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**Perspectives of Kaimahi Māori:**

The Challenges and Opportunities within Mainstream Social Work Settings

**A thesis submitted for the degree of**

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## Abstract

Māori social workers are faced with varying challenges and opportunities when working in mainstream social work settings. While Māori social workers (kaimahi) can naturally practice in culturally responsive ways, this has not and is not currently occurring as organically as one might expect. Over the course of history, tāngata whenua have implemented and cultivated strong fundamentals of indigenous knowledge, theories, and values – these fundamentals can be implemented in a person's professional and personal lives. As Māori social workers provide their service within their respective communities, they are often faced with challenges that their Pākehā colleagues do not encounter due to their ethnicity. They are faced with challenges Pākehā will not experience because of their ethnicity. These encounters present as a wero (challenge). Ultimately, kaimahi find themselves in this field of work to provide whānau and tamariki options to work towards, address trauma and to make sustained changes that benefit them and their whānau. By understanding the intricacies of what kaimahi experience, provides a unique perspective into how we can continue to strive for sound practice that is not based on mainstream ideologies.

This research explores the perspectives of Māori social workers on the challenges and opportunities they experience while working or having worked within mainstream social work settings. The journey of the participants interviewed has been key when identifying and investigating how they each navigated the social work systems. It explores the integration of their personal, professional, and cultural roles in the concept of whānau wellbeing, taking into consideration how indigenous practice frameworks are utilised and recorded with mainstream recording constructs. As Māori social workers continue to navigate the varying mainstream systems, they are faced with many burdens of responsibilities. Being considered an expert of all things Māori, they are often a sought-after resource when working with whānau who have distrust in the system. This naturally has consequences both positive and negative and as a practitioner, walking between two worlds (Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā) this is one outcome of being employed within the mainstream setting. Of interest, the participants I spoke to raised various examples of the challenges and opportunities they were faced with:

- Burnout and Fatigue
- Lived Experiences
- Racism

Were just three of thirteen key findings within this research. Each finding spends time unpacking how and what this looked like and the overall effect this has on both the practitioner, the organisation and the whānau in which they are working with. This research has the potential to help future research of Māori social work in Aotearoa, particularly as a response and tool to implement cultural shifts within mainstream organisations. For any change to occur, there requires a need and a desire to make things happen. As part of my recommendations, there is current capacity for organisations to consider implementing Māori focussed and dedicated Full Time Equivalent (FTE) roles. These roles are valuable, as they provide a natural cultural lens that whānau naturally connect with. With an overwhelming statistic of negative Māori health outcomes – it requires a strong cultural shift within the social work field to start implementing and changing outcomes for the better.

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I dedicate this rangahau to tāngata whenua and my whānau.

Thank you to my parents for raising me, providing me opportunities and for the aroha I have received. The decision to take on tamariki as your own was the reason I pursued social work as a career. I would not be where I am today without either of you.

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## Glossary

To ensure that the reader is comfortable with the translation of the Māori terms used interchangeably throughout this text, a glossary has been included at the beginning of the thesis. Additionally, while there may be some variances to the kupu mentioned based on different dialects or dictionaries used, the terms given are as I perceive the translation to be and in the context of this thesis.

| **Kupu or word** | **Translation** |
|---|---|
| Aotearoa | New Zealand |
| Aroha ki te tāngata | Love/care to the people |
| Haere Mai | Welcome, come here, a greeting |
| Hapū | Larger than whānau but referring to a group of people or community from a certain geographical area in Aotearoa |
| Hei Mihi | To thank |
| Hui | A meeting, gathering of people to discuss or deliberate something |
| Iwi | A community of Māori people. Often referred to as a collective originating through whakapapa to a certain geographical location |
| Kanohi ki te kanohi | Face to face, in person |
| Kapahaka | A Māori cultural group |
| Karakia | Māori prayer |
| Kaua e takahia te mana o te tāngata | Do not trample on the mana or dignity of a person. |
| Kaupapa Māori | The principles and ideas which act as a base or foundation for action. Is a set of values, principles, and beliefs of Māori |
| Kawa | Māori protocol and etiquette |
| Kete | Bag woven from flax. Symbolically, to fill ones kete, can also refer to the process of absorbing knowledge |
| Kia tūpato | To be careful, a warning |
| Kōrero | Talking, having a conversation |
| Mahi | Work, employment |
| Mana | A supernatural force that permeates the universe. A cultivation and possession of energy and power. Everyone is born with this |

| | |
|---|---|
| Māori | Māori, indigenous New Zealander, indigenous person of Aotearoa/New Zealand - a new use of the word resulting from Pākehā contact to distinguish between people of Māori descent and the colonisers |
| Marae | A place Māori where your ancestors lived |
| Mātauranga | Knowledge, wisdom, knowledgeable person |
| Pākehā | Someone who is not Māori but from New Zealand |
| Pepeha | A way of introducing yourself in Māori. It tells people who you are through sharing of connections with people and places |
| Pēpi | Baby, infant, toddler |
| Pono | To be true, valid, honest, genuine, sincere |
| Pūkana | To stare wildly, done by both genders when performing haka and waiata, to emphasise particular words and to add excitement to the performance |
| Pūrākau | Knowledge, rituals, karakia, history, experiences, and creation narratives |
| Runanga | To discuss in hui, holding counsel |
| Tautoko | To support, prop up, advocate |
| Tāngata Whenua | The indigenous peoples of New Zealand |
| Te Ao Māori | The world of Māori. The respect and acknowledgement of Māori customs and protocols |
| Te Reo | The language of Māori peoples |
| Tika | To be correct, fair, accurate, appropriate, proper |
| Tikanga | Customs and traditional values |
| Tino Rangatiratanga | Self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy |
| Tīpuna | Ancestors, whānau who have passed on and looking over you (spiritual context) |
| Tuākana Tēina | Elder sibling to younger sibling |
| Tūturu | To be fixed, real, permanent |
| Wahi Tapu | Sacred place e.g. A burial ground |
| Wahine | Female, woman |
| Waiata | Māori songs and hymns |
| Wero | Challenge |

| | |
|---|---|
| Whai Mātauranga | Pursuit of knowledge and understanding. The pursuit of best practice. |
| Whakapapa | Primarily referred to as one's genealogy or the history of something |
| Whakawhanaungatanga | The process of introducing oneself and getting to know another. The process of finding connections whether biological or common places, interest's hobbies |
| Whānau | Extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to several people - the primary economic unit of traditional Māori society. In the modern context the term is sometimes used to include friends who may not have any kinship ties to other members |

## Definitions

| **Kupu** | **Definition** |
|---|---|
| Mainstream or Westernised Setting | Referring to Social Work organisations in Aotearoa New Zealand with a government or statutory response. |
| Kaimahi, Māori Social Worker, Participants | These definitions are used interchangeably throughout the entire research paper. It is to refer to a Māori social worker working within a mainstream or westernised social work setting. |

# Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

Social work strives for social change and development and is among the most value-based professions. Underpinning this, are the principles and theories of social work, social sciences, humanities, and indigenous knowledges. These principal and theories support the engagement of people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing (Internation Federation of Social Workers, 2014). These principles while seemingly simple, are in fact complex, thus leading to ethical challenges and conflict of values. In addition, in Aotearoa, Māori social work practice also has a solid grounding in indigenous knowledge, philosophies, and values. Social work theories may be utilised to back up what social workers do and to strengthen the bond between kaimahi and whānau (Hollis-English, 2015).

The aim of this research was to explore how kaimahi (Māori social workers) construct and implement their indigenous practice framework when working in mainstream social services. It intends to examine challenges and opportunities for how kaimahi facilitate and negotiate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for mokopuna and whānau wellbeing. I used both Pūrākau and kaupapa Māori theory to help with the methodology of this research. This complemented the qualitative approach and use of semi-structured interviews that I employed to interview six kaimahi. Kaimahi were recruited through ANZASW and word of mouth. The data collected was done through semi-structured interviews and was analysed by thematic analysis. The study intends to inform future kaimahi practice and the opportunity for other social workers to comprehend the challenges faced by their kaimahi colleagues and support culturally responsive practice and further knowledge building. Throughout the course of this research, I will use the terms 'kaimahi', 'kaimahi Māori', 'participants' and 'interviewees' interchangeably.

## 1.2 Brief historical context

Indigenous peoples have inherited and continue to practise distinctive traditions and methods of interacting with others and the environment (Castellano, 2004). They still exhibit social, cultural, economic, and political traits that set them apart from the societies in which they live. Indigenous peoples have similar issues with the protection of their rights as unique peoples, notwithstanding their cultural variations (Kuokkanen, 2000; Margot & McKenzie, 2006). Indigenous peoples have long fought for acknowledgement of their identity, way of life, and claim to ancestral lands, territories, and natural resources. Despite this, their rights continue to be infringed. Perhaps the most disadvantaged group of people in the world today are indigenous peoples. Now that their rights are being protected, the international world is aware that specific steps are needed to preserve their unique traditions and way of life (Hooks, 1992; Kuokkanen, 2000).

The global campaign for indigenous peoples' self-determination is growing every day. One of the main objectives of the ensuing United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is indigenous rights to equal treatment and self-determination (Margot & McKenzie, 2006; United Nations, 2007). Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination covers a wide variety of topics, one of which is the ability to preserve and advance cultural expressions, including the return of their spiritual and intellectual assets (Hook,1992; United Nations, 2022). Even now, in the age of post-colonialism, colonisation of people's minds by educational, social, or economic means has resulted in internalised colonialism and the development of white lenses/Western ideals, thought processes, and worldviews (Castellano, 2004). In this sense, these subtle forms of colonialism have led to a devaluation of indigenous people, and everything associated with them (Kuokkanen, 2000; United Nations, 2022). When considering the aim of this research is to understand the view of Māori kaimahi within mainstream social work settings, this brief historical context informs us that indigenous peoples are forced to participate in western ideologies despite this not being the norm for their origin. Indigenous peoples appear to be steps behind people whom Pākehā.

## 1.3 Significance of the study

Māori are overrepresented in negative social and economic statistics in health, homelessness, mental health, imprisonment, child welfare, youth offending, drug use and other areas pertaining to social work (Mardani, 2010; Walters, 2018). In recent years, these negative social and economic statistics have become more apparent and as a result, social media has seen an increase in articles pertaining to the poor treatment, racist systems and misjustice inflicted on Māori (Barnes & McCreanor, 2019; Health and Disabilty System Review, 2020; Radio New Zealand, 2020). The levels of racism within state institutions against Māori is quite high. So, an understanding of why child uplifts are occurring and why there are so many of them, cannot be gained without looking into the role of police and different DHB settings (Health and Disabilty System Review, 2020).

In 2015, a review by the Ombudsman was carried out for the Ministry for Children–Oranga Tamariki, which identified that the existing system of child protection did not adequately meet the needs of tamariki and rangatahi in Aotearoa. While a raft of legislative and policy changes was introduced to support a new (culturally sound) operating model, the Ministry still received criticism for not upholding its promises to implement cultural practices (Boshier, 2022). It has been evidenced via different reviews of Oranga Tamariki-Ministry for Children that Māori whānau within the system are poorly over-represented and often provided culturally insensitive services from social workers, both Pākehā and Māori (Kaiwai et al., 2020). This further solidifies my rationale as to why this research is significant.

Māori continue to face scrutiny both in the media and when accessing health care services and over the years the statistics indicate marginalisation towards Māori more and more. This impacts Māori in terms of them receiving quality and timely health care support and increases the chances of on-going health issues (Barnes & McCreanor, 2019; Child, Youth and Family, 2010; Health and Disabilty System Review, 2020; Mardani, 2010). When a group of people continue to be marginalised and mistreated, it becomes almost impossible for the targeted group to separate themselves from those stereotypes (Durie, 1999; 2001; Takitimu, 2007). Additionally, Māori children are five times more likely to be brought into state care (Children’s Commissioner,

2020; Dunlop, 2020; McRae, 2019; Takitimu, 2007). These negative connotations about Māori have been accredited to several different factors, including systemic racism through the employment of European mono-cultural value systems within policy, intergenerational oppression of whānau Māori and community structures through colonisation, and the discriminatory delivery of services in employment, housing, and wealth (Kiro, 2000; Takitimu, 2007; Tauri, 2010). As a result of historic unfairness towards Māori, Māori are less likely to work with mainstream services due to assessments being culturally insensitive (Durie, 2001; Takitimu, 2007). This research explores the construction and implementation of how kaimahi integrate an indigenous practice framework when working in mainstream social services. I will be exploring the opportunities and challenges kaimahi have encountered in their mahi and the impacts this has on both the kaimahi and the whānau they work with. It is envisioned that this research will help identify some key issues within mainstream social work and how management within these structures can avoid these mistakes and implement and sustain culturally responsive workspaces and practice within their respective communities.

## 1.4 Personal Rationale

When considering the research, I wanted to do I thought of three questions. These were derived from my experiences both professionally and personally as a social worker, whānau member and Māori wahine. I wanted to be able to answer these questions and to understand more about the potential opportunities or challenges and whether these could be resolved.

I initially wanted to seek understanding on how kaimahi were practically addressing the negative health statistics for tāngata whenua. In doing this, were there/ are there barriers for kaimahi to provide quality service? My final thought before deciding on my research objectives was how culturally responsive constructs looked within mainstream systems.

I am currently employed by the Ministry for Children—Oranga Tamariki, previously known as Child, Youth and Family. I have been working for this organisation since 2016. I was a social worker for five of these years and have been a supervisor (of a team of social workers) for just over two years. Both roles involve me working within the context of care and protection of children and often require me to work within mainstream/westernised constructs. In addition to these two positions, I have also had other responsibilities such as: Health and Safety Representative, Runanga Union delegate, Senior Social Work Practitioner, Acting Supervisor, and I belong to Te Ahi Kaa (a network of Māori colleagues within the Wellington Region). Most recently, I have been championing the Practice shift within my site as a response to the Ombudsman's 2020 report issued on 6th August 2020 - *He Take Kōhukihuki: A Matter of Urgency.* This report investigated and responded to the policies and practices the Ministry for Children–Oranga Tamariki implemented? when removing Māori new-born pēpi from their parents via a section 78 interim custody order. Ultimately, this report criticised the Ministry for Children–Oranga Tamariki and its culturally inappropriate practices (Boshier, 2022). This led to the direction to make immediate and sustained changes that effectively recognised te Tiriti o Waitangi and the findings of *Te Pūao-te-Ata-Tū* – another report written by the Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Māori Perspective for the Department of Social Welfare in Aotearoa. It was a detailed report and enquiry

into racism within Aotearoa, and within the Department of Social Welfare – now known as Ministry for Children–Oranga Tamariki (Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1988).

Aside from my professional career, I also have provided free advocacy for whānau and friends within various social work platforms; I have participated and competed in a national kapa haka competition and have sat on the committee for my local marae. I have completed many different training opportunities throughout my career – all of which fill my kete with resources in the pursuit of positive and sustainable whānau outcomes. I am now about to begin my Postgraduate Diploma in Bicultural Professional Supervision via Te Wānanga o Aotearoa to further extend my knowledge within supervision of social work utilising mātauranga Māori approaches. It is important to recognise that my journey within the social work field is never ending and that for me to provide the best care to my whānau, my kete must be continuously replenished.

When I compare my professional and personal experience with the three questions mentioned above, I can quite easily reference my own experiences of the opportunities and challenges when navigating mainstream social work settings. I have experienced roadblocks and criticism when I have wanted to respond in a culturally appropriate manner. Comments such as "that is too out of the box thinking", "that isn't following the process we already have", "the timeframes will exceed your deadlines" have been said to me throughout my career. Conversely, I have had the opposite experience and been encouraged to respond and work with my clients through a cultural lens as past approaches have not worked. I have been utilised to provide cultural advice or support to my Pākehā colleagues when they have felt stuck on what to do next. Most recently, I have been supported to provide cultural supervision to my own team of social workers. Furthermore, my motivation for conducting this research was to see if there were differences between current and historical literature, the participants' experiences, and my own personal views.

## 1.5 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to explore how kaimahi navigate mainstream social work settings and how they apply Māori practice frameworks when working in these services. It intends to examine the challenges and opportunities when kaimahi facilitate and negotiate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing. The overall aims are:

1. To investigate how kaimahi navigate the challenges and opportunities of mainstream social work settings.
2. To identify how kaimahi integrate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing.
3. To identify how kaimahi record and acknowledge indigenous practice frameworks when working in mainstream social work settings.

## 1.6 Research Design

This research was designed to focus on mainstream social work settings to better understand how this area of competence affects Māori social workers. There is a growing amount of research pertaining to Māori social

work. However, there appears to be less literature relating to mainstream social workers. If Māori health statistics are as inequitable as He Take Kōhukihuki: A Matter of Urgency and Te Pūao-te-Ata-Tū suggest then this research is critical in providing insight into an opportunity to understand the challenges and opportunities for kaimahi within their respective mainstream roles.

Worth noting, the completion of the literature review occurred prior to the interviews taking place. The benefit of this was to provide me with some overall current and historical information about Māori social workers and key or important outcomes because of decisions that were made at the time. The downfall of this, is that the key themes I have discovered because of the Pūrākau shared were not specifically researched on prior.

## 1.7 Thesis Outline

Chapter One: The introduction sets out the framework for this thesis and what exploratory research methods were utilised. This chapter briefly describes my personal motivation for selecting this research topic and why I believed it was significant for me to work on this project. The thesis format is covered in this section, including what each part specifies and explains.

Chapter Two: The literature review includes the key themes that surfaced during the in-depth interviews with the kaimahi. This chapter analyses relevant literature and the Pūrākau surrounding Māori cosmology to get insight into the viewpoints of kaimahi working in mainstream social work settings. This chapter elucidates the significance of Kaimahi and the need for Māori experts in the social work area. This chapter is structured in a way that is consistent with the various research findings and highlights how little focus has been given to Māori social workers despite the vital job they do for tāngata whenua. The literature review further examines similar, already-existing indigenous social work research to see whether the research comes to the same conclusions. The traditional idea of tuākana-tēina is examined in this chapter (Hook et al., 2007).

Chapter Three: In this chapter, the methodological and theoretical foundations of this study are explored. Thanks to the techniques used through Kaupapa Māori Research and Pūrākau, the participants in this study were allowed to freely express their views on the research's issues through kōrero. This chapter talks about the ethical concerns that were involved as well as opinions on the data collection process and the theme analysis.

Chapter Four: This chapter discusses the findings from the Pūrākau provided by the participants. Through kōrero, the participants reflected and shared their experiences of the varying cultural constructs within mainstream social work settings and how these resulted in various challenges and opportunities. This chapter contains direct excerpts from the material presented and is divided into the primary themes.

Chapter Five: This chapter contains a discussion and an analysis; it discusses the ideas and conversations sparked by the primary results found because of this research. This chapter presents guidelines for our social work practice and how we may establish a supportive and culturally aware atmosphere.

Chapter Six: This chapter contains a conclusion that connects the chapters of this thesis and summarises the important results from this research investigation. In addition, I will be sharing my experiences and insights from this academic journey. Finally, the conclusion chapter examines the limits revealed in this research, future research prospects and recommendations.

## 1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the research subject as the different perspectives of kaimahi within mainstream social work settings. It has highlighted the importance surrounding this research and why I have chosen to gain a deeper understanding of the different challenges and opportunities kaimahi have faced and how they have navigated this space. The three research aims that have been outlined include the following: 1) To investigate how kaimahi navigate the challenges and opportunities of mainstream social work settings; 2) To identify how kaimahi integrate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing; and 3) To identify how kaimahi record and acknowledge indigenous practice frameworks when working in mainstream social work settings.

## Literature Review

### 1.9 Overview

This chapter discusses the literature that explores experiences of Māori and other indigenous peoples who work in mainstream settings. To get clarification on the probable distinctions or similarities identified, I broadened the search of this study to include mahi outside of the social work field. To accomplish this, the scope of the search included both international and New Zealand literature. Before exploring the key themes, I will first provide a brief historical context for why this area of enquiry is vital for all indigenous peoples, not just Māori. This chapter will cover three significant points of contention.

Firstly, internal colonialism is researched and discussed in this chapter. Largely due to the impacts this has had and still has on indigenous peoples and their journey for overall hauora. In a predominantly pākehā world, Aotearoa New Zealand has over the course of history dis-enabled Māori peoples to teach, heal, and grow in ways that makes sense to them. Through colonisation an ideology that one system is better than the other has been created and within internal organisations, this can still be seen today. Following from internal colonialism, this research then discussed the impacts of institutional racism. Like internal colonialism, this section focusses on the behaviours and how this further discriminates against indigenous peoples. Institutional racism further explores the relationship Māori have had with the government. The last section of this chapter will focus on western science and indigenous knowledge. With mainstream systems working from a western or pākehā lens how can this transpire into positive outcomes for indigenous peoples? This section therefor explores the implementation on indigenous knowledge and its benefits for its peoples.

### 1.10 Internal Colonialism

Navigating mainstream social work systems can be challenging as an indigenous practitioner. The challenges faced, are derived from the impacts of colonisation and how the governing bodies of that country implement their way of doing things (Boulton et al., 2018). For Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori are the indigenous and the kaimahi that were interviewed, discussed the different ways in which colonisation can impact internal structures. Developing on this idea further, Internal colonialism was a modern capitalist practice of oppression and exploitation of racial and ethnic minorities, within the borders of the state characterised by relationships of domination, oppression, and exploitation (Adebanwi, 2016; Etkind, 2011; Kipfer, 2007). In simple terms, a process whereby countries were ruled and dominated by a distant power; for example, the British with India and Māori peoples or the French in Nigeria (Turner, 2017). Throughout the process of colonisation, these countries controlled the economy and justified these actions from the view that they were saviours and that the indigenous cultures were backward in their way of thinking. Ultimately, the coloniser believed themselves to be superior and the colonised the inferior (Fanon, 1967).

However, theorist Fanon (1967), who is well-known for his unapologetic position on colonisation, and his theory of internal colonialisation seeks to explain how inequality and dominance are perpetuated in a community when a foreign force is not always in charge. In the past, we have tended to view colonialism as an external phenomenon and to believe that certain types of colonialism emanate within a country from the oppressed (Fanon, 1967; Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012; Turner, 2017) Internal colonialism examines how individuals generate their own types of racial dominance within a community. For example, due to the multitude of methods of oppression that indigenous peoples or colonised peoples have been subject to, the oppressed have continued to adopt some of their coloniser's methods, which have been forced to become societal norms in mainstream society (Fanon, 1967).

Internal colonisation is a geographically based pattern of subjection of a distinct people within a prevailing place. Internal colonies were ethnically separated areas such as ghettos and inner-city suburbs where citizens were denied voting rights, labourers were exploited, and harsh policing have always been the standard (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012). Internal colonialism has been described as multi-dimensional and embodied in contemporary accounts as it denies the subjectivity of people who have been colonised by relying on orientalist knowledge that continues to distinguish civilisation from barbarism, and violence motivated by race, gender, or sexual orientation is regarded as the result of internal colonisation (Short, 2005; Turner, 2017). The basis of internal colonialism includes power coloniality and epistemic violence, as well as physical exploitation and warfare. Creating unequal and emotional subject positions is a sort of colonialism that helps us to choose between what is worth living and what is not. According to Fanon (1967):

> I move slowly in the world, accustomed now to seek no longer for upheaval. I progress by crawling. And already I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am fixed. Having adjusted their microtomes, they objectively cut away slices of my reality. I am laid bare. I feel, I see in those white faces that it is not a new man who has come in, but a new kind of man, a new genus (p. 116).

