lives. One of the main determinants was their will power to survive and to take on new challenges as time went on.

Being confident about decisions made, growing trusting relationships, being the key decision makers, being free to make choices and having total control of their lives are the values that all six wāhine Māori have worked towards. It is comprehensible that during their journey their confidence lacked because of the struggles of their past experiences. It seemed very empowering for them to be at the stages they are at now. Paterson (2014) talks about the challenges sole mother’s go through although she describes them as having ‘absolute courage’ to be able to cope with the stresses of providing for their tamariki:

“Invariably they don’t share these struggles except with one another – and “just get on with it” – intuitively knowing that others would not understand. They get on with it and they work hard at creating a better life for themselves and for their children – knowing that this will cost them and that there will be significant sacrifices to do so” (p. 8).

Resilience in the face of adversity

Three of the five wāhine Māori experienced trauma that affected and impacted significantly on their life journeys. It is important to note that all three wāhine Māori pursued educative strategies with excellent supports to guide them through to mauri ora. A study undertaken by

Lees (2009) examined the relationship resilience had with coping, engagement and life satisfaction. She discusses how resilience is the ability to thrive in the face of adversity and a number of personal characteristics are identified such as:

1. Having a meaningful belief system
2. Having a clear understanding of reality
3. Having good cognitive and problem solving skills
4. Having high self-esteem.

Although it took a significant amount of time for the participants to get to this stage they did have strategies in place that helped them move to a good space. For many years' researchers in America studied the problems of children whose lives were threatened by the accumulated risk factors. A group of pioneering investigators realised that some children managed to succeed in spite of adversity and disadvantages, hence the systematic study of resilience was born (Masten, 2012). All the participants' tamariki have been supported in their education over the years. From the ten tamariki, four are at University, two are under the age of 15 years therefore still at primary, secondary level and the other four are now adults and in employment.

Other authors that contribute to the studies of resilience have given good insight into resilience characteristics. These may include having a staunch acceptance of reality; having a deep belief; strong values that life is meaningful and having the ability to improvise (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Coutu, May, 2002; Dumont & Provost, 1999; Emerson, n.d.).

Another determinant that stood out when reviewing the wāhine findings was their continuous courage and tenacity to improve areas in their lives, especially for their tamariki. To do this they had to overcome barriers put in place by government policies and those in society critical of their situations (Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare., 1986; R. Walker, 1990). To be able to write about this theme both wāhine and children's education, training and development have been used as examples. When the wāhine were being interviewed they constantly involved korero about their tamariki, although indirectly. The gains after their low points are identified more so than the negative aspects of their lives.

One of the many strategies Elaine used were mentors for her tamariki, it was these men in their lives that made a difference to their future, they are all now at University. She works full time in management. Through all her adversities Jane trained for five years in tertiary education and now works full time. Penny graduated with a double Degree and will continue to support her

two tamariki emotionally, physically and financially. Jenn works full time, her intentions are to ensure her daughter receives what education she requires to succeed in life. When her daughter is older and completes her schooling Jenn will concentrate on upskilling academically in her chosen career. Donna has a Degree; however, parenting is the focus of her life at the present time. Lena has a Degree and works full time. She continues to support her son with whatever he chooses to do in life.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that what has been gained from this research is insight into how these wāhine Māori have successfully parented their tamariki, and further to this had gone onto educating themselves in their respective disciplines. The journey for them has not been easy therefore I felt really humbled to have had an opportunity to experience first-hand knowledge shared with me. It has been both a privilege and honour to write and analyse their stories. The individual experiences and knowledge shared by these wāhine in this study has been constructed on their accumulative years of parenting and sharing of their experiences. This information will be helpful for wāhine Māori to read and ‘others’ parenting their tamariki alone because of shared experiences from these participants. It will definitely be helpful to professionals working with sole parents as it may give them strategies to work with and give understandings of their situation. Overall this study provides a ‘personal look into what is usually private’ therefore awareness and understanding is required as this shows what has driven these wāhine to survive and to succeed in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Ko te pae tawhiti, whaia kia tata, ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tina
*Seek out distant horizons and cherish those you attain*⁷ (Alsop & Kupenga,
 2016, p. 144).

