Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.
Whitiwhitia i te ora!

Culture and Occupational Therapy:  
A Māori Case Study

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Māori Studies at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Masters in Philosophy  
at Massey University, Manawatu,  
New Zealand.

Jane Christine Huia Hopkirk  
2010
KARAKIA WAEREĀ

Whitiwhitia i te ora!
Whitiwhitia i te ora!
Ka ea ki runga
Ka ea ki raro
He tipua he tawhito
He ioio nui, he ioio roa
He ioio atua Tane te Wananga
Houhia te uru ora
He ueue tawhito, he ueue tipua
He ueue atua
Rongomai atua
E hua to tino
E hua to aro
E hua to ariki ē
Kia tapatapa tu
Kia tapatapa rangi
Ki nga rangi nao ariki
Ki nga rangi tatara
Kia eke tiritiri o nga rangi
Tuturu o whiti whakamaua kia tina, tina
Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e!1 (Jury in Wairarapa Moana Trust, 2007).

This karakia waerea was gifted to me by whānau to use in this research. It was used by Te Matorohanga to clear the marae ātea when the Māori Parliament met at Papawai in the mid 1800’s. It was recorded by my great great Uncle Whatahoro Jury (Ngāti Muretu, Ngāti Moe) (Whatahoro) as part of mātau ranganga Māori he wrote down in te reo over that time. This karakia threads right through the thesis as does the influence of my whānau especially Whatahoro. The journey he took in walking in two worlds that of his Māori mother and Pākehā father has inspired me in my journey and in my use of dual - cultural clinical practice in occupational therapy.

1 This karakia has not had macrons inserted as the original did not have them. To gain the right meaning the karakia must be listened to and left to the hearer to interpret along with whenua understandings. This also has not been translated and has meanings in the Wairarapa but these belong to te ao Māori and so remain in te reo.
ABSTRACT

This master’s research reports the findings of a mixed methodology study based on qualitative and quantitative data that considers culture in occupational therapy practice from a Māori perspective.

Health perspectives of Māori and occupational therapy are explored and similarities identified. Tangata whaiora responsive practice (client-centred), holistic and wairua (spiritual) views are mutual themes. Whenua/taiao and environment also held great significance for both Māori and the profession, though occupational therapy modified the environment to enable safety, whereas Māori negotiate with the environment prior to making it safe. The major differences, in perspectives, were the recognition of whānau and the interdependent relationships so critical to whānau and whānau ora, with occupation identified as a significant perspective not supported as so significant to Māori practitioners. The implications of these differences were explored in this dissertation.

Eighteen occupational therapists self-selected to participate in a questionnaire given out at a professional conference workshop on culture, and this was forwarded to further participants who expressed an interest. Some of the respondents self-identified as Māori. Five specialists were identified to interview: three occupational therapists, two Māori health specialists, one an occupational therapy specialist who was Pākehā. A professional workshop of around 24 participants, self identifying as Pākehā, also contributed to the identification of health perspectives. The final source of information came from the researcher’s participation in numerous hui of varying sorts where Māori health was forwarded. Where appropriate, and in order to provide greater substance and depth to the research, selected quotes from these sources are used. These are further designed to bring a more personal feel to the research and to illustrate how the various concepts impact on lives and ultimately influence practice.
Traditional practice and Māori understandings of occupation were also explored as were the development needs of Māori occupational therapists as minor themes to the key findings.

Providing holistic occupational therapy care to Māori in a respectful and collaborative way will provide opportunities for the profession to have a positive impact on the health of individuals, their whānau and, in turn, their communities, hapū and iwi.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has been a journey of discovery not only for me but also for my family, and when whānau work to support a dream it is amazing what can happen.

Thank you John my husband for all you did and to my children Huia, Stephanie and Robert for allowing me the time I took to do this research. Dad thanks for all the editing and Mum would have been proud of this!

Te Kani Kingi has been a wise supervisor guiding this research and effectively teaching me much about the research process. Thank you for all your direction.

Te Rau Puawai especially Moni and Fee (Māori mental health scholarship) were fantastic support and I could not have done this without them.