If it is true, that the colonised have inadvertently adopted some of the coloniser's methods – then this supports the aims of this research. How will Māori Kaimahi within mainstream social work settings, work in a way that is inherently non-colonial? As research evolves and Indigenous peoples become further educated and more impactful/influential, it will be interesting to see how this will then convert into how Indigenous – specifically Māori people, display their Tino Rangatiratanga. For example, Pūao-te-Ata-tu contributed significantly to a fundamental shift from the prevalent colonialist vision (Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children, 2021). Since the colonisation of Aotearoa-New Zealand, social work practise ideologies were formed by a Western perspective prior to the rise of Indigenous approaches (King, 2014; Munford & Sanders, 2011). Walker (2012) talks about their experience of the changes in the education system. While colonisation and racism still exist, the younger generation in Aotearoa New Zealand is more susceptible and less resistant of culturally significant methods of living and healing. Furthermore, indigenous methods or language are more likely to be accepted within the younger generation and implemented within the workforce or personal lives more seamlessly.

Unfortunately, the emergence of a bi-cultural approach to health is still in the foundational stages within Aotearoa New Zealand. Organisations appear to have inadequate structures and policies that allow a Māori practice framework to be equally recognised as its Pākehā methods (Durie, 1995). As the foundations of a cultural response to health is attempted, sustainable changes to social work practice is a goal yet to be achieved. The impacts of colonisation can be felt throughout generations for indigenous peoples.

### 1.10.1 Trauma and Colonisation

As the world evolves, so too do our ways of living. Society has evolved, governments have altered, and legislation, policies, and international agreements have been developed (Johnson, 2014). Internal colonialism persists and is undoubtedly detrimental to the oppressed. Indigenous citizens dominate the negative economic and social statistics of the settler states (Adebanwi, 2017). In comparison to the oppressor, Kuokkanen (2000) and Fanon (1967) describes the colonised as being significantly more likely to: exhibit signs of mental and physical illness; to be poor; to be undereducated; higher chance of incarceration; to have been abused as children, and significantly more likely to be in poverty.

The list of disadvantages is often exhaustive within each settler state, and they are almost identical among the main settler nations, from the Anglosphere (New Zealand, Australia, the United States, and Canada) to the Iberian Peninsula (Brazil, Argentina, Chile). Simply put, indigenous populations in all settler states live significantly below the national median (Etkind, 2011; Short, 2005; Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012). But how do these current negative indicators relate to colonialism, and how is internal colonialism impacting trauma in the modern era? It is apparent that indigenous people have endured trauma because of colonisation, but it is more difficult to make the link between this 'historical' trauma and the contemporary overrepresentation of indigenous people in the bad statistics of colonist states (Fanon, 1967).

Trauma is a common theme seen when working in mainstream social work settings. In the context to this research, understanding the barriers to recording accurately while Māori kaimahi walk between the world of Te Ao Pākehā and Te Ao Māori can be difficult to navigate. The whakapapa of the kōrero had with whānau needs to be correct and mana-enhancing. For example, Roberts (2013) describes whakapapa as being something that describes the origin of something. It would be incorrect to say that the Kumara originates from the Kauri tree in which people will pluck them off to eat. Therefore, in the context of social work, rather than describing a whānau from a lens of risk and harm, we listen, learn, and gain insight into the whakapapa of how a whānau came to the attention of needing a social worker. No whānau is inherently bad (Eruera & Ruwhiu, 2015). Working with whānau requires kaimahi to manage and integrate their cultural, personal, and professional obligations in several ways, including walking between two worlds. Yet, emphasis is also given to the effects of trauma and colonisation, as well as how this information may be utilised while working in mainstream contexts. Despite a difficulty, the past may contribute to the healing process so that the future is more open to opportunity.

### 1.10.2 Current modern-day impacts of internal colonialism

As mentioned briefly under "Trauma and colonisation," Indigenous cultures continue to be subjected to internal colonisation. However, what formerly resembled wars, slavery, land confiscation, and several other kinds of oppression – today, resembles decades of whānau isolation; inactivity to investigate whānau, hapū, and iwi, as well as treaties and constitutional legislation being disregarded or poorly implemented (Reid et al., 2014). Delays in recognising that indigenous approaches are, in fact, optimal for indigenous outcomes, while being restricted to mainstream systems, are hindering, delaying, and preventing development (Moyle, 2013). Knowing that Indigenous methods correlates to positive indigenous outcomes, it makes sense that these known methods are to be re-introduced into mainstream settings and that the ethos of internal colonialism is challenged (Mikaere, 2011; Morgensen, 2011).

Nonetheless, colonisation, is unquestionably a series of terrible historical occurrences. Moreover, it produced a catastrophic atmosphere in which indigenous people endured both present traumas caused by the colonial environment in addition to the historic traumas (Hill, 2009). The traumatic repercussions of colonisation range from almost permanent structural changes at the national level, such as the colonial state, to more episodic psychological challenges at the individual level, such as seeing a racist stereotypes in the media (Etkind, 2011; Morgensen, 2011). Hill (2004) contends that despite the revival of efforts to protect, preserve, and promote Māori institutions and culture, tāngata Whenua never lost faith in their ability to retain or reclaim control over their own destiny.

To make reparations for past wrongs, acknowledge colonial pasts, and apologise for breaches of trust and good faith, Hill (2009) argues that the Crown joined with several tribal organisations (often iwi) to establish the Waitangi Tribunal and the Treaty settlement process. However, what Hill did not completely acknowledge was the mahi completed by Māori peoples, to get the Crown to respect and uphold the rights of Māori the same way they do for Pākehā. For almost a century, Māori have sought to use petitions, court proceedings, and other legal measures to address disputes with the Crown. Extreme measures, such as land occupations, were used by some Māori as early as 1975 (Sharp, 1997). The Labour government's Minister of Māori Affairs, Matiu Rata, pushed for the establishment of a special judiciary to hear and resolve Māori complaints. It was intended that this would facilitate the resolution of lingering disputes between Māori and Pākehā by providing a judicial framework for investigating Māori allegations of disadvantage owing to Crown violations of the Treaty (Derby, 2012; Sharp 1997). As a result, many iwi have seen the return of wahi tapu, the delivery of compensating assets to iwi, and the formation of varied power-sharing arrangements between the Crown and tribal authorities (Hill, 2004; Hill & Williams, 2009; Mahuika, 2011). The majority of iwi have handled their resources prudently to expand their economic base and political prominence (Derby, 2012).

In response to allegations of racist Department of Social Welfare practices and high rates of Māori tamariki being brough into state care Pūao-te-Ata-tū was created. Through the process of its competition, tāngata

Whenua were given the opportunity to share their collective extensive experience of a socially unjust State welfare agency, policies, and practices (Hollis, 2006; Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children, 2021). In-depth historical, legal, and cultural concerns affecting Māori were examined in Pūao-te-Ata-tū (Hollis-English, 2012). Institutional racism, which is pervasive throughout Aotearoa and its public services, was exposed and condemned. State care and protection laws, policies, and practises were singled out for immediate reform, along with other areas of government (Keddell, 2017). A crucial argument within Pūao-te-Ata-tū was that the nation cannot afford to wait any longer because of our issues of Western cultural imperialism and Māori destitution and isolation (Hollis-English, 2012; Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children, 2021). Ultimately, this piece of documentation highlighted the 13 recommendations stemming from (anti-racism behaviour, colonial institutions to include indigenous methods of practice and bi-cultural training and implementation) (Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children, 2021).

Pūao-te-Ata-tū has had a long-lasting contribution on Māori approaches to social work. As said by Hollis (2006), the impact was visible first and foremost through the recruitment of Māori kaimahi, but more crucially through endorsing the acquiescence of Māori ways of practise within the organization. It was the first official government document that recognised and promoted the implementation of Māori social work practises. Pūao-te-Ata-tū has been characterised as a pioneer text of Māori social work in Aotearoa, second only to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (1840) in importance for Māori kaimahi (Hollis-English, 2012). Despite the importance of Pūao-te-Ata-tū on the adoption of its recommendations into practice, Webber-Dreadon (1999) claims that nothing had changed in the former Department of Social Welfare a decade after publication. While it was intended that workers would become more culturally conscious, this is not always reflected in action or practise. Colonisation monoculturalism continues to silently dominate inside state social services in Aotearoa. Even the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989, enacted in the aftermath of Pūao-te-Ata-tū to encourage more collaborative and preventative measures to child protection, was varied in its implementation and chronically underfunded (Keddell, 2017). Though the proportion of tamariki Māori in foster care decreased in the years following the Act's implementation, it has recently climbed from 49.5% in 2011 to 61.6% in 2017 (Keddell & Hyslop, 2019).

Despite Pūao-te-Ata-tū having some influence regarding social work within state social work settings, only recently (2021) did Ministry for Children—Oranga Tamariki publish their evidence brief regarding Māori Centred Social Work Practice. This is significant as it demonstrates how slow the Crown have been in the application of Pūao-te-Ata-tū recommendations into everyday practice. Waitangi Tribunal (2021) noted:

> The disparity has arisen and persists in part due to the effects of alienation and dispossession, but also because of a failure by the Crown to honour the guarantee to Māori of the right of cultural continuity embodied in the guarantee of tino rangatiratanga over their kāinga.

In 2021, The Waitangi Tribunal argued that the Crown has continued to fail to fully implement Pūao-te-Ata-tū and its 13 recommendations (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2021). Further arguing that “we do not think the legislative policy and practice changes introduced since 2017 are sufficient to secure outcomes consistent with te Tiriti, the Treaty and its principles” (Waitangi Tribunal, 2021).

Internal colonialism as mentioned is still clearly evidenced in society today. There are continued breaches of te Tiriti o Waitangi and Pūao-te-Ata-tū which further supports the argument that most interpretations of Māori are negative, reinforcing the colonisers ideology. This is particularly true of the media, which continues to spread the narrative's preconceived notions (Reid et al., 2017). Consequently, Māori continue to confront societal discrimination from many Pākehā or mainstream environments, even though things are changing. Moreover, to societal racism, Māori continue to endure institutional bias which again reinforces the idea the internal colonialism still exists in the 21st century (Reid et al., 2017). When left un-challenged, internal colonialism fosters an environment that is harmful to indigenous peoples. By standing still and not speaking out, is contributing to its growth and acceptance. It is tolerated, but at the expense of positive cultural outcomes. While the literature is growing, the impacts of internal colonialism within the structure of Māori social work is still a seed that needs nurturing.

## 1.11 Institutional Racism

### 1.11.1 Institutional Racism and Privilege

Institutional racism is an undeserved structural advantage that co-operates with systemic discrimination, creating racial inequities (Came & Da Silva, 2011). Institutional racism is the fertile ground for privilege. It is linked to colonisation and assimilation, which eroded indigenous sovereignty (Eruera & Ruwhiu, 2015; Munford & Sanders, 2011; Williams, 2001). The descendants of colonisers benefit from the indigenous peoples' land and other economic resources as well as from the racial legacy of colonialism. Granted, not every colonial descendent has the same level of comfort and accessibility (Came & Da Silva, 2011; Williams, 2001). Some scholars link privilege to class, gender, sexuality, and (dis)ability. By engaging in political activism is to challenge privilege hierarchies (Griffith et al., 2007; Moreton-Robinson, 2004). These benefits present ethical concerns for racists when navigating the current injustices generated by racism and imperialism (Awatere, 1984). Colonialism is racist because it encourages cultural supremacy. Within scope of Aotearoa, we have been able to evidence how Pākehā have dominated political, industrial, health, education, and criminal justice institutions since 1840 (Awatere, 1984; Cook, 1984).

An example of this, is how the Crown claims sovereignty, based on the false idea that Māori surrendered this in 1840. This led the Crown to create kāwanatanga arrangements that denied Māori rangatiratanga and failed to defend Te Tiriti o Waitangi rights. Successive colonial governments fostered colonisation and assimilation, isolating Māori land and marginalising Māori traditional practises (Waitangi Tribunal 1986; Williams 2001). In

turn, these initiatives facilitate a fast-track system of Pākehā derived outcomes led by Pākehā professionals. Transferring economic assets and normalising Pākehā traditional norms and beliefs have helped them achieve this. Pākehā can inherit family land, get culturally relevant education at all levels, and have favoured access to jobs, housing, commodities, and services. Pākehā privilege can be seen regarding regulating the spelling of Māori names. For example, the Whanganui River and city spelling controversy (Moon, 2009). Reid and Robson (2007) contend that any discussion on equity and rights must reflect the Pākehā preferential advantage from mechanisms they constructed and administer.

To avoid cooperating with institutional racism in the face of pervasive Pākehā privilege, Pākehā professionals must, both individually and collectively, build a solid foundation of political abilities (Mikaere, 2002; Reid & Robson, 2007). It is believed that practitioners' ability to make strategic decisions within our various circles of influence requires this foundational knowledge and understanding. The dynamics of racism and privilege may be made apparent via this knowledge and the related understandings, providing the opportunity for moral decision-making (Came & Da Silva, 2011). Therefore, to understand the present, one must first understand the past. Jackson (2000) argues that past and current experiences influence Māori views of government structures, policies, and practises. According to him, it is "unwise" to try to ignore the relationship between the past and present in the Māori context since doing so would be both intellectually and culturally unintelligible. Pākehā must be aware of their own history, their complicity in colonisation, and the history of the peoples they are collaborating with (Came & Da Silva, 2011; Mikaere, 2002).

### 1.11.2 Tokenism vs inclusion within education systems

Within a social work construct, as Pākehā kaimahi adapt and acknowledge their inherited racist past, there is also a clear difference between what is a genuine response to culturally appropriate practice to that of a “tick box” exercise (Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children, 2021). Understanding and responding on the ideology that embedding a Māori-centred strategy will necessitate much more than merely having a Māori-named service with Māori principles in its vision statement (Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children, 2021). Mitchell (2018) emphasises this idea, stating, "Mana derives from a Te Ao Māori worldview” (p.1). Maintaining this type of Mātauranga Māori lens is about questioning the prevailing way we perceive the world and are seen by the world when mana enhancement becomes a tokenistic.

To better comprehend the origins of tokenism, looking at the education system, we gain our first perceptions as to why tokenism is still inherent today. Researchers McAllister et al., (2022) discovered that Māori students felt their identities were being erased if they did not conform to expectations about what they should know or how they should behave. Furthermore, that Māori students felt pressured to be an expert in all things Māori and if they were not, then they were made to feel inadequate (McAllister et al., 2022; Walters, 2018). Since its inception in 1816, the school system in Aotearoa has had an adverse influence on Māori despite good intentions. It was meant to bring about Christianization, civilisation, colonisation, and assimilation (Walters,

2018). Children who feel they belong to a group and are protected from the harmful effects of racism and other forms of prejudice can learn more effectively thanks to the role that their culture and language play in this process (Children's Commissioner, 2018; Walters, 2018).

While political parties, academics, and Māori can all agree that cultural and linguistic diversity should be prioritised inside the classroom, there is ongoing dispute on how this should be accomplished. The views of various political parties on the necessity of teaching primary school children Te Reo and their proposed strategies for doing so are only one example (Walters, 2018 & 2020). While it is true that English is a compulsory subject in primary education; New Zealand's official languages are English, Te Reo Māori, and Sign Language, of which the latter two have not always been compulsory (Walters, 2020). More time and energy are required to be spent in teacher education programmes focusing on language, culture, New Zealand's history, and how to identify and counteract prejudice and bias. Better yet, teachers would enter the field with a different perspective if they were educated more about these issues in school. This would mean that they would be less likely to have racist or biased beliefs (Children's Commissioner, 2018; Patrick, 2018; Walters, 2018).

It is intriguing that to become a registered social worker through the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB), one must be able to demonstrate competency in the practise of social work with Māori (Social Workers Registration Board, 2021). It is so important that it is the first of 10 core competencies within its policy. Interestingly, while this policy specifies that the SWRB may establish programmes to determine whether kaimahi possess the skills necessary to achieve the 10 key competences, it does not specify how competence can be measured (Social Service Providers Aotearoa, 2018 & Social Workers Registration Board, 2021). Social Service Providers Aotearoa (2018) further claims that "The social worker registration fails to meet the Bill's fundamental objectives of safeguarding the public and protecting the integrity of the social work profession" (p.1).

They recommend that a scope of practise should underpin the registration procedure. The Social Workers Registration Board has followed recommendations and published a general scope of practise that will help social professionals feel more united and give people in Aotearoa a better idea of what social workers do (Social Workers Registration Board, 2021). Without this, employers are left to determine what constitutes social work and what does not. Beddoe (2017) adds that while registration is essential, it is not sufficient to improve the quality of practise on its own. Continuing education in all facets of social work must be prioritised, sponsored, and made accessible to licenced social workers (Beddoe, 2017). Without dedicated upskilling and education, the social work profession will not move in the shift that Pūao-te-Ata-tū and te Tiriti ō Waitangi ask for. Therefore, the question remains as to whether these systems intended to promote quality social work practise are fundamentally racist and tokenistic.

### 1.11.3 Relationship between Māori and the state

There is a need to recognise that a statutory lens in the social service sector plays a critical role in the policy environment and indeed enact policies through their own discretionary actions (Hollis-Engish, 2012). These organisations are conveyers and enactors of moral systems (Hasenfeld, 2010). Nevertheless, how Māori have functioned within social service organisations has evolved significantly throughout the years. The consequences of Pūao-te-Ata-tū and political and economic upheaval have resulted in a cultural transition inside the workplace from being a primarily non-diverse environment towards one in which Māori are active in policy, management, and service execution (Hollis, 2006; Hollis-English, 2012). The question of whether Māori are engaged is no longer relevant. Nevertheless, people are now interested in Māori social work advancement and how the extent of autonomy in various sectors of social services look (Pakura, 2003). The interaction seen between state and social service organisations is crucial in that organisations may impact both policies and foundational ideology in the same way that government policies can influence organisations (Hollis-Engish, 2012; Pakura, 2003).

The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) established in 1972, employed minimal Māori kaimahi and at the time, promoted Western techniques throughout the organisation (Rimene, 1994; Hollis, 2006). Oranga Tamariki, as it is now known, focuses on the welfare of families in three areas: Care and protection, youth justice and adoption. Māori whānau within the system have repeatedly asked for a Māori response and emphasised the importance of whānau led decision making (Pakura, 2003).

After just over a decade, DSW implemented the Family Group Conference (FGC). Which endeavoured to acknowledge the fundamental principles of whānau, hapū, and iwi inside government organisations (Brown, 2000). It was anticipated that through collaboration between whānau and the kaimahi, better decision making was achievable. Throughout this process kaimahi would incorporate Māori practises and ideas. During the early implementation stages of FGC's, Oranga Tamariki would expect Māori kaimahi to carry out Māori procedures within the framework of organisational regulations (Brown, 2000; Hasenfield, 2010; Hollis, 2006). At this time, Māori kaimahi were generally inexperienced. it was clear that they were hired to fit the profiling the organisation wanted to portray (Hollis, 2006). This itself is an example of how institutional racism exists. While we can argue that Oranga Tamariki improved its FGC process to allow whānau led decision making, outcomes were not always positive and the implantation of Pūao-te-Ata-tū and te Tiriti were either implemented superficially or not at all (Hollis-English, 2012). Hollis-English (2012) further highlights how Māori kaimahi during this time would struggle with the organisation's ideas about what a Māori response would correlate into their business model, which was a stark contrast to a kaupapa Māori approach to social work. As a result, the idea of tokenism arose (Hollis, 2006). Rimene (1994) further explores this concept and touches on the difficulties involved in changing from a monocultural to a multicultural organisation. He highlights how DSW to then Child Youth and Family (as it was known) would often talk the talk (regarding cultural responses) but struggled with walking the talk. By not whole heartedly implementing this cultural shift, was a clear indication that things were moving backwards (Hasenfield, 2010; Pakura, 2003; Rimene, 1994). That institutional racism and tokenistic gestures existed and that Māori kaimahi could do nothing to change this is highlighted by taking

a step backwards, highlighting the problem of positive initiatives being overshadowed by political and economic change focused on efficiency and productivity rather than empowerment (Hollis-Engish, 2012).

Despite the government's support for human rights treaties and the founding text Te Tiriti o Waitangi, racism has become institutionalised in New Zealand society (Came & Da Silva, 2011; Came & McCreanor, 2015). Significant and permanent differences in economic and social well-being exist between Māori and non-Māori because of racism. Through the administration of the public sector and the control of knowledge and resources, state agencies have a substantial impact on the lives of New Zealanders (Jackson, 2000). While considered politically impartial (Palmer & Palmer, 2004), the public service has traditionally developed, supervised, and implemented policies and procedures that benefit the Pākehā colonial agenda at the expense of Māori and other indigenous cultures. This historical collaboration with colonial assimilation methods, persists to influence the dynamic between Māori and the state (Hill, 2004; 2009; Jackson, 2000).

Racism, like all human behaviour, may be controlled, discovered, prevented, minimised, and eradicated. Even in huge public organisations, this change is conceivable. Human rights controls, government mandates, leadership skills and political will, quality assurance systems, and the professionalism, competency, and integrity of workers can help to mitigate racism (Came & McCreanor, 2015; Hill, 2004; Hill & Williams, 2009). With appropriate training and monitoring in place, racism can be fought against. Micro, meso, and macro anti-racism initiatives can all enter the public sphere through a variety of different entryways (Came & McCreanor, 2015; Jackson, 2000). For instance, correcting someone in the workplace for mis-pronouncing a Māori name wrong, to mainstream social work settings allowing local iwi to hold whānau hui to create safety for our mokopuna are both examples of expanding the institutional opportunities for Māori voices to be heard.

The state's continued failures can be better understood if we learn from the experiences of Māori kaimahi as they negotiate the complexities of the traditional social work environment. Is it up to the minority of Māori kaimahi to deal with racism in the institution and the tokenistic attitude of the majority, or does it require a unified reaction, one in which the crown recognises and leads the way?

## 1.12 Western Science and Indigenous Knowledge

Can Western Science and Indigenous knowledge truly coexist as equals in a society where legislation and foundational treaties haven't been recognised? Contrary to Indigenous knowledge, Western science is objective and quantitative. Western science is intellectual and literate, but Indigenous knowledge is generally passed down orally. Western science removes its study objects from their crucial context by putting them in simplified and regulated situations (Nakashima & Roue, 2002). Indigenous knowledge always depends on its context and local conditions. Indigenous knowledge systems are comprehensive and don't break observations into divisions like Western science (Laccarino, 2003). Its systems do not perceive reality as a linear cause-and-effect relationship, but as a universe of continually creating multidimensional cycles in which all parts are part of a complex web of relationships (Freeman, 1992).

So, when we consider indigenous knowledge within Aotearoa, how has the colonisation impacted how we can access this resource? In relation of overall wellbeing, colonialism imposed abusive, exploitative, and racist power relations on society, resulting in consistent gains for Pākehā and terrible losses for tāngata whenua (Eruera & Ruwhiu, 2015; Salmond, 1991). For example, in the early 1800's as more European settlers arrived on Aotearoa shores, as too did various infectious diseases, illnesses and unhygienic practices. Māori suffered great loss and the population rate decreased rapidly (Belich, 2001; O'Malley, 2013; Salmond, 1991).

Along with the emergence of new diseases, ailments, and ways of doing things, there was also a significant shift in what was understood to be "normal" or "acceptable" (Durie, 2003). While the Crown was successful in achieving their goals by negotiating the Treaty of Waitangi, they were also successful in achieving their goal of causing trauma to an entire indigenous population (Came & Da Silva, 2011; Hill, 2004). One in which the traumatic effects are still being felt to this day. The narrative of colonial devastation, terrible loss, forced adaptation, and great recovery for Māori illustrates population-level invasions against Māori and is a major strand of Aotearoa's historical trauma (Reid et al., 2014).