Introduction

Research on wāhine Māori sole parents is very important because of the responsibilities they have in parenting their tamariki. Whānau health and wellbeing is crucial given the extenuating circumstances these participants faced in their journey to mauri ora. This conclusions chapter provides a summary of the research aims and gives an overview of the chapters. A discussion of the key findings and reflection on the research will follow. This chapter includes reflections; limitations of the research; lessons learnt and recommendations for further studies; a conclusion will complete this kaupapa.

Summary of research aims

This research explored and examined the experiences of sole parenting by wāhine Māori over the age of 30 years and who have parented sole for five years or more. It endeavoured to answer the question, *‘What are the impacts of sole parenthood on wāhine Māori and their tamariki’?* The objectives were to identify the roles and responsibilities of wāhine Māori whilst sole parenting in Aotearoa/New Zealand. A subsidiary aim was also to consider how their experiences have contributed to their future. The research also wanted to explore the impact sole parenting has had on tamariki and to determine how te ao Māori knowledge can contribute to the future aspirations of wāhine Māori sole parents. Six wāhine Māori were interviewed and the results were put into themes by the process of thematic analyses.

Overview of research chapters

Chapter one set the parameters for this research. It identified the objectives and the methodology that would be employed in order to create a safe environment for Māori wāhine to voice their understandings and experiences. Key definitions relating to this kaupapa were

⁷ Continue on your journey with significant supports in place as your life can only improve from here. Contribution to this research has been significant.

explained and defined. My interest in pursuing this kaupapa grew from personal experience of parenting my children alone for over 20 years.

Chapter two contextualised the research through the exploration of historical and contemporary literature relating to Māori and Western ideologies. This chapter was divided into seven sections depicting themes. It reviewed significant events for example how particular time periods affected women as sole parents in England and whānau hapū and iwi in Aotearoa. The chapter delved into contemporary Māori society and the norms of British society in Aotearoa/New Zealand as well as the impacts of colonisation. There were discussions throughout the literature about sole parents and the political and legislative changes that occurred over many generations.

Chapter three examined the methodology and research methods employed in this research. The methodology used was both Kaupapa Māori, Māori centred and Mana wāhine throughout the discussions with wāhine Māori. The methodological framework adopted to inform this research was a qualitative approach to outline the framework and underpin the research process. The research focuses on the experiences of wāhine Māori, a kaupapa Māori and Māori-centred research are explored to ensure a culturally safe research processes were employed, therefore ensuring the safety of the researcher and the participants. Qualitative methods are particularly relevant in exploratory research that focuses on the experiences and perceptions of people, in this research particularly wāhine Māori.

Chapter four presented the findings from the interviews with the wāhine Māori celebrating their voices through six key themes. The responses were initially themed as whānau support; policies; tamariki and wāhine frustrations; violence in relationships and wāhine and their 'new light'. Sub-headings had been included to emphasise related kaupapa. The voices of the wāhine Māori were very powerful and it signified for some the traumatic experiences they had endured. It also emphasised the policies and practices of governments of the day and the discriminative attitudes of the time. Huge learning occurred for wāhine Māori in terms of staying strong and being determined to live a healthy life.

The wāhine Māori successfully parented their tamariki although they did find it hard at times. They progressed into education and moved into full time employment. One of the main

determinants was their will power to survive and take on new challenges as time went on. They recognised the importance of their role as whaea or mama to their tamariki, and as nurturer. As a role model, specific behaviours were utilised to ensure safe and genuine relationships were created with their tamariki, immediate and wider whānau and others. Whānau involvement was a key and valuable tool that was embraced wholeheartedly by them. The wāhine Māori each valued their tamariki and saw them as their taonga, their future, hence why another important tool was education. This again reflected the importance of wāhine Māori developing skills to then pass on through the role model process.

With wāhine Māori having come from a history of abuse whether physical or psychological, this is not easy to work on, or with. Wāhine Māori in this study brought their ‘self’ to the forefront that included their own values and belief systems then worked accordingly to right the wrongs. Trust issues come to the fore for most wāhine Māori especially if they had grown up in the environment of abuse.

