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TIKANGA OR TOKENISM?
KAIMAHI EXPERIENCES WITH THE FAMILY GROUP
CONFERENCE PROCESS

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Abstract

The Family Group Conference (FGC) emerged in response to the lack of culturally competent social work practice and institutional racism embedded within statutory policies. Ultimately, Māori were subject to statutory policies and processes that marginalised their voices and disempowered their decision-making. By introducing the FGC, tikanga (values) would be implemented into the process thus empowering whānau to take a lead role in decision-making. As a result, whānaungatanga (relationships) would be stronger as the process will be more collaborative and engaging. Inevitably, substantial change to these processes and policies have been drawn out with whānau continuing to be disadvantaged.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, any opportunity to build or maintain whānaungatanga was severed. For whānau in the care system, this further exacerbated pre-existing challenges such as isolation from wider whānau due to the imposed social distancing requirements when whānau already suffered from disconnection. Nevertheless, an overwhelming number of tamariki and their whānau still continue to enter the care system. For many this has become an intergenerational “normality” of experiencing the same trauma. Expectedly, whānau have grown distrustful of the system and the professionals, often revoking engagement. In order to understand what barriers there are in the current FGC process, a comprehensive insight into the realities of those on the frontline is necessary.

The present research addresses this knowledge gap through amplifying the voices of the community kaimahi (workers) who operate the space between statutory and community. Often overlooked by other agencies and labelled as “non-qualified,” kaimahi harbour an incredibly valuable and rich array of knowledge due to their constant engagement with the whānau they support. Adopting a Kaupapa Māori research, ethnographic approach whilst drawing from elements of autoethnography, the experiences of three kaimahi were explored. Insights into how they perceive the FGC and locate themselves within a network of relationships and narrative were gained through go-along interviews and a reflective research journal. Drawing from two forms of Māori narrative analysis: Pūrakau and Kaupapa Kōrero, this permitted a vast range of considerations. Affirming whānau as decision-makers during this process and promoting a Te ao Māori process encompassing a range of traditional practices is pivotal to enhancing the mana of whānau and pathways out of the care system. Future research derived from Kaupapa Māori principles is necessary to invoke meaningful change.

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Chapter One: Introduction

E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangīātea

I will never be lost, for I am the seed which was sown from Rangīātea

I begin with this whakataukī as it speaks to the to the whakapapa (ancestry) of all Māori to Rangīātea, the original migration source in the Pacific Ocean. In referring to the “seed” as people or tamariki (children), there is an inherent promise for growth and development. The seed’s potential is activated by ruia, the planting and establishing of a proper foundation. When given the optimum conditions of nurture and support, the seed will thrive, thus creating a link between the seed’s potential and actualisation (Williams, Ruru, Irwin-Easthope, Quince & Gifford, 2019, P.1). This whakataukī (proverb) encapsulates the purpose of this research as ruia earths the seed, just as the intention of the FGC process was to establish a foundation from which he kākano (seed, or child) can be nourished by whānau and services to develop and progress forward. Like a person, a seed is inextricably linked to past, present and future generations. It comes from something, belongs to someone or something and it cannot be detached or isolated from those connections (Williams et al., 2019). The kaimahi (Māori workers) in the present research are representative of the kaitiaki in the FGC space who nourish he kākano to travel forward to Rangīātea and from it, depicting the start and end of the journey of potential as well as the arrival to the point of opportunity to realise it (Williams et al., 2019). Thus affirming the connecteness of Māori as people and their identities is fundamental to overall hauora (health) and actualisation of potential.

This ignited a realisation within me that was; as a kaimahi working within this space who has such a vital role in nourishing the taiohi (young person) during this process, was my voice and experiences as well as others, truly heard and reflected in research and consultation? Often it is the voices and experiences of social workers being reflected and whilst I will not minimise the importance of the role social workers have, kaimahi in this space are also part of the ruia and their experiences are also valuable and uniquely individual.

Firstly to set the scene of how the FGC process came to be, chapter one will discuss the child welfare system prior to and after the reformation period of the 1980’s – 1990’s. In particular how colonisation impacted on Māori communities, traditional whānau structures and child rearing practices. Following this, it will also discuss the shift in political mindset that occurred during the reformation period and the acknowledgement of the lack of adherence to

Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the child welfare system to what it has eventuated to in the present FGC process.

Subsequently, chapter two discusses how the present research is informed by Kaupapa Māori research principles. It further describes how ethnography and autoethnography methods were used to collect qualitative data through case-based research interviews and how I was uniquely positioned to immerse myself within this environment to gain a deeper insight into the narratives of the kaimahi. Finally, this chapter discusses the narrative analysis process utilised for the three kaimahi I had interviewed, drawing on two Kaupapa Māori informed methods; Pūrakau and Kaupapa Kōrero, to uncover layers of meaning behind the Kaimahi narratives from a Te Ao Māori worldview. Chapter three presents my analysis for the three kaimahi. Finally, chapter four flows into a discussion of the broader issues as addressed in the previous chapters, key findings from this research in relation to relevant past research and implications for contribution to current and possibly future knowledge regarding the FGC process.