As the colonial state continued gaining power and control, Māori were oppressed in speech and practise (Ballara 1986; Belich, 2001; Durie 2003; Reid & Robson, 2007; Walker 1990). Disparities in health and wellness reflect systemic injustice, cruelty, deprivation, and marginalisation that have persisted for decades and been worsened by factors such as the loss of land and economic power, as well as poverty, illness, and racism (Durie, 2003; 2012). From disease epidemics and mass death through land confiscations, uncertain recovery, and urban migration, the loss of land has been a continuous and accumulative process, compounded by racism, discrimination, and marginalisation (Belich, 2001; Durie, 2003; Walker 1990).

According to Durie (2003), Māori see health as inextricably linked to the integrity of the land itself. As awareness of the environment's precarious status spreads across the world, so does the notion that preserving ecological balance is essential to human survival. A wide variety of preventative measures and restoration efforts are now under action on a regional, national, and international scale. By elevating whenua to the status, it deserves as a health factor, we will be able to improve the health and well-being of people on all fronts, from the preservation of humanity to the restoration of the health of individuals (Durie, 2003; 2004; Marsden, 1986).

From this understanding, we can understand why kaimahi who practice from an indigenous knowledge lens will be able to effectively work with Māori whānau – thus providing them opportunity for healing and to thrive (Durie, 2012). Conversely, in current times, it is important to recognise that as Māori we have urbanised (National Business Review, 1998). Rightly or wrongly, this means that western science is also used to better understand and to provide a choice – western vs holistic vs both (Durie, 2004). For example, a social worker may take a Māori tamaiti in state care to their local general practitioner. They have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and have been prescribed the pharmaceutical drug Ritalin. Now this tamaiti has been struggling to concentrate and engage in the classroom and is constantly restless. A Ritalin prescription provides an opportunity for this tamaiti to be able to settle, focus and engage better in the classroom which in turn will provide career opportunities in the future. Or this diagnosis, provides an opportunity for whānau, caregivers and professionals to understand how the mind of this tamaiti operates and

from a holistic approach they can adapt the way they teach, parent, and involve this tamaiti. Ultimately, there is not a wrong answer, however, by giving the whānau a choice with all the current information (both from a western and holistic lens) will enable the whānau and tamaiti to make the best-informed decision that is right for them and their circumstances (Durie, 2004; Viergever, 1999).

By understanding that Māori have a very different way to approaching hauora than Pākehā, it would be expected that an appropriate service is provided. What remains of concern is the over-representation of Māori tamariki and whānau involved in state care and protection (Durie, 2012; Oranga Tamariki Ministerial Advisory Board, 2021). In February 2019, an external evaluation survey was completed on Oranga Tamariki to determine whether Oranga Tamariki were in fact enhancing tamariki and whānau participation and decision making. Love et al., (2019) reports what comes as no surprise, but it is still deeply saddening:

> The numbers of Māori children in care, when compared proportionately with other cultural groups is a testament to systemic failure despite numerous attempts to turn it around. The effects of Māori over-representation in state and non-whānau care impact whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities as well as the tamariki themselves. These impacts are inter-generational and overwhelmingly negative. The development of an indigenous model with whakapapa/genealogy and extended whānau at its heart is a seriously alternative model to those that have been practiced by mainstream social workers, psychologists, and other Crown-institute professionals. It draws deeply from Māori culture rather than the academic training and professional codes of practice that are usually implemented with modest success and worse (p.6).

With the rates of Māori tamariki in state care surpassing those of Pākehā descent, it is time to question whether Oranga Tamariki can whole heartedly implement a culturally response service. A service in which naturally applies indigenous knowledge – specific to the culture in which the whānau can whakapapa too. Last year the Oranga Tamariki Advisory Board (2021) released an initial report outlining the failures of Oranga Tamariki and provided recommendations to address these. While the advisory board provided Oranga Tamariki a timeframe in which to implement these recommendations, only time will tell as to whether Indigenous knowledge and Western Science can co-exist effectively within a statutory agency.

## 1.13 Summary

Overall, this Literature Chapter considered some of the relevant international and national literature regarding social work and health. It explored colonisation and how this has impacted indigenous peoples across generations. It considered how, colonisation and racism interlink and how these further discredit indigenous methods of practice. Colonisation is a process in which the coloniser attempts to abolish another ideology. It is the process in destroying a set of people's culture, home, and way of living. The intentions are to force their way of being as the norm and to criticise and exclude anyone who disagrees. What this demonstrates is how attempts were made over the generations by Māori to declare their tino rangatiratanga, however their voices

were somewhat snuffed out, due to politics and the Pākehā way. As a result, the accumulative trauma that has been endured, has not had time to properly heal. Generations of mokopuna have been affected by this and opportunities lost. For Māori kaimahi, this makes their role incredibly difficult, heavy, and never-ending.

Nonetheless, hope is not completely gone. Small adjustments may have far-reaching consequences. More and more people are coming around to the idea that Te Ao Māori and operating with cultural sensitivity and indigenous knowledge are valid approaches. If this trend keeps up, tamaiti and their whānau will continue to benefit. It's possible for post-colonial effects to go away. Tools, indigenous knowledge, and resources do exist, as alluded to by previous academics and researchers and discussed in this chapter; nevertheless, achieving this goal will need Pākehā and Māori to recognise the history and be prepared and ready to work equally together. Assuring that all tāngata are treated fairly and with respect. With the literature in mind, the next chapter outlines how this study attempts to identify the unique obstacles and possibilities facing kaimahi in mainstream social work settings. It examines the effects of colonisation, racism throughout systems, and how kaimahi and I utilise Māori practise techniques to learn and comprehend more about the challenges and opportunities kaimahi encounter in their everyday mahi.

## Methodology

### 1.14 Overview

The methods employed in this research are described in this chapter. The methods are utilised to meet the goal of this research which is to determine how important parts of Kaupapa Māori contribute to addressing kaimahi issues and possibilities in mainstream social work contexts. I discuss the notion Whai Mātauranga, while considering Kaupapa Māori research and how it plays an important part in not just this research, but also how kaimahi practise. This has made it easier for the researcher to understand Kaupapa Māori, Pūrākau and its theoretical philosophy, by breaking it down into manageable chunks. This methodology chapter will address the following topics: kaupapa Māori research, qualitative research, semi-structures interviews, pūrākau, the researcher, participants and data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations, insider research and limitations.

### 1.15 Kaupapa Māori research

Kaupapa Māori research is conducted by Māori, for Māori, and in collaboration with Māori. It differs from other types of research in which Māori may engage but have no conceptual, design, methodological, or interpretive control. Smith (2015) further supports this statement and discusses how Māori people, like other indigenous peoples, have a separate knowledge tradition that is outside of western perspectives (Pihama et al., 2015). Kaupapa Māori is clear in its overarching goal in which it is an approach or application for Māori to generate positive and sustainable outcomes for all Māori. While it may be used on an individual scale, the impacts it has on the collective is truly the foundational aspects to this research approach (Cram, 2001; Katoa, n.d.).

According to Cram (2001),

> "Kaupapa Māori is an attempt to retrieve space for Māori voices and perspectives. It is also about providing a framework for explaining to tauiwi what we have always been about…[this] also opens up avenues for approaching and critiquing dominant, Western worldviews… [it is] an intervention strategy. The common sense of any society often goes unnamed and therefore unchallenged" (pp. 40-41).

Considering both the quote above and Kaupapa Māori research, I believe creates opportunities for new ways of thinking and comprehending the difficulties kaimahi face in mainstream social work settings. Ruwhiu (2019) argues that understanding Māori knowledge entails more than just gaining access to more cooperative Māori. It is about broadening our perspectives and broadening our knowledge base in ways that benefit ourselves and others. To achieve this, I first needed to identify where the kaimahi fit within the scope of the research. As a Māori wahine who also practices social work in my professional life, this provided scope in which to initiate a Kaupapa Māori approach.

Once I was able to identify myself within the paradigm, it was easier to understand how to best use this to get the desired results – to understand the challenges and opportunities kaimahi face within mainstream social work settings. Not only do I whakapapa Māori, so too were the participants. The outcome, or in other words, the learned knowledge and understanding of the research (Whai Mātauranga in practice), was to understand the experiences the kaimahi participants had, and how these experiences could impact change or understandings within mainstream social work settings.

In addition to understanding one's place within the research, the Kaupapa Māori paradigm invites the researcher to think critically, to consider the different Pākehā constructs that could exist within mainstream social work settings, and how they can directly and/or indirectly impact the kaimahi who participated in this research. This construct of critiquing and exploration is part of the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. Indigenous research organisation Katoa Ltd (n.d.), supports this notion, by stating that to comprehend and depict Māori as Māori, a structural understanding of the historical, political, social, and economic factors (enablers and obstacles) of Māori wellbeing is required. The goal of Kaupapa Māori research is to reclaim power of the narrative (Cram, 2019). First and foremost, this is about having control over how we are portrayed in studies and to ensure that our view is not skewed by Pākehā (Cram, 2019; Smith, 2015). To put things simply, Māori would benefit more from research that is completed by Māori – someone who enlists the ideas and values as tāngata whenua, with the sole purpose of better understanding who Māori are as people, and how this can impact the area that has been researched (Cram, 2019; Katoa, n.d.; Smith, 2015).

As mentioned, I have introduced the notion of Whai Mātauranga in this research methodology. To get to the desired goal, one first must partake in the journey or pursuit of knowledge and understanding. Kaupapa Māori (as a paradigm) is the framework in which this research is conducted. It is a by Māori, for Māori approach to understanding the different challenges and opportunities kaimahi have within mainstream social work settings (Pihama et al., 2015). To conduct this method, the researcher then needed to enlist in design tools and methods to help collate, analyse, and critique the data. The researcher conducted qualitative research to assist in the data collection.

## 1.16 Qualitative Research

Since the objective of this research is to explore how kaimahi construct and re-construct their indigenous practice framework when working in mainstream social services, a qualitative approach was utilised. This approach is the most appropriate way to explore subjective worldviews, understandings, and belief systems of the research participants (Barbour, 2008). As I am proficient in Te Ao Māori, I was able to facilitate all interviews using tikanga and kawa. Being guided by Kaupapa Māori theory means that whakawhanaungatanga is vital for beginning of hui and that time is given to support the rapport building process. Throughout this process I also focussed on ensuring data collected is ultimately beneficial for Māori whānau, hapū and iwi (Bosmann-Watene, 2009).

As identified, qualitative research was used for this research. It has similarities in how Kaupapa Māori theory is used – in the sense that they both derive their information from written and verbal data. Due to the similarities in its application, this made for a more seamless pairing, as they both assist in the exploration and construction of the worldviews of both the participants and the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Individual experiences are acknowledged, according to Nash et al., (2005), since qualitative research recognises that reality is socially produced. The goal of qualitative research is to investigate and conceptualise participants' living experiences (Walsh-Tapiata, 2003). As the research aimed to understand the perspectives of Kaimahi, this process appeared to best fit the research topic.

## 1.17 Semi-structured interviews

The researcher utilised the qualitative tool of individual semi-structured interviews to collate this verbal and written data collection. This style of interview enhanced the opportunity for the researcher and participant to create a more intimate setting (Berg, 2007). It provided space for the interviewer to offer encouragement, empathy, and space to speak freely. This was possible with the six participants since one-on-one, semi-structured interviews promoted open and in-depth kōrero (Walsh-Tapiata, 2003). Qualitative semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewer to use specific open-ended questions to construct a full account to capture and build on problems, themes, and strengths. It delves deeply into personal and sometimes delicate subjects by exploring participants' ideas, feelings, and beliefs about a specific topic (Smith, 1995; Whittaker, 2012).

Semi-structured interviews are typically employed when the researcher has some expertise of the issue and is aware of any potential themes (Barbour, 2008). Semi-structured interviews contain a pre-determined list of questions, but depending on how the kōrero goes, the interviewer may opt not to ask a question or have follow-up questions (Barbour, 2008). This type of research instrument is best suited to exploratory nature research. Given my personal experience as a kaimahi in mainstream social work, structured interviews were considered – however, given the limited academic research completed on this specific topic, semi structured interviews allowed for flexibility depending on the kōrero shared (Barbour, 2008; Berg, 2007). The structured method would have been too limiting and would not have allowed participants to share their perspectives through Pūrākau because the precise structured questions would not have allowed for open-ended responses (Smith, 1995). The advantages of employing this approach, were that they provided participants with a sense of autonomy, allowing them to seek clarification on words, as well as explain their own opinions if they so desired (Hollis-English, 2012; Rautaki Ltd, n.d.).

As a result, the combination of the six semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher and participants to be fluid and adaptable in response to the interview's pre-determined questions (Berg, 2007; Given, 2008). Using a semi-structured interview method, allowed the researcher to use probing questions to further investigate an idea or story being told by the participant. Furthermore, it enabled participants to actively reflect on their own experiences and how they affected themselves, their whānau, and/or their mahi (Gray et al., 2012; Mātena, 2017). As a result, the participants and I could engage with fluidity, reciprocity, and reflexivity (Given, 2008; Gray et al., 2012; Mātena, 2017). When it comes to the research's aim, unstructured interviews could

have been useful for finding and elaborating on essential themes within research objects, however semi-structured interviews encouraged rapport development throughout the interview, which was best suited to this research approach and topic (Chilisa, 2020; Windchief & San Pedro, 2019).

## 1.18 Pūrākau

Pūrākau is the process Māori have used to share important stories, share whakapapa, and pass down information throughout the generations. Pūrākau was therefore a process used to ascertain in depth information around the experiences had of the kaimahi interviewed. Pūrākau fits well with the kaupapa Māori research paradigm as the paradigm is inclusive in that it identifies strengths in other research methods and adapts to these constructs to achieve positive outcomes for Māori research (Lee, 2009; Wirihana, 2012). Along with semi-structured interviews, the notion of Pūrākau was used in this study. Pūrākau believes that we use stories to make sense of and give meaning to our existence. It is a traditional Māori narrative that comprises philosophical ideas, epistemological frameworks, and worldviews that are central to our Māori identity (Elkington, 2011; Lee, 2005, 2009). Pūrākau emerged naturally throughout the interview process as participants utilised stories to explain their perspectives, beliefs, or experiences. As each question was asked, each participant presented different personal and professional accounts. Through story/narration, they were able to provide additional context and feedback. Naturally, the semi-structured, open-ended style questions allowed participants to justify their answers with a specific scenario pertinent to them.

Furthermore, the use of Pūrākau in this research is also used as a methodology within the Kaupapa Māori paradigm as it enabled me to layer narratives one on top of the other. Lee (2005, 2009) theorises Pūrākau as a legitimate method for qualitative research that is critical, interdisciplinary, and cross-cultural. Pūrākau and semi-structured interviews are similar in that Pūrākau refers to stories passed on by Māori, and semi-structured interviews allows participants to share their stories with fluidity (Lee, 2009). Although Pūrākau derives from an oral tradition, it can continue to provide the incentive to write, produce and research in ways that are culturally responsive, thus fitting in well with Kaupapa Māori theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Mātena, 2017). Ellis (1975) asserts that oral tradition can contribute to our contemporary literary activities. He says,

> "The oral arts in Māori should provide continuity and inspiration for written literature. Far from being irrelevant, the traditional arts challenge us to create with artistic integrity and seriousness, in a manner relevant in contemporary experience and dimensions" (p. 438).

As the world changes, we now have the skills to turn the oral narratives bequeathed from our oral narrators into timeless pieces of knowledge - both in written documentation and video or voice recordings (Pihama, 2011; Wirihana, 2012).

## 1.19 Participants and data collection

For this research, a social worker must:

1) Have at least two years' experience in a mainstream social work setting
2) Identify as a social worker/kaimahi and
3) Be Māori and utilise Māori approaches in their practice.

This research recruited six Māori social workers who have worked and/or worked in various mainstream social work settings. Potential volunteers were found by publicising my research in an eye-catching one-page poster on a social media social work forum. After the participants were vetted and recruited, a face-to-face interview was done using Pūrākau, which allowed the participants to participate to the direction of the interview while also providing a space for the participants to discuss their unique opinions and experiences. Two advertisements were posted on the Social Work in Aotearoa New Zealand Facebook group to recruit. Following the publication of the advertising, individuals were encouraged to contact the researcher for more information and screening.

During the recruitment phase, I received multiple messages seeking clarification on the research and the expectations of them. As these questions were answered, I was fortunate to have over 15 participants willing to participate in the research. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances there was a period between this point and being able to implement my interviews where I needed to have a break from this research and focus on my whānau. By the time I returned, only six participants were able to continue. As a first-time researcher, this was a blessing in disguise as it provided me a small, focussed group of wāhine kaimahi to complete my research. According to Hackshaw (2008), "It is often better to test a new research hypothesis in a small number of subjects first. This avoids spending too many resources, e.g., subject, time…" (p. 2).

One disappointing factor was the small amount of negative feedback I received from my advertisement. One Facebook user stated that they thought it was unfair for me to only consider Māori and that I was narrowing my scope. Another Facebook user direct messaged me saying it was disappointing that I am putting spotlight onto this subject as it is not needed. This further supported my rationale for this research and highlights the continued racism within Aotearoa.

I also had some people query why 2 year's or more - experience was needed. My rationale behind this decision was that I needed my participants to be able to draw upon a wide range of social work experience. Anything less than two years, in my opinion did not provide the time, space and learnings of how their respective organisational structures operate.

Bosmann-Watene (2009) believes that when building relationships and trust with Māori it is important to present one's face kanohi ki te kanohi. The timing of this research and in particular the interviews, was during the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic. During the months of April – June 2020, four of the six interviews were conducted over skype, Facebook messenger or zoom. This was dependant on the participant's preference.

Throughout this time, New Zealand went through a nationwide lockdown period to try and eradicate the disease from our country. This meant that I could only communicate virtually. Even though the interviews did not take place in person, we were all able to meet face to face, albeit some of these were online (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Mātena, 2017). What the research does tell us, is that the world is becoming more accepting of online forms of meeting. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Facebook video calling – just to name a few applications - all provide the ability for two or more people to stay connected no matter the distance. Archibald et al., (2019) even suggests that video interviews can be more effective as they are cost effective, simple to use and can occur in the comfort of your own space. Pihama and Lipsham (2020) reflected on some of the approaches Māori implemented during this time to stay connected. They spoke about the Manaakitanga of Māori communities and how they remained safe (with regards to the virus) but connected via other streams. "… social media became a necessary tool…with initiatives such as…uploading self-isolation videos, online karakia (blessings), tamariki (children) sessions and disseminating information regarding food and wellbeing..." (p. 96).

In the last few decades, technical advances in internet growth have expanded the experience of online interviewing in qualitative research and decreased the challenges associated with face-to-face interviews (Hooley et al., 2012). Has opened up the use of video interviewing as a legitimate interview approach. Both online and in person interviews generate interactive conversation with direct probing at the same time. For the presence of nonverbal and social indicators, the interaction utilising the online web camera will be comparable to the in-person interview (Stewart & Williams, 2005; Sullivan, 2012). However, a webcam's "head view" will make it difficult to see all the participants' body language (Cater, 2011). Online video calling methods can help respondents who are unable to participate in face-to-face interviews, due to various reasons, participate in research. As a result, the interviews took place in more comfortable settings for the participants. My concern about not being able to meet kanohi ki te kanohi was alleviated by the flexibility online interviews provided. However, through virtual interviews there was still potential for a disruptive atmosphere which could have an impact on participants concentration and data collection (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013). Access to verbal and nonverbal cues in online interviews can give the same level of authenticity as face-to-face interviews since it allows a visible element of the impression management process to be examined (Sullivan, 2012). Virtual interviews, on the other hand, may encourage more honest and open self-presentation than in-person ones, according to some studies (Bargh et al., 2002; Ellison et al., 2006).

Whether the semi-structured interview was conducted in person or online, I always opened and closed the interview with karakia to establish a safe place for discussion and to remind each person why we are having this kōrero. After Karakia, whakawhanaungatanga was shared by hearing one's pepeha. This process strengthens the relationship and builds trust through the connections created between the researcher and participant (Ruwhiu & Ruwhiu, 2005; Smith, 2012).

The six interviews ranged from fifty minutes to two and a half hours, and they were transcribed by the researcher into a word document for analysis. The researcher also had handwritten records to capture the non-verbal and verbal data to enhance the research data (O'Leary, 2010). Throughout the six kōrero, there were moments where the interview became quite heavy due to the experiences of the kaimahi. During these

moments, it was important for me to listen and observe what the kaimahi were saying and how their non-verbal cues were placed. This helped me identify some of the themes that kaimahi were passionate about. Conversely, due to the nature of the kōrero, it was important that prior to closing the hui with karakia, I acknowledged the mahi the kaimahi did, the Pūrākau shared and their contribution to this research and Māori social work in Aotearoa.

The six people who took part in the study came from a wide range of social work experiences and educational backgrounds. Pseudonyms are used throughout this article to protect the privacy of the kaimahi who are mentioned. The following is a succinct synopsis of each alias's background and work history in mainstream social work at the time of the interview.

| Name | Age and job experience |
| --- | --- |
| Anahera | Is between the age 25-40. She has eight years of experience and has worked in schools, health, community and most recently within statutory services. |
| Kaia | Is also between 25-40 and has worked in the social work field for around six years. During this time, she has experience three roles: prison reform, mental health and rangatahi support. |
| Manaia | Is between 25-40 years old and has a been in the social work field for 10 years. Of this she has worked in health, care and protection, schools, and refugee services. She has had roles as both a social worker, and in upper management. |
| Ngaire | Is in the 35-60 age range and has had over 18 years' experience in social work. She has worked both on the frontline and in management and has worked across the social work field. |
| Pania | Is in the 35-60 age range and has 21 years' experience. She has worked within mental health, rangatahi support, care and protection and community. She has experience as a frontline worker and within management. |
| Tia | Is in the 25-40 age range and has two years' experience. She has only worked within the statutory context. |

## 1.20 Data Analysis

Pūrākau is an approach used by more Māori academics as it is honouring narrative inquiry and the participants' voices (Lee, 2009; Wirihana, 2012). As Māori voices and experiences are often missing from research, Pūrākau has significance for Kaupapa Māori research as the participants are not marginalised by the research process. Wirihana (2012) believes that "the intent of narrative inquiry is to use research to empower Māori on the margins to tell their story" (p. 207).

Pūrākau informed the data analysis stage. As the participants shared their thoughts, key themes naturally presented themselves. Regarding the practical steps used to analyse the data, Pūrākau was used to collect and reference the stories to share my findings via these key themes. By sharing part of a story through quotations, the researcher was then able to elaborate on how this supports or disagrees with the research aims and to draw out any conclusions.

## 1.21 Ethical Considerations

Before beginning data collection, an ethics review process was undertaken. After a thorough ethical analysis and discussion with my supervisors, the project was deemed and registered as low risk on the Massey University Human Ethics Committee portal. To outline and conduct this research, the researcher utilised "*The principles of the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants"* to help support the research process (Massey University, 2015). These principles comprised of informed and voluntary consent, confidentiality, avoidance of conflict of interest, justice, social and cultural sensitivity. Since this study is researching kaimahi within mainstream social work settings, the researcher drew upon the Māori ethical principles when undertaking her interviews.

To ensure that cultural and ethical considerations was the foundation to this research, I enlisted in the ethos of academics Pipi et al (2004) and Smith (1999). These scholars discussed the importance of incorporating the following principles:

- aroha ki te tāngata (a respect for people)
- kia tupato (be cautious)
- kaua e takahia te mana o te tāngata (to be respectful)

While seemingly simple, these highlight key attributes tāngata whenua typically adhere to in their personal and professional lives. It is a way of life and a way of understanding. These can offer guidance and provide strong foundations when seeking solutions and/or resolutions (Pepi et al., 2004; Smith 1999).