The freedom to dictate their futures is very empowering as this was the catalyst that pushed them to take on a new and positive future for themselves and their tamariki. This was not always easy to achieve, however they prepared themselves well with their supports in place. Reflection is a virtue as whilst interviewing and listening to their stories they all ended with short responses that reflected their lived experiences for example:

“You have to have absolute faith in yourself

Tell it like it is

It’s not just about single mums it’s about absent fathers

You just get on with it

The love, the reciprocal love

Be true to yourself and treat people as you want to be treated yourself”

Chapter five analysed the participant’s responses with the literature from chapter two. The responses from the wāhine Māori confirmed and at times extended on many of the claims of the literature. The themes journey into sole parenthood; societal views of sole mothers; whānau support; fathers as significant carers/grandfathers as mentors and resilience in the face of adversity.

Chapter six concludes the thesis, and shares some personal reflection and learning from the research process, then provides some recommendations for future research.

Key findings

I am ‘blown away’ by wāhine Māori placing an importance on education for themselves and their tamariki. In doing this wāhine Māori became role models for their tamariki. They did this through accessing and completing studies aligning with the kaupapa they wanted to work in as professionals. In utilising this strategy wāhine Māori lead the way for their tamariki to replicate a good ethos of education and manaaki in their futures. This type of role modelling utilised worked alongside the continuing support they provided to their tamariki as their mama with ongoing nurturing and emotional mechanisms essential for their health and wellbeing. The strategy of role modelling recognised for them that as sole parents they strived for the same outcomes as others. In doing this it hit back at the critics of sole parents by proving they can be successful in whatever they choose to do or become.

An acknowledgment needs to be made to the supportive role models (the fathers/grandfathers) or ‘good men’ the wāhine Māori had in their lives. Overall, what this clearly states are whānau support structures makes a significant impact in their growth and development because as seen in the findings; they are there for the good and the bad; they are there as fathers to their daughters; they are there to fill the gap as mentors to their mokopuna.

Reflections

At the completion of this research, reflection on the research question and journey is a critical and very worthwhile process. This identifies the experiences of the researcher, enables the limitations of the research to be considered and following this, future research perspectives are discussed.

This research process was a huge learning journey. It was definitely filled with highs and lows therefore I will admit I found it overwhelming at times. However, a commitment to see it through as the topic has always interested me immensely. This journey has given me insight into the views, values, thoughts, feelings and a ‘personal look into what is usually the private’ lives of wāhine Māori sole parents. In order to answer the research, question the previous

statement fulfilled that part. The impacts had been significant for both wāhine Māori and their tamariki. I am sure others will benefit from the outcomes of this research.

I have learnt so much from this research and I believe that wāhine Māori will find this information an invaluable taonga. The importance of whānau involvement is significant, a good example to use because of its inherent ability to provide life changing support as was seen in the findings and literature.

I have learnt through the interview process that no matter what your crises may be you just get on with it and do the best you can with what you have got. All the wāhine Māori had to play dual multiple roles during the good and the bad times. This I understood was done through the use of action and reflection processes to keep themselves safe and to keep hold of their sanity. What a privilege I have had in being a part of this process when interviewing and writing up the findings.

Limitations

Like any research this study limitation has implications for both the conclusions it reaches and the direction of future research. The sample size in this research was small and whilst this enabled the gathering of much literature around the topic area not all of it was used because of the word limit.

Recommendations

The following lessons are derived from the stories of the participants and reflect the implications of the research for wāhine Māori, friends and whānau, social workers and for educators.

Lessons for wāhine Māori: who are sole parents, be strong and receive and take help from others when it is needed or offered. Don't feel whakama or too proud to say 'kia ora' or 'yes thank you', or think that you can do it alone because you cannot. Put that 'pride' you feel aside to care for you and the tamariki, others will tautoko you. A priority when your tamariki are young is theirs and your health and well-being. You can go onto training in education later when the tamariki are older. But, if you have the opportunity to work part-time access whānau

or friend supports to help you with your tamariki. There are many community services out there that can help, get rid of that 'proud' principle.

Lessons for friends and whānau: keep in constant contact with your whānau, know what is going on at all times. If you are aware they have separated or have had anything traumatic occur, make contact and offer to tautoko where required. Don't listen to 'no, I or we are ok', that is a front or whakama because they may be feeling guilty, ashamed or worse. Annoy them, 'get in their face', and make them know you are there for them.