I would also like to thank especially the participants of this study without whom there would be no research. It was exciting having each one of you as part of my research with your varied thoughts and insights.

This research is an offering to Kaiwhakaora Ngangahau (Māori Occupational Therapists) for having a passion to provide culturally relevant practice to Māori whānau.

Jane Hopkirk
CONTENTS

KARAKIA WAEREĀ ................................................................. ii

ABSTRACT ........................................................................ iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ......................................................... v

CONTENTS ........................................................................ vi

TABLES AND FIGURES ................................................................. xi

CHAPTER ONE: WHITIWHITIA I TE ORA ........................................... 1

Introduction ........................................................................ 1

Background ........................................................................ 3

Māori Health ....................................................................... 7

The Indicators of Health Status .............................................. 7

Māori Perspectives of Health ............................................... 9

Occupational Therapy ........................................................ 11

Occupational Therapy History ............................................. 12

Māori Access to Occupational Therapy Services ............... 16

CHAPTER TWO: CULTURAL COMPETENCE ................................. 18

Introduction: ....................................................................... 18

Definitions .......................................................................... 20

Definition of Culture .......................................................... 20

Definition of Health ............................................................ 21

Māori Perspectives of Health .............................................. 22

Traditional Māori Perspectives of Health ......................... 22

Whare Wānanga ................................................................. 22

Māori Society and Health Concepts .................................... 23

Health Effects of Colonisation ............................................ 24

Tino Rangatiratanga .......................................................... 26
Ethnicity ............................................................................................................ 54
Employment Setting .......................................................................................... 58
Highest Qualification ......................................................................................... 60
Experience in Mental Health ............................................................................. 62
Age of Respondents .......................................................................................... 63
Services to Māori ............................................................................................... 65
Summary of Quantitative Data .............................................................................. 66
Qualitative Data Questionnaire ............................................................................. 68
Is Culture Significant For Practice? And Why? .................................................. 69
What Do You Think Are Core Health Perspectives for Occupational Therapy? 72
Does Culture Play A Role In Your Practice? ..................................................... 79
List Māori Health Perspectives You Think Are Significant For Use In Your Practice. ............................................................................................................ 82
What Barriers Prevent Integrating the Māori And Occupational Therapy Perspectives into your Practice and Why? ........................................................ 84
Do You Have Access To Māori Culture Yourself? And If Yes How? ............... 85
What are the Three Most Significant Things That Could Support You in Your Development as a Māori Occupational Therapy Practitioner? ...................... 88
What Are The Most Significant Workforce Development Needs for Māori Occupational Therapists? ................................................................. 90
Summary .............................................................................................................. 92
Qualitative Data Interviewees ............................................................................... 94
From Your Perspective what are Key Māori Aspirations? Why? ....................... 94
What are some of the Challenges Involved in Merging Māori and Western Health Perspectives? ...................................................................................... 97
What Does Occupation/Doing Mean for You? ................................................. 100
Is There Anything Not Explained by Occupation/Doing or Activity in Your World View? ........................................................................................................ 103
Did Māori Have an Understanding of Occupation/Doing In Pre-Colonial Times? ................................................................. 104
What Do You Think Are Core Health Perspectives For Occupational Therapy? .................................................................................................................................................................................. 106
How Could Occupational Therapy (Treatment And Care) Be More Responsive to The Needs of Māori? ................................................................. 109

CULTURAL COMPETENCE .......................................................................................................................... 109
CLIENT CENTERED PRACTICE .................................................................................................................. 113
WHĀNAU PERSPECTIVES ......................................................................................................................... 113
COLLECTIVE PERSPECTIVE ..................................................................................................................... 114
PARTICIPATION ........................................................................................................................................... 115
IDENTITY .................................................................................................................................................. 116

What Barriers Prevent the Integration of Māori And Occupational Therapy Health Perspectives Into Practice? ................................................................. 117
Workforce Development Priorities for Māori Occupational Therapists? ................................................................. 119
Do You Have Any Other Comments You Would Like To Make? ......................................................................................... 121

Summary .......................................................................................................................................................... 121