In practise, aroha ki te tāngata (respect for people) is simply creating a place for participants to create their own space and connect on their terms (Cram, 2001; Smith, 1999). The semi-structured interview process, as well as defining participant rights and developing whakawhanaungatanga through pepeha, were critical in creating a place of trust and openness (Cram, 2001; Walsh-Tapiata, 1998). The researcher also gave participants time to recount their narratives without prodding them for precise replies. This displayed regard for the process as well as regard for the participants' actual experience. Listening to and absorbing the kōrero of the participants (Pipi et al., 2004).

Kia tupato (ensuring no harm) is about being politically smart, culturally sensitive, and self-aware of our insider/outsider position. It serves as a reminder to researchers to be conscious of their own methods and to be politically alert while interviewing participants (Pipi et al., 2004). The researcher ensured that karakia was delivered during the semi-structured interviews to root us in the Kaupapa and keep us secure. According to

Ruwhiu and Ruwhiu (2005), this method is important to the purpose and promoting open dialogue in a secure and understanding atmosphere. One person refused to utilise karakia and chose to begin the kōrero right away. I then acknowledged why we were meeting and proceeded with their pepeha to build rapport and to open the interview. While the researcher respected this decision, through use of pepeha and acknowledgement, it recognised the cultural need to keep the researcher safe in a way that did not stomp on the mana of the participant.

Kia tupato was also recognised by the utilisation of interview space. The researcher gave participants the option of postponing interviews till kanohi ki te kanohi was attained, however, only one participant to this offer on and chose an in-person interview. The rest were completed virtually. Furthermore, the researcher provided the participants the opportunity to alter, review, or withdraw the interview transcripts at their choice, which they all declined.

The concept of Kaua e takahia te mana o te tāngata (to be respectful) revolves around the idea of brainstorming ideas with people, publishing research findings, and providing community input that keeps people informed about the research methods and findings (Fabish, 2006; Pipi et al., 2004). This was accomplished gently using the mana enhancing approach, in which the researcher took a tuakana teina (elder and younger sister or teacher and student) philosophy/strategy. This accepted that participants were the experts on the transforming characteristics of Kaupapa Māori social work, while the researcher was the learner (Hook et al., 2007; Walsh-Tapiata, 1998). Furthermore, all participants' workplaces and any other identifying information are kept private to safeguard the participants.

## 1.22 Insider research

There are inherent methodological dangers in "insider" research, according to Smith (2005). They include the possibility of bias, a lack of distance and objectivity, and conflating the research position with an advocacy one. According to Tauri (2010), this is fascism that represents mainstream scholars' efforts to stifle indigenous research. Kiro (2000) agrees and believes that good indigenous research should be conducted by an indigenous or insider researcher since "it takes one to know one". As a result, these scholars' perspectives on insider research, reinforce the Kaupapa of Māori research, which is predicated on the idea that only an insider can appreciate changes in social phenomena impacting research participants. This thesis attempts to contribute to Māori social work research by investigating the challenges and opportunities of mainstream social work settings.

## 1.23 Limitations

When working with whānau Māori, this research positioned kaimahi as cultural and professional specialists inside their mainstream jobs. While this may be by default owing to their ethnicity, the purpose of this study was to illustrate and emphasise how they used their values and beliefs in their profession, in accordance with their worldview and their workplace. It considered how they were raised as well as their life experiences

(Walsh-Tapiata, 2003). While this study included just six participants, the goal was to assist the first-time researcher in gaining a high level of personal, professional, and cultural understanding into the topic at hand that connected with other kaimahi in terms of significance and insights gained.

The placement of the Māori researcher is significant in Kaupapa Māori research since it introduces inherent bias (Bell, 2003; Hollis-English 2005; 2012; Smith, 1999). With prior expertise and personal understanding on the subject, I made this fact clear and intended to include strong reflective practises throughout the study. This study has transferability in terms of its significance for different kaimahi because of this placement and the positioning of the participants (O'Leary, 2010).

Due to the small number of research participants, this study is not necessarily generalisable to all kaimahi working in Aotearoa mainstream social work settings. However, the sample was kept small in design, since Kaupapa Māori research implies that knowledge is heterogeneous and that there is no universal understanding (Bell, 2003; Hollis-English, 2012). There are inherent methodological dangers in "insider" research, according to Smith (2006). They include the possibility of bias, a lack of distance and objectivity, and conflating the research position with an advocacy one. This research's legitimacy is based on the participants, the study, and the transferability of meaning to other social workers.

## 1.24 Summary

This chapter described the research methodology and techniques. To integrate with the whole paradigm, the justification for using Kaupapa Māori theory with Pūrākau, while pulling from qualitative and mainstream techniques was outlined. The technique employed in this research was a collaboration of methods that recognises the strengths and shortcomings of each method and instruments used. Overall, it considered the fact that reality is partially socially produced. Using semi-structured and Pūrākau to allow for storytelling, provided a wide diversified collection of worldviews, while letting participants freely express themselves. The outcomes are discussed further in the discussion and findings chapters.

# Findings

## 1.25 Overview

This chapter presents the findings from the Pūrākau provided by the participants. Through kōrero, the participants reflected and shared their experiences of how their culture impacted their social work practice and how these resulted in various challenges and opportunities. This chapter contains direct excerpts from the kaimahi voices and is divided into the primary themes identified through the thematic analysis.

The kaimahi who took part in this study have shared their stories in this chapter. This section delves deeper into participant comments about the highs and lows of working as a Māori social worker in a variety of traditional service settings. Occasionally, kaimahi might use profane language while relating an experience or event. I've kept these parts in so the reader can get a sense of the passion and sincerity that went into what was stated. As said by Moyle:

> "The stories of whānau are precious; they are the torch that cuts a pathway through the Pākehā fog. They talk of the past, of what is right and wrong, of where we come from; they light the way forward. Capture them so that they are not lost" (2014, p. 56).

At the beginning of this thesis, three key aims were identified. These were to identify how kaimahi:

1. Navigate the challenges and opportunities of mainstream social work settings.
2. Integrate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing.
3. Record and acknowledge indigenous practice frameworks when working in mainstream social work settings.

Dual responsibility, expectation versus reality and burnout and fatigue were the clear challenges my kaimahi experienced. Whereas the opportunities kaimahi spoke about were specifically around specialised caseloads, for Māori by Māori and natural connections. The last part of this chapter explores themes related to the third aim. It considers the differences in how kaimahi acknowledge and record indigenous practice frameworks within mainstream social work settings.

### 1.25.1 What were the challenges kaimahi faced in Mainstream social work?

Each of the Kaimahi were upfront and transparent regarding their mahi, the volume of work they had to do, and their ability to produce outcomes. This made it possible for the kōrero to flow, and it helped provide a deeper understanding of the challenges experienced in their different mainstream social work organisations. The themes introduced in this first section are dual responsibility, racism and burnout and fatigue.

## 1.26 Dual responsibility

All six of the participants discussed the issue of dual responsibility affecting them and their practice. Dual responsibility was described by one participant as “a hidden clause in everyone’s job description” (Manaia). It was viewed as a hidden clause in a job description for kaimahi Māori who had additional expectations placed on them in the workplace because they were Māori.

Anahera spoke about her experience in the following way: “I signed my contract expecting to manage my own shit, but soon found out there was a hidden ‘invisible’ clause in which I was also advisor of all things Māori”. The participant went on to discuss how this increased her workload and meant that in a normal workday, she was struggling to meet the “daily demands of the job. (Anahera).

This is a significant issue because it creates additional workload and can lead to burnout. Kaia also had this experience and felt pressure to do this extra work to support best practice with whānau.

> “Managing my own caseload was hard enough, let alone the mentoring and coaching I was providing my Pākehā colleagues in order for the whānau Māori they were working with, were getting quality practice and a fair chance. This is what you want for whānau”.

Of interest, was the different tolerance levels or ability to manage additional responsibility between the different ages and stages of the participants. The younger interviewees (25-35 years) typically spoke about being unable, or lacking confidence, to push back and stick to their job description. Anahera felt that “If I didn’t provide the support, that whānau would not receive a service or be understood correctly”. This was further supported by Kaia when she said that “being Māori in health care means that you are going to get better outcomes for whānau. You carry this responsibility”.

While these statements are very confronting, it really identifies some of the key daily challenges kaimahi face. Throughout the different kōrero, I got the feeling that most of my participants expect to do more than their Pākehā counterpart as they are the experts in comparison. This feeling was a result of the facial expressions and tone in my participants voices. The look of [meh, well someone’s got to do it]. The older generation commented throughout their kōrero about getting into social work to provide quality service to whānau Māori and with that comes additional responsibility because of what you put on you. For example, interviewees touched on different aspects of dual responsibility, such as:

> “My tīpuna would be proud that I am working with Māori” (Ngaire).

> “On one hand I am a social worker for the crown, but on the other hand I am Māori who will also apply cultural understanding and mainstream policy together” (Pania).

Pania and Ngaire also spoke about their confidence in themselves and being able to advocate for fairness and equity. Part of this is around boundary setting and being able to implement them when someone expects you to step outside this.

> "I had spent the last 15 years saying yes to helping my colleagues but realised that it was their responsibility to upskill, not mine. That's when I started pushing back on management and focussed on my whānau and their outcomes" (Pania).

> "I have been around enough to know they will use and abuse you" (Ngaire).

When kōrero was being shared, the participants naturally spoke about being Māori and how this impacted their workload. Kaia said:

> "I am fair skinned, and as soon as my supervisor found out I was Māori, my entire caseload became all the difficult Māori whānau no one wanted to work with".

Whereas Anahera had an uncomfortable experience when starting her new role – where her team cheered at her welcome party.

> "They all celebrated OUT LOUD [raising arms in frustration] the fact that I was Māori because it meant that they didn't have to work those cases".

Anahera rolled her eyes and shrugged the comment off as if to suggest this was normal behaviour. It is worrying hearing these stories as the first competency to be a registered social worker in Aotearoa is to demonstrate "competence to practice social work with Māori". The inability of Anahera's co-workers to display the skill of maintaining relationships that are mana enhancing, self-determining, courteous, conscious of cultural distinctiveness, and recognise cultural identity has been made obvious in just one incident (Social Workers Registration Board, N.d). This led me to think about the idea of dual responsibility, and how it was pervasive throughout the collection of kōrero; it is also evident that there were clear examples of racism both intentional and unintentional, as I did not hear any stories about this expectation being placed upon their Pākehā colleagues.

Another upsetting kōrero shared was by Pania who has worked with the industry for some time. She recalled her initial years and how certain events within that time, impacted her ability to provide quality social work, in addition to what set her back.

> "I read on a previous [legal document] that there was 'no good family members' for this child to go to and that the family 'was entrenched in drugs and alcohol'… I later found out there had been no whakapapa search nor attempts to gather whānau for a hui… I needed to change this… this whānau

> deserved better then judgey and harmful statements. There may be unsafe people in this whānau, but not ALL whānau are bad”.

These statements pinpoint the different levels of dual responsibility. While some may view it as an opportunity to teach, guide and support their colleagues in working and responding correctly to whānau and their needs – others see dual responsibility as a systemic and partially racist issue where there is an inherited expectation that these kaimahi will do more than their role and without appropriate compensation. Dual responsibility is therefore a blessing and a curse. It can be seen as an opportunity as it is the chance to demonstrate and educate your fellow colleagues. However, it serves as a challenge as it creases workload which can lead into multiple consequences, such as burnout and fatigue.

## 1.27 Racism

Within the mainstream social workspace, kaimahi spoke about the different expectations and how this created divides between their colleagues and Māori Kaimahi. Some felt that these expectations were borderline racist and often, their colleagues would not realise they were doing this. Manaia stated:

> “There were some colleagues who would try to learn and implement Te Ao Māori principles but then there was others who would not even try to pronounce a name correctly or check to see if the spelling was correct”.

Kaia discussed racism within the office and its use of Te Reo in the workplace.

> “My Pākehā colleague questioned why I used [Ngā mihi and Kia ora] in my emails and whether that was compulsory. She told me that it isn’t important and that most people won’t even know what I am saying. I was so furious, I had to walk away. My supervisor at the time didn’t know what to do, so as a new social worker I just had to accept it and keep working”.

This experience highlights some of the overt challenges kaimahi have when working in mainstream social work settings. Considering Māori statistics within the health care system are already high – having this experience is indicative of how slowly the nation is adjusting to the multicultural nation that Aotearoa is.

While racism was specifically expressed by Kaia and Manaia, the remaining four participants did speak to the different types of expectations and realities in which they lived and practiced. While some examples did not demonstrate overt racism, they did highlight concerns regarding cultural misunderstanding, ignorance, and avoidance.

> "It was an expectation that I would lead karakia and waiata because I was fluent in Te Reo. I can't even hold a tune, so I was the worst person to be asking in that sense. It did feel somewhat tokenistic. But on occasions, some of my colleagues would offer to lead" (Anahera).

> "My supervisor and manager had a performance and development session with me to go over my… goals… They told me that I was valuable and able to connect with Māori rangatahi better than others so they would only be giving me these cases. I really wanted to develop my skills in other areas, but I was expected to be ok with this" (Tia).

When we spoke about culture, Manaia spoke about how she did not even feel "Māori", saying: "when I first started social work, I was still trying to find who I was. I didn't even know my marae but was expected to be a whakapapa expert. The reality for me was that I was just as fresh as my Pākehā colleagues and felt inadequate".

All the kaimahi were unanimous in that there were always expectations on being the "go to Māori" *(Ngaire)* in the office and that in reality, they weren't always the best person to go to.

> "While I was confident in my own whakapapa, I wasn't always able to help whānau with their whakapapa search. I didn't grow up on my Marae and lived overseas, it meant that the connections my colleagues thought I had – I didn't" (Pania).

Ngaire shared kōrero comparing her younger self to the matured social worker she is now.

> "When I first started out, I guessed A LOT. I pretended I knew what I was doing because I thought that's what my bosses wanted. I was scared to lose my job, so I became a yes man. It wasn't until I took some extended leave that I realised I can't please everyone, and I can't keep social working through a white lens. I almost changed my practice overnight".

Both Anahera and Tia spoke about how they differed to their Pākehā colleagues and how there were examples of unconscious racism displayed by their colleagues.

> "During Māori language week me and my Māori colleagues had to lead some basic Te Reo training to the whole site, whereas my Pākehā colleagues didn't have to lead any training whatsoever" (Anahera).
>
> "Why do I have to be the one who leads karakia? It's just sucks…" (Tia)

Key characteristics of unconscious racism, including how Pākehā might display genuine lack of understanding or care, were identified by Anahera and Tia. Given that cultural responses are a requirement of social worker registration in Aotearoa, the inability of individual professionals to participate or interact would be a setback.

## 1.28 Burnout and fatigue

Completion of work was a challenge for most of the participants. Without asking leading questions, when participants were provided opportunity to share a challenge they have had or have at work the topic of completion of administrative work was a common theme. This then inevitable led into burnout or fatigue.

> "I don't know a single social worker that is able to be on top of all their work. Pākehā or Māori, the work is always endless" (Manaia).

Other statements such as "…the endless tasks and expectations" (Ngaire) and "little tolerance for patience" (Kaia) was shared in our interview spaces – however what eventuated was some participants linking their experiences to fatigue and burnout. This did not only occur in the workspace but also in their personal environments.

> "I was often so exhausted from the day, that I couldn't engage with my partner. There were times where we would argue… all I could talk about was my work and the issues…" (Kaia).

> "There was little tolerance for allowing whānau weeks and months… to demonstrate sustained changes. The legal and policy expectations don't mesh well with Te Ao Māori ways. I would often advocate fiercely against my supervisor and manager which in turn I – I guess, burnt me out. I was struggling with sleep and constantly eating junk food" (Tia).

What wasn't unanimous was the resilience levels between participants. Pania was able to articulate how she has always been able to push back and stick to her role.

> "I have never burnt out in my 10 years of practice. I really think it's because I can be a bitch and push back. Some of my bosses knew not to challenge me and found out quickly that I would involve the union if I felt I was being treated unfairly".

Although a few could pinpoint instances of fatigue and burnout they had experienced, these scenarios have shown me how varying tolerance levels are required depending on the work environment and task at hand. Of course, context is everything, but it's evident that both Māori and Pākehā experience high rates of burnout and exhaustion.

> "The work that I was doing couldn't be done in normal work hours, so I often started early and finished late. When I didn't have kids, it was somewhat ok, but it did affect my social life" (Kaia).

Tia spoke about her experiences of reaching breaking point:

> “I got so much pressure to complete my own case work targets, that I would not always provide a quality service. My [Pākehā] supervisor didn’t understand that whānau need time and that timeframes are not always going to produce outcomes. I ended up closing cases too early and whānau ended up regressing and returning to our services. The work I was doing was only causing me to feel stressed, unsupported, and unsatisfied”.

Like Tia’s experience, Anahera faced another challenge in her working environment:

> “When I was helping my colleagues with specific whānau, I was also expected to write case notes, attend consults, and provide cultural support to my colleague. It made it tough to complete my own planned work when I was also helping other colleagues do theirs”.

Burnout and fatigue are real life symptoms that these kaimahi faced at different times of their career. These kaimahi were faced with significant challenges that tested their productivity, longevity and most importantly outcomes for whānau Māori.

## 1.29 What were the opportunities for kaimahi within mainstream social work?

Even though dual responsibility was highlighted as a negative aspect of one’s mahi, it can also be seen as an opportunity. While none of my participants spoke about their experiences of dual responsibility as a positive, when they started to discuss their personal opportunities, I was able to connect how the dual responsibility gave them the required skillset that possibly allowed for this opportunity to occur. The next three themes I will be discussing will be specialised caseloads, for Māori-by Māori and natural connections.

### 1.29.1 Specialised caseload

Most of my participants found that the majority of their caseload/workloads consisted of Māori whānau. More interestingly, some complex whānau whom have had difficulties engaging with previous social workers. What this tells me is the expertise of these social workers. It evidences some specialised abilities that not all workers can do. For our kaimahi it was apparent that they could do what there Pākehā colleagues could not. In addition, it was made clear that these specialised abilities produced positive outcomes for whānau which they previously were unable to achieve.

> “…. often referred to as aggressive or difficult. Some of my work mates would often talk about my whānau in derogatory ways. It’s like they assumed the whole whānau were the same, with the same issues…” (Manaia).

> “Working within [health care] as a Māori Liaison, all my referrals were Māori. My role with engaging with whānau was simple. What was difficult was the doctors and nurses not always seeing the patient as a whānau or the possible environmental issues… I was always explaining to the staff basic tikanga” (Kaia).

Another kōrero shared was the “golden gems” (Ngaire) picked up along the way. The comments, stories, or words of wisdom bestowed on the kaimahi when they need it the most. When these moments occur, there are times where this shifts your view and helps the practitioner gain a different perspective. Whereas, on other occasions – provides opportunities to change one’s mindset.

> “As a previous [state social worker], I remember complaining about how I was only allocated the cases nobody wanted or was too afraid to work with. And yup, you guessed it, they were Māori. I complained about how hard engagement was and the various issues of communication… And I will always remember what my boss said to me… she goes, it is not about expecting whānau to engage, it is about inspiring them to make changes with or without you... It was [that] moment I reflected on what I was doing. I was unpacking trauma, unpacking distrust and it was something that no one else had previously done” (Pania).

In addition to mindset changes, another kōrero shared was how Ngaire was challenged to work with a specialised matter – which tested her abilities and helped her further progress their kete of knowledge, awareness, and sound practice.

> “A social worker invited me to a hui with one of her whānau and asked me to facilitate it as this whānau can be verbally and physically aggressive towards kaimahi… I was only given two days’ notice. I ended up having to support, otherwise the meeting wouldn’t go ahead and I didn’t want that whānau to miss out. Despite the short time frame, I changed the venue to a more neutral space – with agreement, and organised for kai to be delivered… I told the social worker that she needed to allow the family to kōrero and raise concerns - not her tell them what the issue is. The social worker was hesitant but listened. I facilitated the hui, followed usual tikanga. I set the kaupapa and called it a wananga to kōrero, to whakarongo and to ensure the tamariki were safe…”

The specialised caseloads highlighted the different opportunities within this specific theme. For instance, one participant spoke about her time within the state and health settings.

> “I never said anything, but somehow, I was always given rangatahi. I never really wanted to work with teenagers but somehow, they found me” (Pania).

Despite being assigned to this position, there were other unexpected opportunities for employment fulfilment and purpose. Pania was able to broaden their skill set as a social worker and could utilise this experience to highlight some crucial key traits that employers look for when applying for other professions.

> “The more I worked in this field, the more I realised I had a knack for working with teenagers. I was able to talk to them on their level, and learnt a whole bunch of lingo… When I decided I needed a change of scenery, I was able to talk about the different youth programmes I created - with no budget might I add – and how I could not only co-ordinate events but also apply therapeutic and social work interventions” (Pania).

From the beginning of our conversation, Manaia brought up the topic of supervision, noting that it allowed for time to reflect and organise one's thoughts before attempting a challenging activity. The phrase "specialised caseload" has a broader and more generic connotation here.

> “When I worked for [the state] my supervisor and I would often have consultations, de-briefs, and planning hui. When I was a new grad, I would talk about different models of practice like Te Whare Tapa Whā or Bronfenbrenner and how they fit within my practice…. I would break down our concerns and discuss which model of practice worked best for the whānau and why…. It all was recorded so that if the whānau requested their notes – would be able to see why we made the decisions we made” (Ngaire).

The use of supervision and how it enabled the implementation of quality practises and checks and balances. In the end, helping the participant's whānau. One of my seasoned participants also mentioned that a certain social work procedure had enabled her to provide quality care by promoting collective rather than isolated decision-making.

> “When we work in a Māori way, we must change how we look and use the mainstream process’s that are in place……On the Marae pre-colonisation, whānau all worked together to benefit them all. They worked as a community, as a collective helping each other to succeed. If I was to apply that same kaupapa to my whānau, it would mean that I would be involving everyone, right from the beginning. Not just mum and dad, but nan, koro, aunty, uncle and all the cousins…. I was always late with my KPI’s [key performance indicators] … But my work was always tika” (Pania).

Specialised caseloads are just one example on how my kaimahi viewed an opportunity. It represented a belief and expectation that these social workers were able to provide quality and expert practice to even the most complex cases.

### 1.29.2 For Māori-by-Māori

Four out of six of my participants spoke specifically about a for-Māori-by-Māori approach, sharing similar views and experiences:

> "I became a social worker to help Māori thrive and navigate the system. As a Māori you just get it and having the ability to only work with Māori was awesome" (Tia).

> "I've been a social worker for almost two decades, and while there are some amazing social workers out there, for-Māori-by Māori approach tends to work far better. The tamariki and whānau would call me whaea, nan or aunty. I would tell them off like your nanny would on the marae... I was relatable" (Ngaire).

> "...During a hui I realised we could whakapapa to the same marae. I then spent hours rationalising to my boss why I could still work the case and how I could ensure a non-biased decision. Whānau from both sides wanted me to remain and they even wrote an email to my boss… The whānau did so well and engaged" (Manaia).

> "What I liked about the Māori liaison role in the hospital was that it recognised the need for a Māori response" (Anahera).

Pania and Kaia did raise the exception to the rule type scenarios.

> "Sometimes, being Māori wasn't always helpful, it actually causes anxiety for one māmā as it was a reminder of her abuse…Just like therapists, you must allow the client to figure out who is the right fit. No use forcing engagement when there isn't that connection" (Pania).