Lessons for social workers: don't assume that all single parents who are Māori are going to end up poorly. Don't assume that all Māori stay in negative relationships. Tane Māori do play an important role in the whānau as seen written in the literature of this research. Don't pre-judge what you see or observe in the wāhine home, ask pertinent questions and be open, respectful and treat the whānau with integrity and you will receive the same back. Don't go in with 'I know what is best for you' attitude. One of the learnings you should know is the best one to tell you about me, is me.

Lessons for educators: acknowledge the importance of research in this area so that people can understand the diverse experiences that can be gained from it. Many of the wāhine Māori in this study have come out of traumatic experiences and achieved greatness as parents and as members of society.

Areas for future research

There are many areas of research that can be exciting:

- Expand on this current research to include more wāhine Māori participants from the same age range and from a wider geographical area.
- To research on the current participants' children (as adults) regarding their views growing up with a sole parent. (You get another side of the story).
- To research on sole Tane Māori and sole Pākeha tane bringing their children up sole, use as a comparative study. The same for wāhine Māori and wāhine 'Pākeha.
- Create a focus team that researches specifically on sole parenting outcomes.

- Society knows very little about what goes on behind closed doors. Although there are advertisements depicting violence in the home; refuges that home wāhine and their tamariki very little is known by the 'lay person'. Creation of a group that holds forums (to men and women separately, or together) to present 'voices' of research participants.

Conclusion

This research has answered the research aim; this research also builds on literature in the area of wāhine Māori sole parenting. The findings emphasise the need for whānau involvement and its importance in ensuring these are accessed when required. The historical and contemporary literature has shown that lessons have been learnt as illustrated in the policy and legislative changes that have occurred through various governments of the day. Society and their attitudes have still a little way to go around understanding the complex and diverse areas that require attention. Examples are in the areas of health, education, unemployment, housing and overall well-being as has been highlighted at the beginning of chapter two.

What has stood out in this research is the manaaki shown from the wāhine Māori, and themselves, friends and whānau. This suggests that there is 'hope' that others will take these lessons learnt and do as they did for their own self development and well-being to live positive, caring and fruitful lives.

It is humbling and sad to know that the wāhine Māori in this research coped with their finances sufficiently, and under extenuating circumstances that life threw them. They did the best they could, even under the most difficult situations. It is this that characterises their capabilities, their strength, their stamina, their mana even in the face of dire adversity. They are who they are, they have individual uniqueness, they are empowered and they are wāhine toa!!!!

My journey as a researcher has been as intense as I thought it would be on a number of levels as I have learnt so much from this research process. As a Māori wāhine and researcher I now understand the pressures of conducting research at this level and on a topic area that is personal to me. It has always been in the back of my mind to ensure I do justice to the taonga that the wāhine Māori have gifted me and other sole wāhine. In particular, the writing up of this research is important at another level, the wider community, as they will get an understanding

of the kaupapa process and implications of the research. I am hoping many will read this research and gain from it what I have, “*manaakitanga koutou*”.

GLOSSARY

Ata	growing respectful relationships, careful engagement, a tool
Aotearoa	New Zealand
Awhi	help, support, embrace
Cultural	customs, ideas and social behaviour of a particular people or society
Hapū	sub-tribe, pregnancy
Haere	go
Hāngai	vice versa, comply, appropriate
Hoki	come
Hoa haere	constant companion, shaped by kaupapa and groupings involved
Iwi	sub group of iwi
Kai	food
Kai rangahau	researcher
Kaitiakitanga	being responsible, steward
Kaitiaki	caretaker
Karakia	prayer
Kaumātua	elderly person
Kaupapa	issue, topic
Kaupapa Māori	conceptualisation of Māori knowledge
Ki	to, at, with
kia	let (express a wish), when, so, that, until
Kinaki	relish
Kohanga	nest, nursery
Korero	to speak, talk
Koro	tāne, pāpā
Koutou	everyone
Kupu	word
Kura	school
Kuri	dog
Mahi	work
Mama	mother
Manaakitanga	hospitality
Manaaki	Support
Mana	integrity, prestige, charisma
Mokopuna	grandchild (singular moko)
Māori	a member of the aboriginal people of NZ
Mārama	informed, lucid, apparent, distinct
Mātua	father, parent, uncle
Mauri	life principle
Mauri ora	life force, wellbeing, conscious