Health Perspectives Occupational Therapy Workshop ................................................................................................. 123

CHAPTER FIVE: INFORMATION ANALYSIS .......................................................................................................... 126

Introduction .......................................................................................................................................................... 126

Themes ............................................................................................................................................................. 127

The Place Culture Has In Occupational Therapy Practice ................................................................................................. 127
The Interface between Māori and Occupational Therapy Health Perspectives ................................................................. 130

Tangata Whaiora Responsive Practice .............................................................................................................. 130
Spirituality Views .................................................................................................................................................. 133
Holistic View .................................................................................................................................................... 134
Environment and Whenua/taiao ......................................................................................................................... 136
Whānau and Whānau Ora .................................................................................................................................... 137

Traditional and Contemporary Knowledge of Occupation .......................................................................................... 139
The Final Consideration In The Data Was The Support Of Māori Occupational Therapy Practitioners. How Should Māori Practitioners Be Supported And Validated? ....................................................................................................... 144

Conclusion .......................................................................................................... 146

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION ............................................................................. 148

Context ............................................................................................................... 151

Implications for Occupational Therapy .............................................................. 152

Occupational Therapists Who Identify As Māori ................................................. 154

Best Practice Development ................................................................................ 155

Training ............................................................................................................... 156

Services .............................................................................................................. 156

Policy .................................................................................................................. 157

Recommendations: ............................................................................................. 158

Concluding Thoughts ......................................................................................... 159

REFERENCES ....................................................................................................... 160

APPENDICES ........................................................................................................ 168

Appendix 1: Glossary .......................................................................................... 168

Appendix 2: Ethics Approval ............................................................................... 171

Appendix 3: Consent Form ................................................................................. 172

Appendix 4: Information Sheet .......................................................................... 173

Appendix 5: Questions Asked ............................................................................. 176
TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1 Hui, Workshops and Conferences .......................................................... 48

Figure 1 Māori and Non-Maori Visits to Other Health Professionals .......... 16

Figure 2 Ethnicity n=23 .................................................................................. 55

Figure 3 Numbers of identified ethnicity n=23 ............................................... 56

Figure 4 Māori and other ethnicity n=11 ......................................................... 57

Figure 5 Employment setting n=23 ................................................................. 58

Figure 6 Highest Qualification n=21 ............................................................. 61

Figure 7 Experience in mental health n=23 .................................................... 62

Figure 8 Ages of Respondents n=18 .............................................................. 64

Figure 9 Frequency of services to Māori n=23 ............................................. 65

Figure 10 Why culture is important in occupational therapy n=15 ............. 69

Figure 11 Occupational Therapy Health Perspectives Questionnaire n=18 .... 72

Figure 12 Māori occupational therapy n=7 .................................................... 76

Figure 13 Culture and its place in practice n=18 ........................................... 79

Figure 14 Māori perspectives of health identified n=6 .................................. 82

Figure 15 Barriers preventing Māori and occupational therapy practice integration n=6 ............................................................. 84

Figure 16 Access to own Māori culture n=6 .................................................. 86

Figure 17 Activities to Support Development as a Māori Occupational Therapists n=6 ............................................................. 88

Figure 18 Workforce Development Needs n=6............................................. 90

Figure 19 Key Māori perspectives of health n=5 ........................................... 94
Figure 20 Challenges in merging two worlds n=5 ............................................ 97
Figure 21 Occupational terms n=5.................................................................. 101
Figure 22 The meaning of Occupation n=5..................................................... 101
Figure 23 Activities not always described by actions n=5.............................. 103
Figure 24 Pre-Colonial Occupation n=5.......................................................... 104
Figure 25 Occupational Therapy Perspectives n=5........................................ 106
Figure 26 A Sub-set of occupational themes n=5.......................................... 107
Figure 27 Responsiveness of Occupational Therapy to Māori n=5................. 109
Figure 28 Reduction of Barriers n=4............................................................... 117
Figure 29 Workforce development Priorities n=5.......................................... 119
Figure 30 Health Perspectives Occupational Therapy Workshop n=24 .......... 123
Figure 31 Framework...................................................................................... 153