When listening to the Pūrākau of the participants, being a Māori practitioner within mainstream social work context, is both a blessing and a curse. Kaimahi shared their examples of how being Māori helped them get through doors, helped them connect fast and helped them understand the unspoken cultural nuances. But at the same time, being Māori meant there was an expectation that you will be able to produce better results than your Pākehā colleague or just intrinsically know how to walk, talk, and behave like a Māori.

> "Sometimes I felt like a fraud. Whānau would look at me as if I was a plastic Māori" (Tia).

Whereas Manaia felt the opposite:

> "Basic tikanga principles and Te Reo felt comfortable for me to use. I would always implement this the best I could when visiting whānau as I wanted them to know I respected them. This helped them feel safe".

Then there were participants who were in specific roles that worked only with Māori whānau. This allowed for natural opportunities when implementing Māori models and theories. And reality of one's practice come together nicely.

> "My role was to work with acute Māori rangatahi. I needed to be able to react and respond in real time. While this job was chaotic and a hot mess, there was a lot of opportunities for open kōrero about their hauora and for me to implement basic principles of Te Whare Tapa Whā and the Harakeke model" (Ngaire).

> "If you are admitted in hospital and you tick the Māori box on the forms they provide you, I must introduce myself and how I can support by the end of each day. The first thing I usually do is introduce myself in Te Reo and my role. If whānau or an individual want to kōrero I usually offer a cuppa tea spend the first moments doing whakawhanaungatanga" (Kaia).

There were also Pūrākau of specific memories of inter agencies collaborating in a for Māori-by-Māori approach which appeared to not be that common but of huge value. The remark below shows how standard social work settings can negatively affect Māori outcomes.

> "When whānau are referred to Family Group Conference the tamariki are entitled to receive a paediatric health and education assessment. This is normally done in the hospital in a room like the doctors you'd go to... I needed to be creative… The Māori liaison and I secured a large room and brought along toys and kai. We organised for dental, optometrist, mental health, and the paediatrician to all be available at the same time to complete basic health checks on this whānau – in the same space. The whole whānau were invited to come tautoko the kids and parents" (Manaia).

The bulk of my respondents highlighted the potential of a Māori-by-Māori strategy. It validated their expertise as a professional and their commitment to Māori principles. It was a chance for the whānau to work with a professional who shares their cultural background and has an innate grasp of what it means to be Māori. Since the professional and client shared interests, establishing a connection was much easier. Having this assurance eases your mind when collaborating with professionals.

#### 1.29.3 Natural Connections

What became apparent in the kōrero shared, was how the kaimahi were able to relate and connect through natural connections. Whakawhanaungatanga in action was clear and sometimes referred to without the kupu being used. As Māori, principles of Te Ao Māori are often practiced without being spoken about. Ngaire described how she was able to work with a nan who was looking after her mokopuna because their māmā was in hospital.

> “My client was the mother of this whānau, but because she was needing treatment which would make her unable to care for her tamariki, nan had to fill in this role. Nan was elderly and didn’t have the energy to keep up with her three mokopuna…. I organised for the tamariki to be enrolled in a holiday programme and after school care at no cost to the whānau. It allowed for nan to tidy the home, make kai, and spend time with her daughter”.

This story demonstrates aroha in action, as she took the time to listen and understand the needs of this whānau. She then applied her own local knowledge to connect this whānau to supports and opportunities. Natural connections, as illustrated by this participant, can resemble the simple acts of service that enable whānau to remain connected and supported. Further supporting this theme, Manaia spoke about their idea of connections:

> “Being raised Pākehā, I didn’t always know how to be Māori… since doing my own whakapapa research I now realise the importance of connections and knowing where you come from. This is a big priority for me. Ensuring the whānau I work with have the opportunity to be supported to find their connections”.

The theme of natural connections could be seen throughout the different kōrero shared with me. Tia spoke about the different ways she was able to connect more effectively than her Pākehā colleague.

> “I took my shoes off at the door and said yes to the cup of tea they offered. I chose to listen and build rapport rather than explain the concerns that had previously been raised. My co-worker spent the entire meeting with her head down writing note… My client was distracted by what she was writing”.

Another example shared was:

> “Sometimes it’s as simple as pronouncing their names correctly and offering karakia or kai... nothing major…. This always helped me connect a lot quicker” (Manaia).

There were also the unspoken cues, the phrases or expressions used, that as Māori, the kaimahi just understood but with their Pākehā counterpart, some explaining was needed.

> “A dad told me that the reason he didn’t have a relationship with his adult son was because he tried to be a tough guy. When we left the whare my Pākehā colleague had no clue what that meant. I had to explain in simple terms that his son attempted to fight his dad... it was stuff like that, that made me question what the social worker would have written or concluded if I didn’t translate for her” (Anahera).

Anahera further spoke about the following:

> "Māori women can often have different ways of making their views known. I refer to it as their Pūkana eyes. By watching their eyes, you can pick up on how they are feeling and sometimes direct the kōrero. It's hard to explain, but their eyes tell a story, my Pākehā colleagues just don't get it".

Pania spoke about how being Māori helped her get through the door.

> "I had to transport this mum and her child to a doctor's appointment. They had already missed five appointments. When I arrived, mum yelled out the window that she wasn't coming. I stood by the car, and just told her to haere mai and kia tere. I just waited and she eventually came out. She told me no one had spoken to her like that, and it was refreshing".

Constructing a manufactured version of a natural connection is unattainable. It comes down to a shared history, common language, or common ancestry. With these assets at your disposal, it can assist in being able to make connections that foster productive relationships, effective and sustainable outcomes.

## 1.30 How did kaimahi integrate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing?

To support in whānau wellbeing, kaimahi spoke about the different examples in which that integrated their personal, professional, and cultural roles. This took many different forms. Some of the examples already highlighted above helped me understand that sometimes a combination of all three occurs in one's practice to achieve whānau wellbeing. There were other examples of isolating each to stay focussed on the end goal. For example:

> "Whakawhanaungatanga requires a bit of vulnerability. You share who you are with whānau and may even find some connections. This vulnerability though helps you build rapport a lot quicker with whānau which enables you to address the root issues a lot faster" (Kaia).

> "If whānau feel like you are relatable, they are more willing to trust your feedback and support" (Manaia).

> "Process and policy hold us accountable and keeps us grounded in sound decision making, but demonstrating and applying tikanga helps connection, helps to build trust, and helps to build relationships" (Ngaire).

As examples were shared there were three key themes that I picked up on. These were Navigating different spaces, lived experiences and quality and thorough practice.

### 1.30.1 Navigating different spaces

There appeared to be times where kaimahi had to navigate between social worker supporting whānau, to social worker becoming whānau. This kōrero was interesting to listen to as each kaimahi had all experienced either blurring the lines themselves or observing that of others.

> "When you work with a person for a long time, you can develop an unconscious bias. It is important that despite the relationship and trust that is built, you unpack and seek further information from others to ensure you aren't being blindsided" (Tia).

> "When clients slip up, you work with them through it, and hope that they will make changes for the next time. However, if the next time rolls around and you continue to make excuses – that's when lines can become crossed and poor decision making is made" (Manaia).

There were specific moments where the kaimahi were able to be vulnerable and share something personal to build rapport and then there were times where this did not work out the way in which was first intended.

> "I once tried to connect with a rangatahi about their mental health by telling them a little about my history with anxiety. The girl screamed at me and told me to stop making the conversation about me...I learnt very quickly that sometimes people want to talk and not listen" (Kaia).

> "For one's hauora to truly be assessed, I used multiple tools and methods to elicit different responses. For tamariki we talked about feelings and what they might mean, for teenagers, I tried to focus on easy topics first… like exercise and sleep... I find that having a kōrero helps you learn and understand more" (Pania).

Sometimes kaimahi felt the tug between a kaupapa Māori approach and following the policies and procedures with the mainstream context.

> "I had to be careful to not blur the lines of my mahi… Transporting whānau to their appointments was frowned upon in the hospital as it wasn't technically my role...when whānau can't get to their appointments due to the appointments being before the first bus in their area – well then of course I am going to offer my support" (Ngaire).

### 1.30.2 Lived experiences

The term "lived experiences" alludes to the idea that a consumer and a professional might bond by a commonality of life experiences. The kupu "kōrero" and "whanaungatanga" relate to the belief that two or more persons may establish a solid base for therapeutic intervention via their interpersonal interactions. As each participant spoke about their journey through mainstream settings, what became apparent was the way in which they naturally formed therapeutic relationships. Each kaimahi has been able to describe a time in their

career where they have heard and been a part of stereotypes that are derogatory. It further highlights the negative statistics that tāngata whenua are characterised into and the different levels of racism both in a professional capacity and within our own communities these kaimahi have experienced. However, through adversity, can come opportunities – which these participants very clearly took in their stride.

> "There were moments where I wasn't sure if I was going to be told off. Sharing my personal stories around my mental health and stuff can be viewed negatively by some of my colleagues. I just thought it was the best way to show you can relate" (Kaia).

> "Part of my role was to do home visits and monitor FGC [Family Group Conference] plans. I remember on one occasion; I met this solo māmā. She was struggling with her finances, getting to all her appointments as per the plan and on one home visit I talked to her about my ex leaving me and my two kids and how alone and overwhelmed I felt. She asked lots of questions about how I got through it and what I did... I was there for a couple of hours just answering her questions. I think she knew that my answers were her solutions. But it just helped keep the focus and pressure off her for a little while… Sometimes you need to be able to hold the weight off their shoulder" (Pania).

> "Most people struggle to say my name, and some don't even try to pronounce it correctly. Whenever I work with whānau of any ethnicity, I will always try to pronounce their name right and if I am not sure I will ask" (Anahera).

> "Whanaungatanga is critical for quality engagement. This is where you connect, find commonalities or shared experiences. When a person can relate to you or you to them, it helps your therapeutic relationship. It's one of the easiest methods but some social workers forget this step" (Manaia).

> "Being Māori can help you get through the door, simply because you are Māori. I look and sound 'what a Māori should look like' and I feel ridiculous saying this, but I do think that has helped me get through some doors that others failed" Ngaire).

Even when the reasons to why my kaimahi were involved with whānau were not because of positive reasons, finding commonalities helped with re-defining narratives or preconceived ideas of what a social worker does. Breaking down barriers or walls was just one step in building trust. Sustaining this by being tika and pono allowed clients to maintain trust in the system and the social worker.

> "I had to tell whānau during hui what the care and protection concerns… these moments were tough on whānau and navigating this space never gets easier… I would introduce myself by my pepeha, sharing what I felt comfortable with… listening to each whānau member introduce themselves, you sort of pick up on some commonalities like the same iwi, marae or place you grew up. That's how I would cater my pepeha, share parts where I know are the same so that we can have further talking points" (Manaia).

> “I worked with an English family once and they believed social worker got bonuses from removing children. I remember by colleague laughing as they said it which instantly built up a wall… I didn’t take her with me to the next meeting… slowly over time I had to show this family that I was different. I wanted to listen and support them. I showed up on time every time and I always followed up in an email or text message the things I said I would do. This helped the family realise that I was genuine” (Pania).

> “I am still visiting family even though we are going through this COVID system. It’s been harder than usual to get through the door – especially now that I am wearing a mask. I ended up buying a clear see-through shield so that whānau and tamariki could see my face… this really helped me break down those barriers. I just have to dodge the intentional coughs” (Kaia).

Lived experiences can assist a kaimahi to empathise and understand the struggles whānau can go through. It can support planning, relationship building and most importantly, trust that the kaimahi will be tika and pono with their work.

### 1.30.3 Quality and thorough practice

Deliberate planning and active listening are ways in which my kaimahi were able to navigate social work within mainstream settings. Implementing tools and models within their kete of knowledge enabled them to produce what they believe to be quality and thorough practice. This would look different between the various jobs, whānau and roles they held – however it was clear that each participant demonstrated a desire to produce quality mahi in the hope for whānau wellbeing.

> “I got into social work to help whānau. I genuinely believe that all social workers have this aim. But burnout and workplace fatigue is a real thing and sometimes this can impact on a person’s reliance and love for the job… for me, I get real satisfaction in helping whānau Māori thrive. Helping them navigate the system and graduate out is the best feeling in the world” (Tia).

> “I was working with two young rangatahi. They had been abused by their parents and other whānau caregivers. I knew there new there were safe whānau out there – I just had to look and be persistent… when I was able to find a long term whānau placement I gifted my kids a taonga each. This was representative of their journey so far, their Māoritanga and to keep them safe for the next stage in their lives. It was my way of ending my professional relationship” (Ngaire).

Another participant was able to provide whānau a visual representative of their whakapapa. This was a way in which the participant was able to connect a whānau to their Māori culture and for it to not be seen as a negative but something to be proud of.

> “I saw this ‘ko wai āu’ advert on Facebook and thought this would be perfect for these young parents. They met in residences and had a baby shortly after. Neither new where they came from… I spent about 2 years working with them and during this time I worked with a whānau searcher to identify whānau and find out their pepeha… I approached this ko wai āu company and paid for a pepeha portrait for both parents and their baby. This came out of my own money because I knew it would be a rigmarole getting the funds for this” (Kaia).

When I hear stories like this, it becomes evident that social work is not just about the core safety concerns an individual might have, it is about understanding their whole story and how they got to where they are in that moment in time. Anahera reminded me that sometimes it is about taking a breath and pausing for a moment.

> “When I felt overwhelmed or sad when talking with clients, I would often pause, take a breath, drink from my water bottle, and sit in silence so that I didn’t make it about me”.

This demonstrates deliberate intent to create a safe space for a client. It is allowing them to be vulnerable and feel safe in the practitioner’s presence. Anahera further elaborated:

> “While emotion and empathy is needed, if I was to cry or outwardly show that I am affected, it makes the person feel they need to console or comfort you. You risk them clamming up and not talking)”.

Holding space and time for whānau is a critical step in being able to do thorough mahi. As described so far, each participant was able to provide examples of deliberate planning and ways in which their mahi was thorough. One noteworthy was from Manaia.

> “Rushing from hui to hui was hard. Holding different spaces and energies really drained me. I was starting to get sick and knew I needed to make changes. I ended up only allowing for 3 whānau hui a day and made sure I had at least 20 minutes between each one. This helped me de-brief if I needed to, karakia if I felt I needed it but to be present and ready for whānau” (Manaia).

There were a range of hidden gems which participants shared that highlight “deliberate planning” (Tia) and “being thorough” (Ngaire).

> “I don’t use acronyms or work terms. I keep it simple…” (Pania).

> “Most days I will write a to do list and organise my day as best as I can” (Ngaire).

> “...utilising supervision to un-pack and challenge bias” (Tia).

> “...choosing to set time aside to write case notes with reflection and evidence” (Kaia).

"if I am sick, I won't go to work. The work will always be there" (Manaia).

"Sometimes I take the long way home and blast my music. I don't want my own family to feel my stress" (Anahera).

These quotes show little ways which help keep each participant safe, focussed and giving whānau quality and meaningful social work. To be deliberate and thorough can be tough when navigating difficult and sometimes unknown situations, however each participant has developed coping mechanisms that aid positive outcomes and whānau wellbeing.

## 1.31 How did kaimahi record mahi completed that recognises cultural values and indigenous practice frameworks?

This line of question was insightful as it demonstrated the multitude of ways in which kaimahi recorded different models and theories. No one way appeared better the other and it was clear that over the decades and different mainstream social work settings came different recording systems. The three themes that presented themselves to me were Templates versus Indigenous methods of communication; Te Whare Tapa Whā; and Oration.

### 1.31.1 Templates versus Indigenous methods of communication

The kaimahi spoken to, all referred to the templates which their organisations had. Some of these templates were compulsory, for example, the Family Court reports. Then there were ways in which kaimahi adapted and adjusted the templates to suit the mahi they were completing. Some felt restricted at times and unable to really demonstrate what mahi was being completed and why it was significant.

"Whenever I would have consults for whānau I would always take notes despite this being my supervisors' role. This meant I was able to accurately record the different perspectives of each party. I would always include Te Whare Tapa Whā principles and record the kōrero under each specific segment" (Ngaire).

"My supervisor gave me permission to be adapt the court report to include the pepeha of the tamaiti I was working with. This was huge for the lawyer for child as they had been requesting whakapapa information for over 18 months" (Manaia).

"Ensuring cultural responses was tough. Indigenous practice doesn't typically involve Pākehā constructs so moulding these two together hasn't always worked. Some of my case notes have been just a couple of sentences, whereas others would include attempts made, why kanohi ki te kanohi is better for whānau engagement…" (Pania).

"My boss told me one time that I needed to shorten my recordings as they were too lengthy and reflective. She told me no one was going to read that information… it was about what this dad experienced as a kid and how it impacted his ability to be a parent" (Kaia).

"Negotiating with doctors is common for me. I have to explain how they could better get engagement…. I would have to find them and tell them in person as they would never read my case notes" (Anahera).

Other exerts include kaimahi believing they were unable to properly document the tasks at hand. Such examples do not represent the quality of the work done, but rather the inability of conventional methods to cope with the task that is really being performed.

"[Statutory mahi] is severely under-resourced…I don't think I have ever been able to be up to date with my case recording – let alone the recordings being of quality standard…I know my practice is sound and encompasses Te Ao Māori, but I struggle to demonstrate this in a way mainstream will accept" (Ngaire).

"I had a debate with a lawyer about how restrictive the Family Court system is. You want outcomes for Māori but expect them to achieve this via their system. It doesn't work" (Manaia).

"Some whānau don't want their whakapapa recorded, you need to respect this" (Pania).

"Often the mahi I did with whānau didn't always correlate into the case notes. Sometimes I just didn't have time, so would bullet point them" (Kaia).

Over the past decade, my participants spoke about how social work has evolved with that more acceptance towards indigenous methods. While there has been some push back and what I would refer to as institutionalised racism, some participants acknowledged some of the mahi they are now able to do – where they previously were told no.

"Kanohi ki te kanohi is always best practice both from an indigenous perspective and practical sense. I arranged a whānau hui and invited all the whānau who could provide both physical and virtual support. As most of the whānau lived in Wellington, I arranged for a bus to transport them to Taupo. Having the whānau all in one space was amazing" (Manaia).

"...understanding the root cause of an issue can be tough. I once spent an entire day talking with a father, building a relationship of trust, and just really getting to know him. My boss wasn't impressed

> with the time away from the office. But I didn't care, for me to support this father I needed to show him that he was valued and worth the investment of time… Through hui and wananga you can really unpack and address a lot of stuff. Time shouldn't be a factor" (Anahera).

Through listening to the experiences of the kaimahi, it became clear that the mainstream systems they had encountered did not always give the space and capability to adequately document the indigenous approaches employed with whānau. Whether as a result of time restrictions or insufficient templates, there were a variety of cases cited that indicate the necessity for an alternative recording approach. The kaimahi were able to explain why indigenous practises were advantageous when interacting with their whānau; however, demonstrating this mahi via a western perspective was not always flawless.

### 1.31.2 Te Whare Tapa Whā

When I spoke with each participant, they all were able to identify different ways in which Te Whare Tapa Whā was applied within their personal and professional lives. More interestingly, how this method was unconsciously used as a wellbeing, unwinding and de-loading tool.

> "When I have particularly hard days, I will always take the long drive home, blast some music and wind the window down. Helps me settle and shake off the day before bringing it home to the family" (Anahera).

> "When working with whānau Māori it has always been important for me to demonstrate how Te Whare Tapa Whā works... how you can apply it to reflect on where you are or how you can use it to understand more about a person" (Manaia).

> "When I am feeling overwhelmed at work, I try to unpack the different pou… I ask myself questions like, how is my whānau wellbeing, what could I be doing for my Tinana (eating healthy instead of buying lollies)… these questions help me evaluate in real time where I am not prioritising myself" (Tia).

The participants were able to check in on themselves to let go of any negative energy that is potentially attached to them from the day/days of mahi. For kaimahi to work in this field day in and day out, ensuring their own hauora is looked after is important in ensuring they can give focus and energy to their clients. This in turn feeds into thorough recordings and sound decision making.

> "If you are keeping yourself safe you can then make sound decision making. Whenever I needed to make decisions around where tamariki should live or what whānau needed to do to ensure their

> tamariki are safe, I would unpack my risk statements with my supervisor as well as the strengths and ask her to question my statements… without these checks and balances I didn't feel it was right to then make decisions or recommendations" (Ngaire).

> "If you want parents to look after their tamariki and whānau, they need to prioritise their own healings and unhealthy habits… same goes for us… to be a good practitioner we need to leave our bias and burdens at the door" (Tia).

For participants, recording case mahi using Te Whare Tapa Whā and other indigenous models was not always easy, and challenges often came in the form of time and lack of understanding. Rightfully or wrongfully, this had flow on effects when social workers changed, transfers were made or even when changes in management occurred.

> "I've worked both in the hospital settings and [the state], what I see inherently wrong is the templates and data recording systems. They just aren't set up to measure or record indigenous approaches to hauora" (Kaia).

> "Recording takes time… an hour-long hui requires the same amount of time recording, should you want it to be reflective of the model or theory you've used and to also include reflection, observations, and professional opinion…I've been told to keep case work simple and to use bullet points as it is concise... I just think it bullshit" (Tia).

> "I worked with a whānau who had over 5 different social workers. When I looked back at the history, it was punitive and only focussed on the negative… mainstream settings and systems do not reflect the… trauma of whānau who have been aggrieved by the system… Including te wheke or Te Whare Tapa Whā in my practice was simple – but writing case notes was challenging as I needed to be able to [essentially translate] these concepts and what I had learnt into a political and western ideology so that the powers that be would understand" (Ngaire).

This last statement highlights how far Aotearoa still must go in ensuring equality across the board. While social work is a much-needed resource in our country, so too is the need for culturally appropriate practices. However, it is also important to highlight the opposite perspectives around recordings of indigenous practice.

> "I created my own template which covers the different pou of Te Whare Tapa Whā. This tool helps me with my assessments and makes recording case work super easy… while this took a while to create,

I use it every day. Even my wider team try to implement it into their practice which is always heart-warming to see" (Tia).

"To go against the grain in a western company can be really daunting… but I didn't get into social work to not provide whānau a service that encompasses te Ao Māori principles… implementing this in my face-to-face practice and in my notes is non-negotiable. It may take time, but if hui is done correctly then there is no time limit – it is at the pace of the whānau. My notes follow the same kaupapa… I record what the whānau share with me and ensure their voices are recorded correctly and with context so my Pākehā colleagues can understand" (Manaia).

The examples provided by the kaimahi were all consistent with the Māori practise model Te Whare Tapa Whā. When the kaimahi were feeling pressured or overwhelmed, they would use the model. So that work-related ideas didn't cross over into their personal lives, it served as a tool for reflection, emotional regulation, and the prioritisation of conflict resolution. The use of Te Whare Tapa Whā in describing and discussing discoveries in written casework was also recognised by kaimahi as an important tool for balancing one's cultural, professional, and personal obligations during daily mahi. Kaimahi were able to record from a cultural standpoint while operating inside a mainstream framework, however this was typically accomplished at the expense of time.

#### 1.31.3 Oration

Oration, which is storytelling and kōrero, is gifted from ancestors for passing on whakapapa, life lessons, words of wisdom and how we got here as peoples. The participants all spoke of ways in which oration has been used within their practice and how this is recorded within their mahi.

"Whānau don't always want to share their whakapapa, for fear that you will get them involved… being creative in how you kōrero can often get specific gems" (Anahera).

"Through story telling or Pūrākau you can learn a lot about a whānau. You just have to listen and be open. Some whānau can be hopeless at telling a concise story but if you're patient you can pick up on what they are trying to tell you" (Manaia).