Ngā	many
Oho	stay
Papakaianga	home base, village
Puku	stamoch
Pūmau	permanent, reliable, definite
Rangahau	research
Rangatiratanga	kingdom, principality, sovereignty, realm
Rohe	area, geographical
Takepu	Māori principles
Tamariki	children
Tamaiti whāngai	adopted child
Tamaiti	child, a boy
Tane	men, male
Tangata	people
Tangi	to cry, death, attend funeral
Taonga	gift, present, property
Tapu	sacred, forbidden, confidential, taboo
Tauira	student
Tautoko	help, support
Te	the
Te Ati Awa	Northland Māori tribe
Te Ao	Māori world
Te reo	Māori language
Te whakakōha rangatiratanga	respectful relationships, absolute integrity
Tikanga	correct procedures, customs
Tino	absolute
Titiro	look, see
Tohutohu	recommend, brief, supervision, specification
Tribal	group of people who share ancestry
Tuhi	write, sketch
Tupuna	ancestor, grandparent
Turangawaewae	home turf
Wāhine	women, female
Waiata	song
Waitangi	locality in Bay of Islands, means weeping waters
Whaea	aunty
Whenua	land
Whānau	family
Whangai	to nourish, to care for
Whakarongo	to listen, listening
Wharenuī	big house
Whare	house
Whare ngaro	childless
Whakapapa	family tree,

Whakaako	being clear, mindful about information shared
Whakaaro	your kōrero, say
Whānau	family, kin
Whāngai	extended family, adopted
Whānaungatanga	relationships, connections
Wharenui	house, home

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Transcribed video information (Nora Rameka)
Appendix 2	Approval letter from MU Human Ethics Comm
Appendix 3	Participant information sheet
Appendix 4	Participant consent form
Appendix 5	Authority for the release of transcripts
Appendix 6	Advertisement to recruit participants
Appendix 7	Interview questions

Appendix 1

The following I watched on TV (Waka Huia) about a kuia Nora Rameka of Ngati Rehia, Takou, Mataatua waka and Napuhi Iwi, she talked about leadership and the roles of women.

The leaders of our times were our elders, we (referring to the children) belonged to all of them.

This for me justified the notion of whangai and how it was embraced within their whānau.

Over the hill at Te Tii, women were the workers, no matter what the gathering women would be there. I became involved with guardianship. Spiritually, if you don't have the right temperament to do it, as my dad said, "get on your bus and go". There is the love for my ancestors. Leaders have been nurtured by their elders. Although kuia Nora does not look at herself as a leader she regularly traverses their land to ensure everything is alright. Over many years she has tried to encourage whānau still living in the area to look after what they have. A Treaty of Waitangi claim is one she hasand encouraging whānau to help to build their new whare on land they can only get to by boat.....

I lodged my first claim for Ngati Rehia alongside Tu Kemp in 1993. We seldom have our history handed to us. That's the importance of a Tribunal claim to me. The government treats it as a mere claim. But the main thing is that our histories are returned to our people and our children are empowered by the dialogue.

We started reparations in February 1982, and it was opened again in November. My ancestors are buried there, the cemetery is named Te Kowhai after one of my ancestors, Tareha Te Kowhai whose headstone is still there. I was so happy that this dream of mine to build a meeting house was achieved. Our people started coming back home to live. The many families that belong here have returned over the years. We know how hard it is to get across our river. It's hard to carry our deceased, especially in the water. Everyone helps out, even our children. My whānau and I decided that it was time to celebrate our canoe, Mataatua. We are the guardians of Mataatua, and that's why we thought to celebrate it. It doesn't have a permanent home. There is Whetumarama, but another must be established.

The idea came to me when I was studying at Waikato University. Upon completing my thesis, I was with Wharehuia Milroy and Hirini Melbourne. I mentioned to them that the time had come to build a proper house for Mataatua. This idea didn't come about yesterday. These that began this journey have now gone. Perhaps I'm the only person left to carry this idea forward. Last year I told the families living in Takou that we should perhaps build a meeting house here, our own a meeting

house. They agreed and we organised the land. Its only a start. We are still looking for funding.

There are many female leaders within Ngati Rehia.

Nora's often found herself swimming against the tide in a male dominated arena.