Historical background

In order to explore the role of FGCs within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, it is useful first to consider historical and cultural understandings of what families, or whānau, are, and how this might impact upon the functioning of the FGC process. This is because the concept of family is not culturally universal (Sear, 2021). During the early modern period, most European countries were undergoing a time of religious reformation and political centralisation, drawing on the model of a patriarchal family and undermining familial influence (Muravyeva, 2013). This notion idealised the “nuclear family,” comprised of a “traditional” husband and wife unit, assumed to be completely autonomous in raising their children (Sear, 2021). However, Kramer (2010) argues that humans are instinctively co-operate in reproductive nature, meaning that a more accurate portrayal of a “family” is flexible, with emphasis on extended family and kinship ties key to thriving family structures and child-rearing practices.

In Māori culture, Whakapapa (genealogy) brings together whaka (the process of becoming) and papa (something broad such as a rock) to share the foundation of how Māori came to be (Hudson, Ahuriri-Driscoll, Marino and Rod, 2007 as cited in Connor, 2019), extending beyond the translation of family or lineage to encompass our connectedness as people and the connectedness of all living things (Connor, 2019). As opposed to the view of the Christian Church where extended family kinships were discouraged in order to shift toward a nuclear family mentality (Sear, 2021). Such displacement of culturally familiar whānau structures, which focuses on collectivism and extended kinships, highlights the emphasis on the western concept of the nuclear family and the broader focus on individualism (Hsu, 1971 as cited in Kumar, Dean, Smith & Mellso, 2012). The impact of assimilation worked to break down traditional Māori society by weakening the base of whānau, hapū and iwi (Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1988 as cited in Moeke-Pickering, 1996). Although within most iwi and hapū agreement exists on some principles of Māori culture, there is also flexibility and diversity in opinions and interpretations of whānau which contrasts with the rigidity of the nuclear family concept.

Traditionally, the concept of whānau was intertwined with iwi, hapū and waka. Keeping within the confines of their tribal affiliations, each whānau mixed, rekindled, migrated and formed fresh relationships (Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1998 as cited in Moeke-Pickering, 1996). Immersing within a whānau provided a sense of collective affiliation, roles and responsibilities to unite people whilst instilling the value of whānaungatanga (importance of building and maintaining relationships in culturally patterned ways) within the younger generation to pass on to future generations (Moeke-Pickering, 1996). This differed significantly from the patriarchal model, where the idea of the “male breadwinner” norm was introduced by colonial authorities and Christian missionaries. Typically, males had a very authoritative role over their wives; whose primary role was to bear and raise children (Seare, 2021).

Whānaungatanga describes these responsibilities that ultimately bind kin through their network of relationships derived from whakapapa (Williams et al., 2019).

Whānau is the primary expression of relationships through whakapapa (Williams et al., 2019). The collective whānau, comprised of grandparents, great-grandparents, uncles, and aunts, situated within broader hapū (sub-tribe) and iwi (tribe) connections, who worked collaboratively to ensure that Māori values, knowledge and practices were sustained for the younger generations (Wirihana & Smith, 2019). A primary aim within this whānau structure was to provide for their children in the context of a nurturing and protective environment (Mikaere, 1994; Walker, 2004; Wirihana, 2012; Wirihana & Smith, 2019). However, cumulative changes in whānau structures have resulted in kaumātua and kuia being less likely to have a central role in raising tamariki. The traditional support structures of co-operating and to maintain and develop along prescribed ways for collective benefit were not as strong as they previously were (Edwards, McCreanor & Moewaka-Barnes, 2007). However, Māori proved to be resilient. As Walker (1989) has noted, there has been an ongoing commitment by Māori to cultural continuity, with the vast majority of Māori whānau having rejected assimilation and have worked to set up structures to enhance Māori well-being.

Māori culture has rich, oral traditions that draw on many narrative forms especially when communicating with tamariki (Reese, Taumoepeau & Schaughency, 2020). An example of this was that waiata oriori (lullabies) were sung to tamariki, verses were focused on their turangawaewae (place of standing), whakawhānaungatanga and wairua (spirituality) emphasising to listeners that tamariki were indeed tapu (sacred) and must be protected (Jenkins & Harte, 2011). Samuel Marsden, an English born priest observed Māori society in 1832 and noted that Māori methods of child-rearing were positive, children were included in everyday activities and not “subdue to their violent passions” regarding discipline (Marsden, 1832). In further observation, Māori parents always appeared happy and indulgent in their children and

their activities and there were no finer children in the world than in New Zealand (Marsden, 1932).