"One hui we each went around the table and shared a positive story about this whānau and one thing we want for them. It was the best way to break the ice, take the pressure off the negative for a moment and consider the moemoea for the family" (Pania).

Then there are occasions where participants were let down by the system with how the oration was recorded. This ultimately effected collaborative decision making as the information professionals held was not in full context or reflected what the whānau spoke about.

> "Ensuring whānau views are recorded accurately is important. This one time I visited a whānau… and they spent the entire hui talking about their records they received and how nothing about their journey was recorded despite, 3 social workers working the case before me. The nan was furious and asked the question [Are my mokopuna still in my care because you failed as an organisation to listen learn about us?] … it was tough, because it was an answer, I wasn't able to give an answer" (Ngaire).

Spending quality time with whānau, listening to their Pūrākau provides kaimahi opportunity to understand the context from the lens of the whānau, build trust within the working relationship and time to consider and think about what is said next. Whānau can have distrust in the system and through oration you can slowly unpack why there are barriers. This is a skillset the kaimahi carry, as they navigate between their personal, professional, and cultural roles.

## 1.32 Summary

In this chapter, I analysed the 12 most prominent themes that emerged throughout my interviews. Dual responsibility was the initial challenge that became apparent in the kōrero that was shared with me. In addition to your usual mahi, being the cultural expert is expected of you as a kaimahi in mainstream contexts. This additional effort may affect one's current workload, mahi quality, and overall hauora outside of mahi. If kaimahi are unable to keep up with the demand of the dual obligation, it will have an influence on their ability to properly integrate their personal, professional, and cultural duties for the wellness of their whānau.

Rather than focusing on the kupu itself, kaimahi tended to highlight the behaviour and experiences associated with racism. The findings of this study show that workplace racism has a deleterious effect not only on the quality of mahi but also on the results for whānau welfare. According to Kaimahi, racism in the workplace is a barrier to implementing culturally relevant and suitable policies and procedures. The many obstacles that kaimahi faced in conventional workplaces inevitably led to burnout and exhaustion. Most of the kaimahi who were interviewed had felt exhausted or burned out at some point in their careers because of the mahi. All forms of hauora (tinana, hinengaro, whānau, and wairua) were affected, but all were impacted by the rising levels of burnout and fatigue.

Specialised caseloads became clear when the kaimahi recounted their experiences. Opportunities arose for kaimahi to hone in on their expertise because of their status as Māori. They had a variety of skills that came easily to them but gave them an advantage over their Pākehā counterparts in terms of connection and comprehension. Two more thoughts emerged as kaimahi discussed their specialised caseloads or the obligation to assist their colleagues with Māori clients. A for-Māori-by-Māori approach and natural connections.

Being Māori, kaimahi found it easy to make and maintain relationships. One method in which kaimahi handled the integration of their personal, cultural, and professional life was through recognising and understanding whakapapa while being cognisant of the repercussions of colonisation. In addition, the for-Māori-by-Māori method allowed for culturally sensitive practises to be acknowledged and for kaimahi to finish their mahi with whānau in ways that benefited whānau hauora.

The last six major takeaways were the ways in which kaimahi documented and acknowledged indigenous practise frameworks while operating in mainstream settings. Natural connections, navigating different spaces and lived experiences were similar when wanting to understand the different challenges and opportunities kaimahi face. Recognizing the speed with which rapport may be established is essential for making natural relationships and adjusting to new environments. By using Māori models of practise, kaimahi have a deeper understanding of the therapeutic value of whanaungatanga than their Pākehā counterparts. Because they too were colonised, kaimahi have first-hand familiarity with the effects of the process. Real-life encounters factor in the varying demographics and stereotypes that have been applied to Māori by the outside world. Kaimahi may not have been personally affected, but their whanau and tupuna have been. As a result, understanding and empathy for whanau emerge much more quickly when the historical backdrop is known.

Kaimahi were self-aware enough to know when they had accomplished quality practise. This occurred most frequently when they had both a leader who was supportive and the cultural competence to fulfil their responsibilities. Although the recording methods created certain barriers, working with whanau under Māori practise models allowed for greater in-depth exploration with whanau than would otherwise be possible for Pākehā. While Pākehā might learn and adopt Māori practise frameworks, the for-Māori-by-Māori methodology speeds up production even more. Via Pūrākau and orations, kaimahi communicated and picked up on social indicators that were otherwise obscured to their peers. This demonstrates the inherent possibilities for kaimahi to negotiate, implement, and integrate culturally responsive services within their mainstream institutions by providing a service that knows the whakapapa of one's culture. In conclusion, this chapter offered information and my observations on how kaimahi deal with mainstream social work environments. This section summarises my key findings and offers a preview of my subsequent discussion chapter.

# Discussion

## 1.33 Overview

In this discussion chapter, I explore how the results of the interviews compare to the existing national and international literature presented in the literature review. I have continued to use the same chapter themes as the previous chapter: dual responsibility, racism, burnout and fatigue, specialised caseload, For Māori by Māori, natural connections, navigating different spaces, lived experiences, quality and thorough practice, templates versus Indigenous methods of communication, Te Whare Tapa Whā; and Oration. In this section, I will examine if there are research gaps worth pursuing to advance this issue, as well as go further into the implications of the participants' comments for my study.

## 1.34 Dual responsibility

Being Māori and a social worker within mainstream social work settings is difficult on many fronts. Dual responsibility has been described by my kaimahi as additional work that is beyond the scope of their contract. Often requiring kaimahi to work above and beyond for the betterment of whānau outcomes. It is perceived as more of an issue as opposed to an opportunity as the consequences far outweigh the positive. Dual responsibility can lead to higher chances of burnout and fatigue within the workspace and within one's personal life. Kaimahi have spoken above about the extra workload they have carried and the cost this has caused them. If kaimahi both within this research and kaimahi in mainstream settings continue to accept extra responsibility due to them simply being Māori, has the potential to undermine effective and timely decision making, reduce resilience levels and cause resentment to one's job for not being appropriately compensated (Nollkaemper, 2018). The kaimahi observed that they may be viewed as an authority on all things Māori and a go-to resource for Pākehā coworkers. This appears to have become a greater concern as mainstream services attempt to include tikanga Māori into their regular operations.

Firstly, there can be a perception that this new "Māori" is an expert of all things Te Ao and from the moment they step foot into employment they are always the "go to" person many Pākehā will seek when they need advice. From the interviews that took place, it is easy to then confirm that this same rule applies when a mainstream social work service then tries to implement tikanga within their daily mahi. My kaimahi had experienced this type of responsibility, this expectation that there job was more then what they initially signed up for. Again, the increased expectations from their Pākehā colleague increased the feelings of being overworked and undervalued. Not only was their role to be a social worker on the frontline but was to be an educator to those unable or unwilling to practice from a lens that best works for tāngata whenua.

In the literature research, I explored the concept of "internal colonialism (Fannon, 1967; Turner, 2017). This refers to the processes in which the indigenous culture is further harmed by systems in which the oppressors

continue to disregard other frameworks and ways of living outside the social norm of mainstream (Fannon, 1967; Turner, 2017). In relation to social work, many kaimahi are working alongside whānau Māori in culturally appropriate ways and achieving positive outcomes. However, there is an additional pressure and responsibility added to their role to support, lead and guide their Pākehā colleagues. When this notion is further expanded, two things are worth noting. Firstly, as Māori, the idea that more of our peoples are getting better quality and culturally responsive services is heartwarming. It is an indication that times are changing, and Aotearoa is recognizing the need to respond differently to allow equality in peoples expression to live whatever cultural norms they want while simultaneously recognising that kaimahi (both Pākehā and Māori) need to adapt their response if they genuinely want better outcomes. Secondly, however, the cost of this can come at the expense of kaimahi burning out. As described in both my literature review and Chapter Four, burnout because of dual responsibility can be common for kaimahi within mainstream settings. While I did not research into the long-term impacts of dual responsibility, we do know that burnout and fatigue is a natural consequence of dual responsibility (Durie, 2012). However, if there are not systems in place designed to upskill and educate Pākehā on how to work better with Māori cliental, then it would be safe to assume that the continued dual responsibility will have long term and repetitive effects on the kaimahi employed in mainstream settings.

As Hooks (1992) and Kuokkanen (2000) have evidenced, indigenous peoples have felt the impacts of repressive behaviors from their colonial invaders. As a result, the findings show that individuals still have to battle for their identities, cultural practices, and methods of health management to be recognized (Kuokkanen, 2000). For indigenous people like Māori, we start to build an understanding on the extra mahi Māori take on to address inequity. The fight for their collective voices to be heard, the strain whānau have when accessing resources that do not recognise their cultural practices. All this adds to the workload of kaimahi within social work organisations (Castellano, 2004). The research literature also highlights key issues pertaining to institutional racism. Given the detrimental influence of Aotearoa and its colonial past on government responses to its people, problems with cultural sensitivity, failure to uphold te Tiriti o Waitangi values, and conventional wisdom about what a whanau should be like persist (Jackson, 2000; Mikaere, 2000). These mainstream/western views have caused a huge division between Māori and Pākehā and as a result Māori have encountered cultural misunderstandings, expectations that cannot be met and statistics that are unfavourable to Māori as a collective (Walters, 2018). This directly impacts kaimahi today, the amount of responsibility that is expected of them by simply being Māori is an overwhelming job. While it is positive in that mainstream social work settings are recognising a need for cultural responses, Kaimahi do feel the pressure of this burden.

The process of disallowing Māori to simply be Māori has systematically broken down how, as a collective, Māori live and thrive. From how we harvest kai and prepare for tangi to how we dress and speak. These, and many other cultural nuances in Te Ao Māori, have resulted in unfavorable statistics. Statistics where some whānau are left isolated and stuck. To then expect good outcomes when delivering a western lens, is irresponsible of health professionals to consider. For my kaimahi, what became evident was the sense of representation and mana enhancing practice. For my kaimahi to thrive in a space that works inherently different to how a Te Ao Māori approach would look, I must consider why this might be. My conclusion is that as a Māori

practitioner you represent not only yourself but your whānau, hapū and iwi. You represent your tīpuna and your future mokopuna. Therefore, by taking on dual responsibility you are indirectly and directly ensuring that whānau Māori are cared for, are considered, and are given equal opportunity to thrive (Komene et al., 2023). Dual responsibility can therefore be seen as both an opportunity and challenge. The disparities in health and wellbeing for Māori and how this has worsened throughout the years (Durie, 2003; 2012). While this is terrible, Durie (2012) also supports a for Māori-by-Māori approach. This naturally add responsibility and the concept of dual responsibility starts to form for our kaimahi. However, as the kaimahi alluded to in the Findings chapter, it is a responsibility they have taken on with pride. Working with our whānau has been a real drive for why kaimahi began their social work career and what drives them to keep going. Because of internal colonisation, racism and tokenism, tāngata Whenua are a group of peoples whom through colonisation had their land, lives, cultures stripped from them. Māori were then expected to change life as they knew it, to conform to the ideologies of their colonisers. As time has moved forward, so too are the slow changes in which attempts to correct the past wrongs and allow Māori to practice and live their culture as equal partners (Reid et al., 2014). However, while this change is good, I am not convinced that the consequences of this truly benefit Māori kaimahi – particularly within the social work context. Can extra workload truly be a positive if it is not compensated?

Dual Responsibility has been described to have both positive and negative effects within a social work context. The positives conclude that, some kaimahi find this part of their job rewarding in the sense that they are supporting their colleagues to better practice, to upskill and to achieve sustainable and realistic outcomes for whānau Māori. Furthermore, this idea reinforces the idea that for culturally responsive practice to be a normality, that sometimes it is about going outside the square and above what a job description might say to seek an increased output of culturally appropriate practice and sustained changes from a broader and more diverse range of practitioners. As the saying goes *“Many hands make light work”* the same concept can be applied with Dual Responsibility. By putting in the extra work now, to support fellow colleagues, Kaimahi would “theoretically” reap the rewards as it would be envisioned that this would not always be needed – once their Pākehā colleagues were adapt enough to do this type of mahi on their own and without the additional support of their Māori colleague.

Dual responsibility has both its challenges and opportunities. If broken down, we see:

Dual = twice (+) Responsibility = workload.

In other words, twice the amount of work.

A kaimahi who is expected to educate, support, and guide their Pākehā counterparts is not a kaimahi who is able to do quality practice (Durie, 2012). Kaimahi can lose time and energy for their own clients and as a result momentum once gained is lost due to time constraints and other expectations (Love et al., 2019). Expanding

further, this impacts one's overall hauora and can impact negatively on outcomes. Increased burn out; mental, spiritual, and physical fatigue and loss of focus can result in unsafe decision making and could potentially compromise the kaimahi, the whānau or a combination of both (Kuokkanen, 2000; Fannon, 1967). This quote best represents this theme:

> Battling a system from within is a role that consumes enormous energy and can limit vision. It can leave the social worker vulnerable to both the organization and the community. This position leaves Māori workers exposed to being individually demonised and labelled by institutional representatives as incompetent or unprofessional, if we do not conform to institutional mores On the other hand, Māori workers perceived as conforming to the norms within statutory welfare systems, may be viewed by their whānau, hapū, iwi and communities; as brown faces doing the dirty work that was previously done by white social workers… (Love et al, 2019).

## 1.35 Racism

Discussing racism can be challenging since it usually offends the oppressor, who does not want to admit to their racism (Eruera & Ruwhiu, 2015). The kaimahi experienced this to varied degrees, thus it is crucial that this kōrero is addressed in the context of this research. Kaimahi suggested different subtle and underlying undercurrents of racism within the varying places of employment. Kaimahi were able to present examples on how their Pākehā colleagues and management team would not recognise the racial undertones in their statements or be completely arrogant about matters from a cultural perspective.

By analysing the indirect effects of racism, I examine how this might appear in practice. Indirect or unconscious racism might take the form of ignorant remarks such as "Why sign off with Ngā mihi? No one will understand that" or acts such as expecting Māori workers to lead Māori training as if it were their prerogative. While these may sound reasonable and simple to ignore, some kaimahi choose to persevere despite them. However, these are harmful and have a compounding impact. Accumulation of indirect racism may evolve to acceptance and transference, as others learn that this conduct, these remarks, and these behaviours are acceptable. These subtle nuances could diminish a person's resilience over time. Within mainstream social work services, Kaimahi have a difficult and demanding job that involves concentration, commitment, honesty, openness, and aroha (to name a few adjectives). The subsequent exposure to indirect racism will affect their general hauora. It can result in exhaustion, mental, physiological, and spiritual malaise. By not questioning and correcting, indirect racism can have accumulative consequences, as previously stated, but it also serves as an exemplification of bystander racism. By doing nothing, an environment is created within which it is acceptable. Although their real reasons why one might be unable to address this behaviour (authority, fear of repercussions, dislike of confrontation), this research reminds us of the purpose of a social worker - to advocate for our clients. Whether you are Māori or not, it is quite likely that you will encounter Māori clients while working in Aotearoa; thus, as advocacy is part of our position, why not confront, question, and address promptly any detrimental behaviours at the outset instead of allowing them to fester.

When amid one's mahi, it can be difficult to manage situations with direct racism, which is much more aggressive and demanding. My interviewees confirmed my suspicions that racism is still pervasive in institutional settings, and they described how it affected their professional lives. The difficulties encountered were not particularly taxing on actual casework, but rather on one's state of mind and sense of ease in the office setting. The accounts of the kaimahi, which details unmet expectations and inadequate assistance, highlights the need of addressing these issues. I believe this kind of racism persists in many Aotearoa social work contexts that fall under the umbrella of "mainstream," and that it will only become worse unless a firmer and more aggressive stance is taken. For kaimahi, being in the minority in conventional social work settings is the norm, and this makes it difficult to address issues that have a direct bearing on their lives. Individuals are more vulnerable to the effects of change, thus it's easier to tackle these issues as a group. This also applies to everyday instances of racism. It is feasible to question societal conventions as a single kaimahi but doing so may not be without consequence. When weighed against long-term objectives (such as supporting one's own family, maintaining stable financial footing, or advancing one's profession), this supplementary expense may prove prohibitive. As a natural consequence, the racism kaimahi have experience has been confirmed to contribute and fuel burnout and fatigue within their professional and personal lives.

Some striking parallels emerge between my study's findings and the works discussed in Chapter Four. When the majority of kaimahi are Pākehā, institutional prejudice can cultivate. Since the Crown's assertion of sovereignty, Pākehā have developed and created infrastructures that promote Pākehā ideologies and models of health, further discriminating against other indigenous models of practise (Awatere, 1984). Moreton-Robinson (2004) confirm Awatere's position by referencing the Crown taking sovereignty and through the systemic actions of Pākehā implementing western practices and enforcing Māori to abide by. This has influenced Māori health outcomes, and in the context of mainstream social work, has made kaimahi the minority in their workplace, exposing them to indirect and direct racist behaviours. As discussed in Chapter Four, kaimahi may feel constrained in their capacity to engage in culturally responsive practise in mainstream social work settings. In addition, there is usually a price to pay in terms of time, effort, lack of resources, and limited support if you want to practise in a way that is culturally responsive. A persistent obstacle that many of the kaimahi must face as they navigate their mahi each day is racism. Either avoiding this issue altogether or confronting it head-on are viable choices, but ones that usually come with a price.

The literature discusses the cultural transformation that the New Zealand government and the social service sector are enacting, but the progress is not happening as quickly as suggested. Crown agencies have made claims about cultural responses, models, and practises; yet the kaimahi reports that racist behaviours persist at all levels of the organisation. This is worrisome and difficult since it shows that there is still room for significant expansion, and because Māori are a minority among mainstream service providers, this places' an especially heavy burden on kaimahi. Kaimahi feel more secure in implementing their viewpoints, methods, and fundamental tikanga inside the workplace when they are not alone. Being a minority (which is most common)

creates an invisible barrier that their voice cannot make a difference. Despite being a minority, it is encouraging to hear some Kaimahi discuss tackling these issues head on.

The issue of racism is highly charged and often divides people. What I have been able to evidence is that there is clear evidence to suggest that racism is still active within mainstream social work settings both internally and within people's practice with whānau. A flow on effect of this is the potential implications this has to outcomes for Māori, sustainability of Māori kaimahi within this field of expertise and a perspective on how little the Crown are doing to right the wrongs of our past colonisers and its generational impacts on Māori.

## 1.36 Burnout and Fatigue

In my findings chapter, kaimahi spoke about the consequences of increased workloads and higher expectations resulting in burnout and fatigue. While there was passion for the mahi being completed, the pressure of having to provide a cultural response to whānau, at times was overwhelming for kaimahi. The researched literature has provided descriptions of some of the unavoidable results of colonialism. Considering which, we may say the following about burnout and fatigue: burnout within the social work context is the result of emotional and occupational repercussions. It is when a social worker is left feeling the trauma of their work and unable to release in a healthy way (Lonczak, 2021; Smullens, 2012). Furthermore, Maslach (1986) defines Burnout and Fatigue as:

> "A syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do "people work'' of some kind... Burnout can lead to deterioration in the quality of care or service provided". (p. 192)

Burnout and Fatigue is a debilitating condition and one that takes time to recover from. So, when considering the conclusions and implications of burnout and fatigue discussed by my kaimahi, I first need to contrast the information gathered from my interviews to the literature review that's already been completed. As a result of different methods of oppression that indigenous peoples have been subjected to, the oppressed have continued to adopt some of their coloniser's methods, which have been forced to become societal norms in mainstream society. As a result, the oppressed must work harder to conform to the social norms they find themselves restricted to – to appear "normal". This idea is similar to what my kaimahi elaborated on. The quotes such as "I don't know a single social worker that is able to be on top of all their work…" and "…the endless tasks and expectations" indicate to me that the requirements of their mahi is rigorous and demanding – much like how the oppressed adopt their colonises methods.

The findings of this research concur with other studiesthat mental and physical fatigue are common conditions social workers experience. By comparing the results of my interviews with kaimahi to Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā model, I've concluded that the objective of social work is grossly underappreciated. As a result,

conventional social work institutions are not designed to adequately support kaimahi. Social workers struggle with burnout and exhaustion for a variety of reasons, despite their best efforts to avoid it. From my interviews, I was able to recognize several causative factors of burnout and fatigue. To facilitate with this identification, I constructed my own methodology.

| **BO&F – QS = WL + C + OT + DR + HL** |
| --- |

Burnout and Fatigue = Workload + Culture on site + Over Time + Dual Responsibility + Quality Supervision + Home Life

The value of each part of the equation is shown on a scale from 0 to 10. In general, a higher grade indicates that the kaimahi is now experiencing a more dire circumstance. This formula is founded on open communication and is meant to prompt reflection and the identification of areas of improvement. To assess the present, one must be aware of functioning optimally is and is not. In my opinion, exhaustion and burnout are inevitable with a score of 30 or above. Even though one's resilience can determine whether they recover from burnout and fatigue, it is not always feasible to predict which factors will push someone to this breaking point. With a score of 30, it's clear that you need to take a hard look at what you want, what you need, and where you stand on those issues. Maslach, et al., (1997) has a similar concept to measure burnout and fatigue, however the key difference being Maslach focusses on three areas (Feelings of energy depletion, increased mental distance, and reduced professional efficacy). Whereas my formula considers six key areas and how this overall impacts the chances of facing burnout and fatigue. From the interviews that took place, the six ingredients within my equation match the commonalities found within the kōrero that was shared. Once these were identified, I was able to reflect and critique what was said to help solidify my understandings of burnout and fatigue and what I believe could be the warning signs.

#### 1.36.1 Quality Supervision

Having access to opportunities to reflect, unpack, critique, examine and continue to improve practice is vital for kaimahi to succeed in their mahi with whānau. Quality supervision is not a want but a necessity. Kaimahi spoke about the impacts of limited or poor-quality supervision. Not having access to this resource can be dangerous with regards to decision making and the hauora of a kaimahi. Social work is demanding, and taxing and this support can help kaimahi offload and ground themselves. This has a direct correlation to whether a kaimahi is more susceptible to Burnout and Fatigue (Awatere, 1984; Came & Da Silva, 2011; Durie, 2012).

#### 1.36.2 Workload

With this equation in mind, "Workload" refers to how the kaimahi feel about the tasks assigned to them. Many factors contribute to this, such as the sheer volume of cases, the size of the clientele, and the difficulty in engaging certain families (due to issues such as mental illness, substance abuse, threats to physical safety, and the involvement of many agencies). Based on my observations and interviews, it seems that Māori kaimahi

have a far heavier caseload and a higher degree of specialisation than their Pākehā counterparts. This has resulted in kaimahi sometimes feeling incapable of fulfilling their duties or overwhelmed by the demands of their positions (Hollis-English, 2012; Pakura, 2003).

#### 1.36.3 Culture on site

Throughout our conversations, kaimahi brought up their own social and political encounters with racism and institutionalised racism. Although not everyone I talked to was affected by this, it is a serious problem that has a substantial effect on people's general hauora and, by extension, on the culture of the workplace. My analysis of the interviews led me to the following hypotheses about what makes up a company's culture: whether employees are treated fairly in terms of workload, whether or not the company provides external and internal trainings, whether or not employees are friendly and supportive of one another, whether or not the company has an anti-racist kaupapa, and whether or not the company shows consideration for and care about others. These hypotheses are what can drive a kaimahi to stick through the tough times. When a kaimahi feels valued and supported and the culture within the office is positive – helps the longevity of employment but also decreases the chances of burnout.

#### 1.36.4 Over Time

As discussed in my findings chapter, shared experiences where it was normal to work long (unpaid) hours to meet the needs of their whānau. Early mornings to late evenings and on occasions weekend work. These hours, while at times beneficial for whānau outcomes can have an adverse effect on the kaimahi and their personal lives. Despite the impact on one's personal time, over time can have a number of consequences on one's hauora and thus, increase the chances of Burnout and Fatigue.