I don't like it when people are arrogant towards females, I've seen it a lot. I've had it said to me 'Im the boss! You're just a woman.' I didn't like that.

There are some males that are arrogant towards females especially when they say 'I'm the boss, you're just a woman'. I thought "up your bum", I really didn't like him. I didn't pay any attention. I've got to an age where I don't worry about those things anymore.

When we have hui, I don't like people coming to gather information then leave. People come and ask questions, and then you never see them again. That happens to many of our elders. I get a bit angry at that aspect of education at the strategies employed by some institutions. They come to gather knowledge for themselves, but don't help out their people. I hold on to the knowledge passed on by our elders. There are many female leaders but the waters are not always calm for woman.

A big issue for me is trying to ensure our people are well educated and can find employment. What saddens me is that I may not be able to establish a new marae. Other issues for me are making sure that our children are safe, our families are educated, and our housing is acceptable, these are my concerns. I am driven to finish what I started while my body is still able. My vision is to ensure that my grandchildren and those that are yet to come are left with beautiful land to build good homes.

Behind every strong woman is a supportive husband. I was able to pursue work every week, then study and always returned home every week to Takou. We have been married 53 years and have 4 boys and 1 girl (her girl sadly passed away last year from cancer). I believe that when you have kids you should leave this earth before them. That saying is a burden to me.

I am left with the dreams and aspirations of those that have gone before me. It is up to me to fulfil those dreams and aspirations. It's important to me that Ngati Ruhia to remain staunch to our sovereignty.

Ngati Rehia's claim wasn't about the land, farms and its history. It was about returning those things to us, that's the main thing. As the Government would put it, cultural redress. Bring it back to Ngati Rehia, guardians of Ngapuhi. I love the idea because this is for all people of Ngapuhi, not just Ngati Rehia. Although Ngati Rehia are advocates for this issue

A whānaunga of Kuia Nora, Kipa Munro of Te Runanga o Nga Puhi joined in with the following when hearing the comment ‘I’m the boss, you’re just a woman’:

That is just nonsense when people say those things to our nannies. Within Ngati Rehia women are welcome to stand and present issues. The only time they must remain silent is during the welcoming process. Lets remember, that the women are responsible for the first call on the marae atea. Therefore, they are the people who introduce the topic of discussion. At the end of this process, Ngati Rehia agrees that woman can stand and address issues, knowing full well that they are able. If we look at the elders in our sub-tribes, the female survive all of the mates. Its them that hold the knowledge that our grandchildren must one day hold. So, to silence them from speaking is to silence the knowledge that they have to give our grandchildren.

Her work is exemplar. Nora has led the way in her work for her hapu and iwi, Ngapuhi and Ngati Rehia. She is a great leader amongst her family and her people.

Irwin (1992b) contends that ‘Māori women must be provided with the time, space, and resources necessary to develop the skills to undertake this work, starting with the exploration, reclamation and celebration of our herstories, our stories as Māori women’. *Mana wahine, then, is a space where Māori women can, on our own terms and in our own way, (re)define and (re)present the multifarious stories and experiences of what it means, and what it meant in the past, to be a Māori woman in Aotearoa New Zealand (p. 7).*

What an amazing and inspiring kuia, to selflessly take no credit for what she is doing and not directly calling herself a leader other than calling herself a kaitiaki over their land. There is definitely Māori development occurring.....



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

27 August 2014

Ripeka Matipou
7 Graham Street
LEVIN

Dear Ripeka

Re: HEC: Southern A Application – 14/61
The highs and lows of sole parenting experienced by wāhine Māori

Thank you for your letter received 25 August 2014.

On behalf of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are now approved. Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Dr Brian Finch, Chair
Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A

cc Ms Rachael Selby
School of Health & Social Services
PN371

Ms Hannah Mooney
School of Health & Social Services
PN371

Dr Kieran O'Donoghue, HoS
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THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF SOLE PARENTING EXPERIENCED BY WĀHINE MĀORI

A study to examine the experiences of sole parenting by Wāhine Māori and the impact sole parenthood has had on their lives and the lives of their tamariki

INFORMATION SHEET

Ko Tararua me Taranaki ōku maunga
Ko Hokio me Waitara ōku awa
Ko Kurahaupo me Tokomaru ōku waka
Ko Kohutaroa me Manukorihi ōku hapū
Ko Pāiri me Owae ōku marae
Ko Muaūpoko me Te Ati awa ōku Iwi
Ko Ripeka Matipou tōku ingoa

Tēnā koe,

You are invited to participate in a pilot interview at your convenience. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

I am currently enrolled in a Master of Philosophy thesis at Massey University. For my thesis I am interested in talking to wāhine Māori to explore your views of parenting your tamariki alone. I am particularly interested in the reasons why you ended up parenting alone, the supports you accessed or did not and how it affected you personally when undertaking future job opportunities or study.

