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Ko au te wahine Māori

**A phenomenological study of Maori women
diagnosed with a mental illness and their
experiences of pregnancy and childbirth**

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WHAKAPAPA

Ko Mamari toku waka

Ko Ruanui te tangata

Ko Oruphana toku maunga

Ko Herikino toku awa

Ko Whakamaharatanga toku marae

Ko Ngati Hine toku hapu

Ko Te Rarawa me Te Arawa oku iwi

Ko Putongaroa Pukeroa toku mama

Ko John Semmons toku papa

Ko Wendy Semmons toku ingoa

Ko Max raua Ko Harry oku tamaiti

ABSTRACT

To date there have been no specific studies undertaken about Maori women, diagnosed with a mental illness and their experiences of pregnancy and childbirth, and the services they accessed during this period. I look at the history of psychiatry and psychology and compare that with what it means for Maori to be well, and the differences in treatment approaches between the two. The research involved a review of the literature relative to the study. However, given the paucity of research written about this topic, a wide range of literature was used to form the backdrop to the study. Using a phenomenological approach following Colaizzi's method, seven Maori women diagnosed with a mental illness as described by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, fourth edition (DSM-IV) were interviewed and their narratives analysed.

The four criteria for inclusion in the study were that the women:

- I. identify as being Maori;
- II. have experienced pregnancy, and childbirth;
- III. had a diagnosis of mental illness, and considered stable enough to take part in the proposed study, as assessed by the Maternal Mental Health staff involved and;
- IV. there was no documented neurological illness, brain damage, or mental retardation,

Three major themes emerged which formed the basis for the analysis. Specifically, identity as a Maori, the treatment approaches participants encountered, and how and why tikanga Maori should be integrated into service delivery for Maori.

The results of the study indicate that the participants felt there was a lack of co-ordinated care between services, and that much needs to be done in order to provide appropriate health and mental health treatments for Maori. This includes further research and ongoing workforce development.

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This thesis is dedicated to the participants of this research study.

Ko au te wahine Maori – Here I am a Maori women.

GLOSSARY

haka	posture dance, war dance
hapu	pregnant, or subtribe
hinengaro	mental, emotional
iwi	tribe, people
kai	food
kaumatua	male elder
kaupapa	plan
koha	donation, gift, contribution
kuia	female elder
mana	power, prestige,
rangatira	respected, of high rank
rongo	herbal remedies, plants
tane	man
tangata whaiora	participant, patient
te ao Maori	maori society, maori world
tikanga	custom, rules
tino rangatiratanga	chieftainship, self-determination
tipuna	ancestor
tohunga	priest, expert
turangawaewae	a place to stand
wahine	woman
wairua	spirit
whakatauiiki	proverb
whanau	family, to give birth
whakapapa	genealogy
whanaungatanga	extended family,
family oriented relationships	
whare	house, building
whenua	land, earth, afterbirth