#### 1.36.5 Dual Responsibility

Dual Responsibility implies that there is additional mahi placed on a kaimahi that can have a direct causation of burnout and fatigue. Dual responsibility is contextual and looks different for each kaimahi. Dual responsibility is the mahi expected of a kaimahi for simply being Māori. Dual responsibility is a systematic and largely racial issue in which kaimahi are expected to go above and beyond their position without adequate pay. It may be viewed as an opportunity since it affords you the chance to display your expertise and educate your peers. Yet, it poses a difficulty since it increases effort, which can result in a variety of negative outcomes, such as burnout and weariness.

#### 1.36.6 Home Life

Kaimahi recalled times where the stress of their mahi would impact their homelife. However, this part of the equation also includes what is occurring at home and how this can impact one's resilience. Life isn't perfect and there will always be times when kaimahi are not feeling their best. Being able to recognise this is important. Being able to communicate effectively about what is occurring or how you made be feeling can help ensure the right support at mahi so that chance of burnout and fatigue is decreased.

## 1.37 Specialised caseload

The findings indicated that when kaimahi are allocated mahi, they were often expected to hold specialised caseloads that required a kaupapa Māori lens. There were also expectations on kaimahi to hold cases where the whānau whakapapa Māori – not necessarily due to the cultural expertise, but because their Pākehā colleagues were unable to build rapport and generate outcomes. In the literature review, I discussed how the attempts to undo the damage of colonisation in Aotearoa affected the country's politics and economy. Māori have been gradually increasing their involvement in policymaking, management, and service delivery over the course of history (especially in the last 50 years or so). This is due to the limitations of Pākehā notions and models of wellbeing in improving Māori economic and social indicators. As a result, the demand for more trained Māori social workers has increased, and the field of social work, has begun to take notice. This idea squares with the accounts provided by my interviewees, and it bolsters the argument that the health care system desperately needs Māori kaimahi who can offer specialised services to the most vulnerable patients.

Kaimahi have described their specialised caseloads as requiring a high degree of competence and, more precisely, a set of talents that are strongly tied to their ethnic origin. Furthermore, that indigenous knowledge is a skillset that Māori naturally possess and implement in their daily practice (Eruera & Ruwhiu, 2015; Hollis-English 2012). This is often done without necessarily naming Te Ao Māori concepts but through the natural connections kaimahi often can do by imply being Māori (Durie, 2004). Based on my research and the literature review, I have concluded that Indigenous knowledge is different from Pākehā culture in that it is innate. Knowledge of Indigenous practises is a fundamental human right. While colonisation severed ties between certain tāngata and their cultural norms and imposed other ways of life, Māori persisted in adapting to new circumstances and testing established norms. The success of this endeavour and the advantages of handling a niche clientele were highlighted by my kaimahi. The kaimahi who were consulted on this matter noted that the capacity to fulfil one's mahi from a kaupapa Māori viewpoint facilitated the kind of transformation that can be sustained by whānau. This idea originated from a place of Māori identity and an understanding of the factors that contribute to Māori success. Several kaimahi spoke at length about the expectations placed on them by management, as well as the stigma that surrounds speaking out about cultural sensitivity while working with Māori clients and co-workers. While it was discussed whether this was a challenge or an opportunity, it is undeniable that social workers need to put in time and energy outside of their usual hours to effectively manage their specialised caseloads. My recommendations are strengthened by drawing parallels between the researched literature and the findings.

When I contemplate the Pūrākau of the Kaimahi, I am taken on their own journeys as to why they became social workers and why they decided to work in mainstream settings. While specialised caseloads were evident, so too were the implicit (and frequently self-enforced) expectations that people would do the right thing by their tāngata. This resulted in difficult openings, wherein kaimahi imposed their own rigorous standards to

bring about long-term, beneficial results for Māori. That in doing so, would result in a greater emotional and physical feeling of fulfilment.

Through the journey of each kaimahi, mana can be obtained. Māori consider mana to be an ethereal resource that should be protected at all costs. With this definition and in accordance with the results of my study, the kaimahi and their existing mana can be bolstered by having a specialised caseload and succeeding in this area. However, I've concluded that this isn't something that the employers of kaimahi review, but rather something that the kaimahi have instituted on their own. Interestingly, this was not evident in my literature review. While this does not reflect the relevance of this point, it is interesting that I did not come across this view throughout my research. Again, this area would be beneficial to conduct further research on – and to see whether there are any further correlations beyond the scope of social work – but health in general.

## 1.38 For Māori-by-Māori

Kaimahi have evidence throughout their experiences in mainstream social work settings that a for-Māori-by-Māori approach provides benefits for sustainable health outcomes. This approach allows for natural connection, cultural nuances understood and a familiarity that whānau find comforting. Different scholars have identified within their respective research the different limitations of resources and Māori being unqualified or ill prepared for the positions they were taking on. The concept of being ill-prepared could be argued as subjective. While colonisation set about an enforced way of life for Māori - we know that Māori have adapted and hold specialist skills that Pākehā simply do not have (Came & Da Silva, 2011; Durie, 2012; Reid & Robson, 2007). The literature study has certain caveats, such that it does not fully capture the reasons why Māori kaimahi were deemed unprepared. However, throughout the kōrero I had with my participants it became clear to me why this may have been. A for-Māori-by-Māori approach is universally agreed upon by my kaimahi – however they all recognised that this was a huge undertaking and generally under-resourced. As a result, key performance indicators are not met and from a mainstream perspective, this is an organisational risk which is demonstrating that either the kaimahi are unskilled or simply under resourced. When I compare the literature to my interviews, it simply recognises that a for-Māori-by-Māori approach cannot work under mainstream expectations and requires a new system in which to work (Durie, 2004, 2012; Mitchell, 2018; Walters, 2012). Furthermore, a for-Māori-by-Māori approach needs the backing of the organisation in which it is placed to be able to do what is believed to work best – without this trust, the approach will fail as kaimahi will be unable to engage with whānau Māori in culturally responsive ways.

Participants were able to highlight a key area of expertise which is inherited by simply being Māori. For Māori – refers to the idea that you are doing something positive for Māori whānau. By Māori refers to the act of doing this positive act can only be done effectively by someone who can whakapapa Māori. Simply put, someone who can whakapapa Māori who completes an act of service (generally) to a Māori in need. This was a discussion point within my interviews as it is something that my kaimahi felt a draw to. There was an ability to

identify that in mainstream social work, there is always a need for cultural understanding and ability to implement cultural norms naturally and without force. As a Pākehā, kaimahi felt that this was something they were simply unable to do as effectively as Māori – by the simple fact they were not. The research supports the idea of a strategy that is "for Māori." Pūao-te-Ata-tū and Te Tiriti o Waitangi are two examples of recent government initiatives that aim to alter the ways in which professionals interact with and provide for Māori families. The kaimahi concur with the literature in that total success is impossible until the plan is properly implemented with enough resources.

However, as a piece of paper has two sides, so too do the views expressed by my kaimahi. While kaimahi expressed a For Māori-by-Māori approach within their own work environments, there was also hesitation from this coming from them due to their own journeys of exploring their own cultural identities. When kaimahi are navigating unfamiliar seas owing to colonisation, it can be extremely difficult for kaimahi to feel that they are experts or better skilled to work with Māori whānau. While there is evidence to support this approach, kaimahi find it challenging to be the one who perform this. By placing themselves in this position of power, the idea of a for Māori approach can be tainted with expectations, or beliefs that they are ready to practice this way, when in fact, they are still on their own waka in discovering ko wai āu.

## 1.39 Natural Connections

Mainstream social service systems use the term "creating rapport" to describe what they do at the outset of a relationship with someone to obtain trust, information, and cooperation. Although this is a notion that is practised by Māori, its meaning within Te Ao Māori is considerably larger. There appears to be commonalities in the ways that Māori cultivate, sustain, and interact with their Māori cliental across the many sources consulted and the viewpoints of kaimahi. Through whakawhanaungatanga, kaimahi have shared that they are able to create relationships, pick up on unspoken queues, and get access to cliental that their Pākehā colleagues have not been able to.

My analysis of the literature reveals themes of colonial influence and the way Māori have not only adapted to the new ways of life imposed upon them but also gradually incorporated Pākehā societal standards into their own whānau or individual culture over the course of several generations. This has resulted in an imbalance of power and elevated the "mainstream" worldview to the status of the best approach to life. When you think about how it may help kaimahi in traditional social work settings, it makes sense. Kaimahi "understands" some of the pain they have been through. Both the historical and spiritual repercussions of colonisation, as well as the consequences of that era's legacy, are worth considering.

Kaimahi saw these innate links in things like shared idioms and jargon, which offered another angle on natural connections. Things like these often go unnoticed yet have significant implications. Using Pūkana eyes, for

instance, or by sharing a tale, a client can show Anahera how they feel about the kōrero without really identifying the sensation or emotion. Anahera was able to identify more than the unsaid cues; she also alluded to the many kupu whānau may employ to characterise events. What I found most intriguing was the usage of colloquial vocabulary, which is not employed in professional or politically acceptable contexts. It's reasonable to assume that kaimahi, who deal with vulnerable people, will have some level of familiarity with the language and culture of the people they serve. A lack of awareness of this fact reveals an inability to distinguish between others and itself and hinders the development of meaningful relationships. Although this is not addressed head-on in the reviewed literature, it is discussed indirectly. The term "colonising hauora" was coined to describe the various ways in which indigenous and Western institutions in Aotearoa may be combined for mutual benefit. Because Māori kaimahi have a greater innate ability to connect with Māori clientele, this strategy acknowledges the necessity of an indigenous approach. This lends credence to the theory that, as Māori, Kaimahi can pick up on subtle cues, ask the correct questions to get the best replies, and increase the likelihood of forming a trustworthy and engaged therapeutic relationship. I'm not saying it's impossible for a Pākehā social worker to connect with a Māori client; however, my opinion based on the literature reviewed and perspectives of kaimahi is that kaimahi Māori have better odds at positive and sustained engagement.

I am curious as to how research may expand upon the discussion of these seemingly unavoidable correlations. It would be fascinating to see how Māori and Pākehā approach their respective clienteles from a social work perspective. Is it different for Pākehā whom have Māori tamariki or whānau? How does this affect the quality of mahi, and is there proof that any beneficial changes or results have persisted for Māori families as a result of this?

## 1.40 Navigating different spaces

The ability to connect with clients on a personal level may be a double-edged sword, causing you to be torn between your professional obligations and the desire to go above and beyond. Although there are mechanisms in place to assist kaimahi to stay safe in their role such as direct supervision or debriefing with a colleague or team leader; there are also occasions when kaimahi must learn the distinction on their own via trial and error. Ngaire recognised that there were instances when she went above and beyond the scope of her position to fight for the whānau she was serving, but that she should not do this on a whim since it would set unrealistic expectations. Alternatively, Kaia shared her experience of learning the difficult lesson that not everyone wants to know why you understand their experience or how you can help them through it and that sometimes the best assistance is to simply listen. In both cases, my kaimahi were tasked with navigating between two distinct environments while maintaining a level of professionalism and mana enhancement in their interactions with the customer.

Through the kōrero shared, my kaimahi recounted the learning opportunities they had as they navigated various circumstances with the whānau they worked with. While the outcomes of their efforts in these settings

may not have been ideal, they did give a chance for introspection and growth. What I learned is that there is no such thing as a flawless practitioner. That resolving an issue is rarely as easy as it seems when dealing with people. Since no one method of practise is without room for improvement, our kaimahi will need to be open to new ideas if they are to effectively aid the whānau, they serve both now and in the future. To sum up, I believe that these encounters allow kaimahi to pause, take stock, and develop a more nuanced understanding of how to best serve their clients, all the while keeping in mind that there is no universal formula for success. Being flexible in how you interact with clients might help you connect with them on a deeper level.

Chapter Two discusses the challenges of communicating in Te Ao Pākehā and Te Ao Māori and why practitioners should not make assumptions about why a whānau are needing support (Eruera & Ruwhiu, 2015; Roberts, 2013). Similar to how it is not tika to make assumptions about any topic based on prior views or cultural norms. By bridging the gap between the two, kaimahi can build relationships with whānau, empowering them to make decisions that will aid in the healing of the whānau, while still carrying out the duties and responsibilities imposed on them by their position. However, if the superiors or co-workers of kaimahi are unwilling or unable to see the value in taking a Te Ao Māori approach, then this might be difficult or even impossible. The opinions of my kaimahi align with Roberts (2013), who suggests that bridging these two worlds is not only challenging but also crucial to sustaining the whakapapa and mana of a whānau.

### 1.41 Lived experiences

Lived experiences is a notion with similar features to "Natural connections" and "For-Māori-by-Māori method," but from a different vantage point. The term "lived experiences" can refer to a shared cultural background or to shared life events. To illustrate, Kaia used her own personal experience with mental health to help her client feel like she knew them and was trustworthy. By connecting to the clientele's lived experiences, show them that they are more than simply a number. That by emphasising these shared experiences, kaimahi were better able to reframe stories and guide their whānau through the difficulties of the present.

Being likeable involves demonstrating a capacity for sympathy and sympathy-inducing understanding. Insightful kaimahi saw gradual and immediate shifts in the whānau they served because of these possibilities. Kaimahi discussed the difficulties and rewards of living in a whānau, noting how they have learned to capitalise on the unique characteristics of their family unit. When a whānau goes experienced a traumatic situation, it is not always possible to look back and remember what happened since everything starts to blend. Kaimahi have the trained eye of an expert, seeing things as they really are and understanding how they all fit together. Pania shared how she overcame obstacles and proved she was different from other social workers. She earned the respect of the whānau via her displays of honesty and responsibility. What this shows is that social workers have not always been helpful and have failed to recognise when they may be doing more damage than good in people's lives. An important part of being a social worker is the responsibility you must keep people safe and assist them in reaching their goals and recovering from trauma.

Micro, meso, and macro efforts may be implemented to recognise people's lived experiences, such as racism, stereotyping, and the perception that people are the way they are because of innate character flaws (Came & McCreanor, 2015; Hill, 2004). My research is supported by the works of Laccarino (2003) and Freeman (1992), who point out that the relationship between trauma and health effects is not always as straightforward and easy as is commonly believed. They also make allusions to the concept that indigenous knowledge is dependent on factors that are hard to pin down, such as background information and intangibles like spiritual and psychological practises. One facet of hauora is the ability to recognise and draw meaning from one's own life experiences. Leaning into life events as a source of healing requires a kaimahi to see beyond the event and outcome and recognise deeper linkages and repercussions.

## 1.42 Quality and thorough practice

Poverty, mental illness, addiction, homelessness, and child abuse are just few of the complex and chronic sociocultural problems that social workers must regularly face and address. Among the many different types of careers, social work stands out for its focus on helping the most marginalised members of society deal with some of society's most intractable issues in low-resource environments. My literature review and results section show that mainstream social work systems don't have the resources required for thorough evaluation and assessment. Although this hinders the capacity to undertake high-quality, in-depth practise, my kaimahi have shown that they can overcome this obstacle when given the chance.

Fundamentally, social workers face these difficulties because they have an ethical obligation to provide excellent care. My kaimahi shared some of the ways they are always trying new things or tweaking their methods to get the best results from their clients. They discussed the administrative mahi that must be prioritised and the measures they take to ensure their own security (through supervision). However, they also discussed the limitations of their position and how it affects the long-term viability of the outcomes for whānau. Nevertheless, there are times when kaimahi are unable to do so due to a lack of resources, poor management, or exhaustion.

As described in Chapter three, social work in mainstream contexts is subject to a variety of governmental and regulatory mandates that, in turn, force practitioners to provide proof of the efficacy of only the highest quality treatments and limit reimbursement to only those services that meet these standards. The capacity of kaimahi to provide services with a firm foundation in evidence and to demonstrate their efficacy is crucial to the future of social work, and to the profession's very existence. I'm not sure that this method properly incorporates indigenous knowledge. As far as I can tell, major systems have rules and policies in place to ensure the wellbeing of their employees and to offer the best possible service to their customers. Since social work is inherently subjective, it cannot be tested reliably (in terms of efficacy). The client may not react to or benefit

from the strict adherence to policy, procedures, and social work models. Given that no two people are the same, it would be unreasonable to evaluate success on one metric alone. It's not quite as simple as that.

When I think about the proof of my kaimahi, I'm happy to see that everyone involved found something that helps them accomplish a good job. What one person considers to be high quality may not be to another. The one thing I have learned is the value of putting aside certain time each week to deal with paperwork and other administrative matters. From a Western perspective, this is crucial since it proves the project is finished. If there are any complaints, management or human resources can look over the paperwork you have filled out as part of your job to see where things went wrong. When the main mahi is conducted in person, there is usually no tangible documentation of this to examine, therefore I am curious as to how things are genuinely assessed and considered. This might be a promising avenue for further study.

My research has led me to the conclusion that kaimahi confront enormous and frequently frightening obstacles. A larger body of research supporting the efficacy of treatments must be compiled and disseminated in a way that is useful for social workers. Some examples include the ways in which we document and make sense of indigenous practises. That means not setting timelines that aren't reasonable for the clients we serve out of some misguided sense of organisational superiority. While I do think structure and Metrics are important, I also think that indigenous practises, like as the kaupapa Māori approach to social work, cannot be evaluated using conventional standards of success. As far as I can tell, kaimahi appear to create their own systems to guarantee high standards of training. It's unclear if these coping methods are formally taught inside the mainstream services or whether they're learned in response to chronic stress or a lack of resources. In addition, I've realised that being Māori gives kaimahi an inherent advantage when interacting with their own people, and that this likely means they'll have more chances to implement high-quality, in-depth practise thanks to their familiarity with the culture, existing networks, and institutional norms.

So how dare we talk about a desire for quality? The idea of seeking the greatest standards in care for the most vulnerable may sound outrageous to others. Even though aiming for excellence is a lofty objective, kaimahi do not settle for anything less. As a profession, social work is well-suited to promoting quality because of its emphasis on ethics, dedication to equality, and proficiency in intervening at many levels of institutions and communities.

## 1.43 Templates versus Indigenous methods of communication

Indigenous methods of communication can sometimes be at odds with Western systems (specifically templates seen within mainstream services). These templates frequently steer a hui or kōrero in a particular direction to elicit a particular reaction. My kaimahi feel the templates are too limiting and do not always capture the essence of the true mahi that takes place because of this. When I reflect and consider the implications to this, I think about the Family Court system and when whānau attempt to reverse custody orders the state may hold. The questions I am left with are: If there are templates in which social workers are reporting to the Family

Court – how does this accurately represent the journey of the whānau? Can this be accomplished at all? Given that the system whānau are fighting against does not wholly and unquestionably respect and incorporate cultural understanding and indigenous techniques of communication, are whānau waging a lost battle? Based on what I have learned during my research, I believe that kaimahi have persistent challenges in completely bringing indigenous frameworks into mainstream social work settings, despite their best attempts to do so. Furthermore, the potential effect kaimahi wield inside their specific places is still noteworthy. My kaimahi have pointed to small ways in which they are helping to document and preserve traditional ways of doing things. Kaimahi can recognise and document their indigenous work in a variety of ways, such as via the use of Māori social work models of practise and the completion of reflective pieces of mahi.

The ability to move fluidly between template-based and indigenous modes of communication has proven to be both a challenge and an opportunity. One example was given of how kaimahi modified the template to include whakapapa, showcasing the adaptability of both the template and the willingness to fight for an indigenous solution. Then another example where mainstream management prevented reflection and detailed casework recording as it was too long and detailed. Unfortunately, this encounter effectively characterises a client's narrative as annoying. It's another proof of an inability to see things as they really are. Given that this was the experience of kaimahi serving Māori customers, I would go so far as to call it a case of institutionalised racism.

As I read more and learn from my kaimahi, I am beginning to see signs that the two approaches can work together. For decades, attempts have been made to discredit indigenous languages and cultures. The colonisers' beliefs were hammered into Māori through a variety of institutions and public platforms. When everything is said and done, it helps the Pākehā succeed while further marginalising the Māori. Intergenerational communication of kaupapa Māori knowledge has been disrupted, and the damage has not been limited to the loss of what once was known: the process of knowledge creation – that is, the use of cultural resources to refine knowledge in the laboratory of daily living – has also been disrupted. My kaimahi are asserting their cultural rights in a more accepting society, and they must now determine how to incorporate their cultural practises into modern life. While Ngaire's supervisor was technically responsible for producing consultation notes, she did so on her own initiative to ensure that kaupapa Māori principles were included. This suggests shared responsibility, but it's also an example of influencing change from within the system to preserve Ngaire's cultural norms and responses.

Many distinct models are used for each service intervention by mainstream social service organisations. The templates may be used as a guide to save time and organise data in a certain way. Contrary to popular belief, I have shown evidence that this is not widely accepted and, in fact, hampers (at times) kaimahi and their capacity to explain analyses from a kaupapa Māori viewpoint. Especially in a way that helps the family unit, or whānau. This illustrates tension between the two approaches, and I do not think it can be disregarded if social workers truly want to help whānau in the long run.

When I continue to analyse the data collected, I am perplexed as to how mainstream processes has continued to be the majority stakeholder. The literature and the experiences of the kaimahi both point to the persistence of mainstream services' colonisation of hauora. Changes are being undertaken (from an institutional perspective and via the efforts of individual kaimahi) to address this issue, yet colonial practises persist. How, for example, commonly used services develop models considering kaupapa Māori principles and how, specifically, to use these models warrants additional investigation.

### 1.44 Te Whare Tapa Whā

This model of health and wellbeing has been used to help kaimahi separate work life from home life which has been key to reducing the effects of burnout and fatigue. It evidences to me that it is a useful tool to not only navigate the challenges and opportunities one faces within mainstream settings; but demonstrates how kaimahi integrate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing (both their own whānau and whānau they work alongside). Moreover, this model allowed kaimahi to feel grounded in times of stress which ultimately impacted their decision making. Being clear in one's mind and looking after ones self-first, allows kaimahi to feel clear headed, more focussed, and better able to make sound decision making. Kaimahi spoke about whānau engagement and allowing opportunity for them to be involved in changing their lives for the better. With kaimahi using Te Whare Tapa Whā both as professional response and on a personal level – helps whānau get the best version of the kaimahi while simultaneously being provided opportunity for kaimahi to demonstrate ways in which this model can be used in daily life. Te Whare Tapa Whā is flexible in how it is used which allows greater opportunity for kaimahi to integrate this into their mahi. What kaimahi spoke about was the versatility this model has when recording case work from an indigenous perspective. While the biggest challenge was recognition of time it can take to complete thorough case notes using this model, they also spoke about the opportunity of clearly recording from a Te Ao Māori perspective what hauora looks like for a whānau at the point in time. My further conclusions are that hauora is ever evolving and changing. Due to this, Te Whare Tapa Whā can be used by kaimahi to reflect these different stages while respecting and upholding the mana of the whānau. Given it is a kaupapa Māori framework/model, Te Whare Tapa Whā allows kaimahi to reflect and record accurately what whānau share – it recognises the tikanga Māori have and cherishes it.

The initial questions I asked each kaimahi allowed for them to share different Pūrākau of their mahi and how the navigate mainstream social work. While I believe that this identified ways in which Māori models of practice was incorporated into their mahi. I am intrigued to know more and dive deeper into their understandings on how this mahi is made transparent to their Pākehā colleagues. I say this, as social work decisions should not be done in isolation and given Māori are the minority within most mainstream social work settings it would be fair to assume that some of the people kaimahi would have to consult with would not be of Māori decent. Are their specific ways in which kaimahi ensure that their colleagues understand casework recording or verbal recollection of events?