I am recruiting wāhine Māori over 30 years of age who live in the Horowhenua and Manawatu areas and have parented alone for 5 years or more and are willing to talk about their experiences. The interview schedule will be semi-structured where you will be asked to share your views on parenting alone.

Your interview will be recorded and transcribed. You will have the opportunity to read the transcription of your interview and check it before the material is released for use in my report. The final report will be presented in such a way that no individual will be identified. A summary of the report will be sent to you. Data will be securely stored in a password protected computer and locked in a filing cabinet accessible only to me. It will be stored for five years before being destroyed.

Participants Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to

- Have a family member or friend attend/support you during the interview;
- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the study at any time up until you approve your transcripts of the interview;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- Ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

You are welcome at any time to make contact with the researcher if you have any questions about the project.

If you would like to participate in this research, please make contact by sending an email to justmerm@xtra.co.nz. I will respond to you immediately.

Ngā mihi

Nākū noa, nā

Ripeka Matipou

Supervisors

Rachael Selby and Hannah Mooney

Massey University

06356 9099

0800MASSEY

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee Southern A, Application 14/61. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Brian Finch, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06350 5799 x 84458, email humanethicsouth@massey.ac.nz

THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF SOLE PARENTING EXPERIENCED BY WĀHINE MĀORI

A study examining the experiences of sole parenting by wāhine Māori and the impact sole parenthood has had on their lives and the lives of their tamariki

INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Full name – printed _____

THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF SOLE PARENTING EXPERIENCED BY WĀHINE MĀORI

A study examining the experiences of sole parenting by wāhine Māori and the impact sole parenthood has had on their lives and the lives of their tamariki

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Full name-printed _____

RESEARCH WITH SOLE PARENT WĀHINE MĀORI

Ko Tararua me Taranaki ōku maunga
Ko Hokio me Waitara ōku awa
Ko Kurahaupo me Tokomaru ōku waka
Ko Kohutaroa me Manukorihi ōku hapū
Ko Pāiri me Owae ōku marae
Ko Muaūpoko me Te Ati awa ōku Iwi
Ko Ripeka Matipou tōku ingoa

I am currently enrolled as a Masters student at Massey University, Palmerston North. My thesis topic is titled: The highs and lows of sole parenting experienced by wāhine Māori. I am interested in talking to wāhine Māori to explore your views of parenting tamariki alone. I am particularly interested in the reasons why you may have ended up alone, the supports you accessed/or not, and how it affected you personally when undertaking future job opportunities or study.

I am recruiting wāhine Māori aged 30 years and over who have parented alone for 5 years or more and are willing to talk about their experiences with me. I am looking for participants in the Horowhenua and Manawatu areas.

If you are interested in participating please make contact with Ripeka Matipou on justmerm@xtra.co.nz and I will make contact with you. If you meet the criteria I will send out an information sheet that gives more information regarding the research.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about yourself. Where have you lived while parenting your children?
2. How long had you raised your children alone?
3. What do you consider were the greatest benefits?
4. What were the disadvantages and risks of being a sole parent?
5. **Did you work while raising your children, if so, where?**
6. What type of supports did you access (in the community/whānau)?
7. What were the difficulties faced by you raising your children?
8. What was not difficult?
9. How did changing laws and social policies support or impact on your role as a sole parent?
10. What impact did the DPB have on you (from 1975)?
11. In your experience how have public attitudes changed towards sole parents?
12. What values are developed by being a sole parent? For example how are independence and autonomy developed and viewed by sole parents?

Secondary questions

- a) Was there a time when you wanted to give up parenting, explain this?
- b) What involvement do you have with wider whānau?
- c) Who are the significant people in your life?
- d) If you had a chance in changing anything in your life, what would that be?

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