## 1.45 Oration

There are strong linkages between the literature and kaimahi with regards to oration and how Māori and other indigenous cultures pass down information. Hooks (1992) argues that Indigenous peoples have long fought for their culture to be protected, heard and respected by others. This includes the traditions in which get passed down (Kuokkanen, 2000). However through colonisation or internal colonialsim there are still process's in place which further capatilise on the oppression of a minority group of peoples (Walters, 2018). When I consider mainstream social work settings and how they function I consider the methods of communication and sharing of information. Pākehā find value in working in isolation within health and believe in written forms of communication as a way to preseve information. This does not traditionally align with Kaupapa Māori values and with Oration being one way in which Tīpuna passed down information, I am left considering how kaimahi effectively record or share this taonga.

According to Roberts (2013), their research places importance of preserving information correctly and in the context to which it is shared. This also supports what the kaimahi expressed when whānau shared their stories with them – often finding it challenging to accurately record their feedback due to time, no consent from whānau or not having whānau around the table to give any additional information to fill in any gaps. As kaimahi continue to work alongside whānau Māori and build upon their understanding to support, whānau will naturally kōrero and share whakapapa (not limited to genealogy but how they arrived in the position they are in). While kaimahi see this as a privilege, while working within mainstream services the fluidity between Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā appears stagnant at times making it hard for information to flow freely and accurately.

I remain conflicted, much like my kaimahi, with regards to recording indigenous practices within ones mahi. As mentioned, navigating between Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā can be challenging for kaimahi within mainstream social services. There is a constant tug between mainstream process's which one is obliged to follow versus providing and implementing a kaupapa Māori response. Kaimahi have been able to identify that recording accurate information is important, but it is difficult to be able to do this from a kaupapa Māori lens due to factors already spoken about. Kaimahi also have faced challenges of whānau not consenting for information to be recorded or not be prepared to share information. I conclude that there is not one right way to do things and ultimately, it requires the kaimahi to whakawhanaungatanga and provide opportunity for the whānau to make a decision that is best for them. With regards to kaimahi, they have demonstrated that they use kanohi ki te kanohi as an opportunity to build rapport and to really listen to the kōrero shared. That there is value in providing whānau the space to feel safe and to talk and that it is the responsibility of the kaimahi to provide this opportunity to engage not expect engagement.

## 1.46 Summary

This section offered a deeper dive into the findings from the literature review and the personal experiences of my kaimahi. Like Chapter Four, this one served to highlight significant themes to better pinpoint research gaps and potential avenues for exploration. Some inferences have been drawn by me about the acquired data and their consistency with the literature. My interpretation of the findings presented in the results chapter led me to the conclusions discussed. This chapter shows how challenging it may be to be a kaimahi in a mainstream social work setting. The concept of hauora is evident, and it is spoken to by kaimahi at great length. This chapter analyses the data and provides some reflection that will be taken through into the next chapter. The data and findings will develop into some concluding statements that discuss how this research answers the key objectives.

# Conclusion

## 1.47 Overview

This conclusion chapter synthesises this study's findings, which focus on the perspectives of kaimahi operating within conventional service delivery models. This research was driven by three main objectives.

1. To investigate how kaimahi navigate the challenges and opportunities of mainstream social work settings.
2. To identify how kaimahi integrate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing.
3. To identify how kaimahi record and acknowledge indigenous practice frameworks when working in mainstream social work settings.

This chapter provides a concise overview of the research's methodology, as well as its conclusions and limitations. A discussion of the research's relevance is provided. As is a conclusion and recommendations for future study are offered.

## 1.48 Kaupapa Māori and Pūrākau

This research engaged six Māori social workers in kōrero using both kaupapa Māori and Pūrākau as the methodological backbone for this research. These principles informed and underpinned the entire research process, from topic formation, through participant interview processes, to the analyses of data. A Pūrākau theoretical approach was also employed in conjunction with Kaupapa Māori theory. This related particularly to the presentation of the kōrero (narrative) in the interviews to analyse the findings. The Pūrākau approach foregrounds the participant’s stories. It enabled access to analyse the comments within their context, while seeking to value their use of words and emotion (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). These qualitative methods enabled respectful interaction with individuals and groups. The participant’s statements about reality are valued as substantial and unique experiences, as opposed to the quantity of times they were stated (Holliday, 2007). The kaimahi involved in this research were all significantly influenced by their whānau (extended family) and by their life experiences. While this was not specifically highlighted within my findings chapter, by engaging in whakawhanaungatanga, we established connection through whakapapa. None of my participants were new graduates and all had at least two years’ experience within mainstream social work settings. All my participants identified as Māori and practiced from a kaupapa Māori lens in the daily practice. However, not all my participants were fluent Te Reo speakers or grew up understanding what/who/how their whakapapa related to them. All believed that being Māori and providing a kaupapa Māori service is a journey.

## 1.49 Objective One – concluding comments

> To investigate how kaimahi navigate the challenges and opportunities of mainstream social work settings.

Throughout the duration of the six interviews, I was presented with different Pūrākau on the many challenges and opportunities my kaimahi have encountered. The research undertaken has evidenced more challenges than opportunities for Māori working within mainstream settings – however given that whānau Māori are a particularly large cohort of clientele, kaimahi have felt a pull to work in this field of social work and to imprint whatever they can in how kaupapa Māori and other indigenous practices are implemented within the walls of their organisation and when working alongside whānau Māori.

As highlighted, kaimahi have talked through the challenges of confronting (on the outset) social norms in which social workers are expected to work (meeting deadlines, recording systems, and making decisions). However, kaimahi described many situations of tokenism, internal colonialism, and direct and indirect racism. This research highlights the opportunity for mainstream social work settings to choose whether to continue with status quo or to make changes actively and aggressively.

Another important takeaway is the impact of dual responsibility and the consequence of burnout and fatigue. As discussed, social work can be a relentless and demanding job, often without praise or thanks. Kaimahi described the different challenges with engaging with whānau and the extra mahi that is put into one's day to provide a culturally responsive practice which benefits the clientele kaimahi are working with. It is unfortunate that this practice is a rarity and often abused by management. Most kaimahi were able to identify different occasions where they have either reached burnout and fatigue and when the kōrero revealed the interdependencies between dual responsibility, tokenism, and racist expectations.

On the contrary, kaimahi also shared the opportunities that have come their way by being Māori within mainstream social work settings. By simply being Māori, kaimahi have found that they are – generally, better equipped to understand basic Māori concepts (such as tikanga, whakapapa, whanaungatanga) than their Pākehā colleagues. However, there are some Pākehā who are able to connect and practice in culturally responsive ways. This in turn, has been pivotal in building connections quicker, understanding cultural trauma more effectively and being able to address root issues with whānau. For social work settings that want to provide more inclusive and indigenous frameworks, the kaimahi were either being offered opportunity to educate, offered opportunities to have specialised Māori caseloads or even offered leadership roles where they can then influence teams. Not all opportunities were taken, however it does indicate there being some advantages to being Māori within mainstream settings.

Kaimahi also spoke to the for Māori-by-Māori approach. This framework comes with the understanding, that Māori know what is best for Māori. It comes with the appreciation that clientele will not have to always go into greater detail for kaimahi to understand. It recognises that kaimahi will often pick up on things that go over the heads of some of their Pākehā colleagues. From a kaupapa Māori lens, this approach provides greater opportunity for both kaimahi and whānau Māori to work in a way that is familiar, safe and from the foundations

of acceptance and respect. Kaimahi were able to speak to the ways in which this framework has provided both professional and personal opportunities.

## 1.50 Objective Two - concluding comments

> To identify how kaimahi integrate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing.

Through the Pūrākau shared, kaimahi spoke about many ways in which they integrated their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing. This question was never asked specifically but kaimahi naturally provided kōrero that has enabled me to answer this objective. In reviewing the findings, I have concluded two key examples.

Firstly, kaimahi have referred to ways in which they have grown rapport and built solid foundations to support whānau to create and implement plans to address trauma and heal. For example, the use of karakia, speaking te reo (even if only basic kupu) and acknowledging how colonialisation has impacted whānau hauora over the years. While recognising that the current actions are not tika or pono – having empathy and basic understandings on the overall journey this whānau and their tīpuna have endured not only creates opportunity for kaimahi to create space for change but supports whānau to create their own plans. This process has also been utilised when kaimahi are needing to ground themselves, re-focus and provide opportunity to unpack and release trauma (both their own and vicarious). Kaimahi can recognise when there is a need – however, there has been times where self-care has not been a priority and therefore an increased chance to burnout and fatigue.

Secondly, some of the kaimahi spoke about how indigenous and culturally responsive practices can work together in harmony. While this is possible in some respects, there were occasions described where this is simply not the case and tokenism, or racist behaviours impact sustainable outcomes for whānau. However, in the context of this objective, I have concluded that at times it is possible to integrate all three together seamlessly. There are times where kaupapa Māori and te Ao Pākehā can walk alongside each other and enable whānau to thrive. These moments also provide opportunity for kaimahi to lead by example rather than do as they say not as they do. We see this in how kaimahi wash off their mahi at the end of the day and how they de-brief and make sound decision making so that the risk does not just sit with them alone. However, this is not inherently the case. Each kaimahi indicated times where they have faced barriers with practice, with western lensed processes, and being able to keep themselves safe (from a hauora perspective). Primarily due to mainstream constructs and management being unable to see the value in an indigenous approach.

## 1.51 Objective Three – concluding comments

> To identify how kaimahi record and acknowledge indigenous practice frameworks when working in mainstream social work settings.

Kaimahi were able to discuss how they value recording systems within their mahi, how this is viewed organisationally and how it benefits the whānau they are working with. Kaimahi collectively agree that mainstream settings are not in complete cohesion with indigenous methods of recording. They do not gel seamlessly and often result in confusion, misinterpretation, or avoidance.

With regards to confusion, misinterpretation, and avoidance, some kaimahi spoke about their Pākehā colleagues sometimes being unable to see or comprehend kaupapa Māori approaches or recognise the impacts of colonisation, simply due to their ethnicity. I do not necessarily agree with this. I do believe there are some Pākehā who are willing and able to implement culturally responsive practice methods. While it is possible to learn, there are just times, where some nuances are just missed. This directly impacts both the recording systems within the mainstream settings and how information is transferred from social worker to social worker. For kaimahi, they have seen incorrect information about whānau on recording systems and from a government lens, this misinformation can lead to some big decision making which can exclude whakapapa, create unnecessary labels, or place certain stigma on whānau. This creates both a challenge and opportunity for kaimahi. Challenge in the sense that they have to re-visit kōrero with whānau, spend time correcting misinformation (which could be in court documents, information forms with various kura or social services) and apologising to whānau were mistakes have been made. Kaimahi acknowledged that this can impact significantly on whakawhanaungatanga but is important to address concerns to move forward. However, this confusion can provide opportunity for kaimahi to accurately record whakapapa and the journey whānau have gone on and going through. Kaimahi spoke about utilising Te Whare Tapa Whā and its four pou (whānau, tinana, hinengaro and wairua) to accurately reflect the journey the whānau are on. It is a framework that is living and can be used at any stage in one's journey. Kaimahi also spoke about ensuring time is set aside to accurately record hui – expecting an hour hui to be 10 minutes of notetaking would indicate that there is no emphasise on the details, the observations, and no comparison of kaupapa Māori principles.

Some kaimahi also spoke to occasions where whānau would not provide consent for whakapapa to be recorded – however mainstream settings expect that this is done. On one hand, I view the mainstream perspective as tokenistic and not representative of how Māori traditionally do things. However, I also see benefit in some aspects of whakapapa being recorded. Having some information recorded (accurately) can aid kaimahi in forming connections quicker, open opportunities for kaimahi to ensure iwi social services have opportunity to support their whānau and provide tamariki who are estranged from their whānau – ability to reconnect. For kaimahi, they had to learn ways in which to navigate/manipulate the systems they worked within

to ensure information was passed on correctly in ways in which whānau consented to (while also upholding) mainstream systems.

## 1.52 Research Limitations and implications

This study only reflects the views and experiences of six participants who identify and whakapapa Māori, and who have worked within mainstream social work systems for at least two years. The sample of participants spanned New Zealand, ranging from Auckland to Wellington. There were no participants from the South Island. However, this was not a demographically reflective sample of the number of Māori social workers or of the Māori population of those areas. One unexpected opportunity that influenced this research was that four out of six participants had worked both within the community, government, and Māori/ iwi-based services, giving them unique insights into organisational practice as it related to Māori social work.

The consequential outcome of this research is the building of knowledge and understanding of how to further develop Māori social work for the benefit of Māori clients and whānau within mainstream social work settings. A cardinal point is that kaimahi need support in developing their cultural knowledge to continue critically integrating concepts of identity. This involves each kaimahi strengthening their ability to articulate and express their identity. This increases their ability to justify practices based on a Māori worldview. A clear outcome is those organisations expectations of what it means to be a Māori social worker, do not align with the expectations of those very workers. Implicit in this research is the diverse realities of kaimahi and the diverse knowledge, skills and values needed to work with whānau Māori and to navigate the mainstream social work systems. Kaimahi need to develop their skills to a level that enables them to meet the needs of all types and kinds of whānau. This research validates kaimahi and their kaupapa Māori based practices and can provide insight into how kaimahi practice in contemporary Aotearoa. Kaimahi need to have confidence in their methods, knowing that their processes do lead to positive outcomes for whānau. A combination of age and experience effected the confidence kaimahi had to navigate and challenge cultural injustice, however ultimately each kaimahi felt that utilising kaupapa Māori practices only enhanced ones mahi and positive outcomes for whānau Māori.

One implication for kaimahi that are tūturu (true or authentic) in their use of tikanga and kawa is that they need to take on the role of a tuakana with their Pākehā colleagues or junior kaimahi and support them in the development of Māori practices in the workplace. While kaimahi have spoken about the dual responsibility, they also acknowledge its importance that their organisations and themselves prioritise this type of support over other duties. If kaimahi are unable to provide this due to their contractual mahi obligations, then organisations need to fund resourcing from external Māori providers to enable opportunity for Māori development. This is to ensure that younger Māori social workers and Pākehā colleagues can learn at an early stage, how to juggle the new social work variables, while maintaining tīkanga practices.

While many social service organisations have made considered efforts to implement Te Tiriti o Waitangi and other culturally appropriate practices, kaimahi have experienced a variety of environments, some that are supportive of tīkanga Māori and some that are not. For organisations to be aware of their level of cultural capabilities – as an organisation, not reliant on individual employees – they need to establish a system of organisational review. Creating an establishment to complete regular reviews could enable the organisation to continually review their internal processes around implementing tīkanga and through this, adequately support Māori social workers.

## 1.53 Implications for Research

While there are many research projects that use a Kaupapa Māori methodology there are many areas within the social work arena where further research could be undertaken. Some of the potential topics for further research are:

1. Pākehā social workers experiences of Māori /iwi social service organisations.
2. Comparison of Māori and Pākehā social workers views of Indigenous practise within statutory social work.
3. Māori processes for positive outcomes from a client /whānau perspective.
4. Developing a greater understanding of how tīkanga underpins social work methods within state social work.
5. How ANZASW review and critique culturally responsive practice – does this positively contribute to outcomes for Māori whānau.
6. How management within mainstream organisations monitor internal processes and culture within the office from a tikanga perspective.

## 1.54 Recommendations

With the above implications in mind, recommendations are now made from the perspective of both the participants and the researcher. This research has shown that there is slow growing knowledge around Māori social work practice, theory, and experiences within the organisational context. It is anticipated that the following recommendations can support the further development of kaimahi for the benefit of Māori, Pākehā practitioners and whānau.

1. For every social work degree within every education institution within Aotearoa New Zealand to provide a dual lens on every compulsory paper taught across the degree. To represent te Ao Māori and te Ao Pākehā.
2. That social service organisations ensure that kaimahi are supported and provided the resources needed to engage from a Māori lens.

3. That social service organisations should commit to providing compulsory training on indigenous methods of practice and their relevance. That this training should be continuous and not a one-off experience.
4. That management of organisations establish a relationship agreement with local iwi and maintain this relationship in accordance with local kawa (protocol).
5. For social service organisations to create and implement systems to audit culturally responsive practices. So that they are implementing the Treaty of Waitangi within the organisation.
6. For internal, external, and cultural supervision to be offered and funded by organisations.
7. For mainstream systems to encourage and provide recording systems that can be utilised from a kaupapa Māori perspective.
8. For institutional racism be addressed promptly by organisations and for there to be a zero-tolerance policy implemented and enacted on.

**Final comments**

This thesis has presented the findings of six kaimahi on their experiences working within mainstream social work settings. It has taken me four years to complete and over this time I have grown and learnt a lot about myself as an individual and as a professional. Social Work is a career in which you should not stop evolving in. Be open to learning new skills, be open to new research and continue striving for sustained and healthy outcomes for our whānau.

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## Appendices

## Appendix one: Application to the Massey University Ethics Committee

-----Original Message-----
From: humanethics@massey.ac.nz <humanethics@massey.ac.nz>
Sent: Friday, 1 November 2019 9:55 am
To: Kaysha.Whakarau.1@uni.massey.ac.nz; Mooney, Hannah <H.A.Mooney@massey.ac.nz>
Cc: Human Ethics <gmhumeth@massey.ac.nz>
Subject: Human Ethics Notification - 4000021175

HoU Review Group

Ethics Notification Number: 4000021175
Title: Navigating mainstream social work settings: perspectives of kaimahi (Māori) social workers on challenges and opportunities

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish require evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to complete the application

form again answering yes to the publication question to provide more information to go before one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

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

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

Yours sincerely

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

## Appendix two: Advertisement for Research Participants

**Navigating mainstream social work settings: perspectives of kaimahi (Māori) social workers on challenges and opportunities**

I am looking for kaimahi Māori social workers who have previously worked, or currently work, in a mainstream social work setting.

I would love to kōrero with you and discuss the challenges and opportunities you have experienced when working in this setting.

I want to investigate how you incorporate an indigenous practice framework when working within mainstream services.

I want to explore and navigate what it is to be kaimahi within the walls of westernised social work. Is the mahi we are producing beneficial for our whānau?

This research needs the voices of kaimahi Māori social work whānau – please consider getting on board this waka and giving life to this research.

***Te Ara Haumaru – created by Sandy Rodgers***

Kia ora koutou, my name is Kaysha Whakarau. I am in the process of completing my Master's in social work and am beginning my journey to writing my thesis. If this topic is something that sits well with you, then I encourage you to read the attached information sheet and to make contact.

Ngā mihi nui.

**Navigating mainstream social work settings: perspectives of kaimahi (Māori) social workers on challenges and opportunities.**

Ko wai au
Ko Ngāti Raukawa raua ko Ngati Ruanui toku iwi
Ko Pareraukawa raua ko Nga Rauru toku hapu
Ko Ngatokuwaru raua ko Waioturi toku marae
Ko Whakarau, ko Rangihaeta, ko Hartley, ko Penny, oku whānau
Ko Kaysha Whakarau toku ingoa.

I am the eldest of 10 children, the four youngest being whangai - becoming a part of my whānau by way of Child Youth and Family (now known as Oranga Tamariki) intervention. Growing up in a Māori whānau I experienced life through the lens of te Ao Māori. I have grown up around mental health, dynamic personalities and experienced several life events which have all shaped me into becoming the strong woman I believe myself to be today.
I am now 25 and currently completing my master's in social work. I have a passion for helping and shaping the future of our Māori whānau and believe that our culture is key to ensuring more positive and sustainable outcomes. I am currently employed as a care and protection social worker at Oranga Tamariki, Lower Hutt. Too often I find myself confined by the walls of policies and procedures and unable to work with our whānau the way I would like to. Therefore, I am interested in exploring how other Māori social workers are navigating this space in their own workplaces.

In the context of my research and my brief introduction, I believe that western approaches have been unsuccessful in making positive changes for all Māori. In the past and currently, Māori families' engagement with mainstream government organisations have been problematic. Research indicates that there is still a lack of cultural understanding, systemic bias and an absence of knowledge around whānau dynamics, values and making connections (Durie, 2011; Durie & Wintrob, 2011 & Moyle 2014).

The purpose of this project is to explore how kaimahi navigate in mainstream social work settings and how they apply a Māori practice framework when working in these mainstream social services. It intends to examine the challenges and opportunities when kaimahi facilitate and negotiate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for whānau wellbeing.

The aims of this research are:

4. To investigate how kaimahi navigate mainstream social work settings in relation to challenges and opportunities.
5. To identify key elements of how kaimahi integrate their personal, professional, and cultural roles for overall whānau wellbeing.

6. To investigate how kaimahi apply their indigenous practice framework when working in mainstream social work settings.

In this stage of the project, I am **inviting you** to share your views and experiences with me on this topic. I would value hearing your views and have incorporated the interview schedule for your information.
I am looking for 6-8 kaimahi and supervisors who:

- Have had at least 2 years' experience working (past or present) in a mainstream social work setting.
- Preferably have a qualification in social work
- Are Māori and utilise Māori approaches in their practice

The interview will follow a tikanga Māori process. I anticipate the interview to be no longer than 1 hour and 30 minutes. The interview will be semi-structured where I will ask prepared questions (find these questions below). However, there will be flexibility for me to prompt further and for you to add any relevant information you think is important.

Interview questions:

- Whānaungatanga, Tell me about yourself? What is your pepehā, age, etc?
- What is your current role?
- How would you describe your social work practice?
- Do you have experience working in other social work settings? How does your current role compare/contrast in relation to how you navigate the space as a Māori social worker?
- What have been some of the cultural challenges you have faced when doing your mahi?
- How do you navigate between Māori practice frameworks and mainstream policy and procedures?
- What are the opportunities for Māori who work in a westernised social work setting?
- How do kaimahi practices (like your own) differ from non-Māori social workers when working with whānau Māori?
- How do you think mainstream social work settings enhance or disenable Māori hauora?
- What do kaimahi in mainstream social work settings need to thrive when working with whānau?
- From a supervisor or supervisee perspective: what does supervision look like for you in a mainstream setting? How does supervision support your practice and navigation of working with whānau Māori from a te ao Māori perspective?
- What are your moemoea for the profession of social work, the Māori social work role and for our whānau Māori?
- Any final comments?

*Exclusion criteria:*

- To avoid any conflict of interest, I will not interview any direct work colleagues or kaimahi I am engaged with currently in practice from other organisations.

Throughout this research I will be utilising Kaupapa Māori methodology. I will record our interview with a digital voice recorder which I will transcribe myself. The data will be analysed using Pūrakau which seems fitting seeing as this methodology recognises past experiences and how they impact today.

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

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study up until you sign to release your transcript;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- 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.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

**Project Contacts**

Should you have any further questions regarding this project I invite you to contact either myself or my supervisors on the below details.

Researcher:

Kaysha Whakarau

Email; [redacted] Phone; [redacted]

Supervisors:

- Hannah Mooney

Email; H.A.Mooney@massey.ac.nz Phone; 06 9516 511

- Tracey Mafileo

Email; T.A.Mafileo@massey.ac.nz

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Prof Craig Johnson, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 85271, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz".

***I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho***

***A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions***

## Appendix three: Consent form

***Navigating mainstream/westernized social work settings: perspectives of kaimahi (Māori social workers) on challenges and opportunities.***

**PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL**

I have read, or have had read to me in my first language, and I understand the Information Sheet attached as Appendix I. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

1. I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.
2. I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.
3. I wish/do not wish to have data placed in an official archive.
4. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

**Declaration by Participant:**

I ________________________________ hereby consent to take part in this study.
[print full name]

**Signature:** ________________________ Date: ________________