Traditionally, if a collective decision was made that tamariki needed nurturing and protection, the whānau would whāngai tamariki to other whānau members or into the extended hapū or iwi to be raised. The meaning behind whāngai is to “feed or nourish” in not just the literal sense but culturally, emotionally, and spiritually through affection, instruction, and aroha (Bradley 1997 as cited in McRae & Nikora; 2006). Paramount to the Māori world view, keeping tamariki within their own kin group maintains and affirms whakapapa to strengthen whānau without relinquishing their claims to their birth identity (Bradley 1997 as cited in McRae & Nikora; 2006). The practice of whāngai sought to promote self-identity and mana of tamariki, in turn enhancing the entire well-being of the whānau and community as the needs of the tamariki are met holistically (McRae & Nikora, 2006).

Social structures in Māori society changed drastically with the impact of colonisation, particularly with the creation of The Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. The Treaty was an agreement, signed in 1840, between representatives of the British crown and approximately 540 Māori rangatira (chiefs). Although the Treaty was translated into Māori (Te Tiriti o Waitangi), the English version failed to convey the Māori understanding of what was outlined in Te Tiriti and the difference was not clarified (Orange, 2015). Notably, 33 rangatira signed the Treaty as opposed to the 540 who signed Te Tiriti, based on oral discussions in Te Reo Māori and that the document would be understood as a whole in its intent and meaning (Blincoe, 2015). Claimants continue to debate the agreement to this day, stating that Māori lore would not subject their tūpuna (ancestors) to cede their mana and rangatira (Blincoe, 2015). Presently, the Waitangi Tribunal ¹ concluded that a deliberate mistranslation occurred to assert

¹ The Waitangi Tribunal is a commission of inquiry that makes recommendations on claims brought by Māori relating to Crown actions which breach the promises made in The Treaty of Waitangi (<https://waitangitribunal.govt.nz>)

colonisation as “few rangatira would have envisaged the Government interfering with Māori affairs” and would require significant convincing (Henare, 2010). Unlike a constitution or statutory law, Te Tiriti was to act as a covenant; an exchange of promises between two parties that would be upheld. The British Crown had a notorious record for failing to protect Indigenous peoples from the worse effects of European contact such as disease, degradation, and eventually racial extinction (Orange, 2010). Arguably, the Te Tiriti would contribute to redeeming this negative record and was comprised of three main articles.

In the English translation, the first article declared that the Crown had absolute sovereignty over all Māori land with no reservations, compared to the Māori (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) translation; kawatanga which Māori believed would be held by the Crown (Stenson, 2012, p. 10). Notwithstanding the word kawana, a transliteration of the English word governor, then later expanded upon as kawatanga (Daley, 2004, p.1). The word was created by missionaries to ideally provide a close transliteration of governorship. Considering the implications of the Lord’s Prayer; kia tae mai tou rangatiratanga (thy kingdom come), rangatiratanga in this context implies absolute authority (Daley, 2004, p.1). It has been acknowledged that the colonial notions of ‘ownership’ and ‘sovereignty’ were attached to the concept of tino rangatiratanga but in its true essence it encompasses a collective understanding of sovereignty beyond the individual (Henare, 2010).

The second article referred to the Crown having possession of all Māori property whereas in Te Tiriti; tino rangatira (chieftainship) over “ratou taonga katoa” (precious treasures) including children, was to remain with Māori (Stenson, 2012). It was loosely understood that Māori would give the Crown the powers of a governor but retain the powers of rangatira (Daley, 2004, p.1). In terms of greater mana and absolute authority, this would insinuate that rangatira hold this above any type of governor. This is further proclaimed in the missionaries Māori translation of the Catholic Bible in which Caesar was the rangatira of Rome,

subsequently others in positions of power were referred to as kawana (Daley, 2004, p.1). By 1840, there were approximately 2000 Pākehā residing in New Zealand, Māori became frustrated at their lack of respect for tikanga and saw Te Tiriti as a strategic alliance in which Pākehā governors would only govern Pākehā subjects (Blincoe, 2015).

Finally, the third article guaranteed the crown's protection over Māori, with equal rights and privileges as British subjects, however the emphasis remains on 'equal.' (Stenson, 2012). Co-incidentally, the emphasis shifted to a 'special' relationship between the Crown and Māori. Evidently, there were significant differences in what the two different versions embodied. Notably, Te Tiriti had more signatures from Māori than the Treaty, it was also the version they had more of an understanding of (Daley, 2004). The Treaty laid the basis for amalgamation of Māori society with a British settler community (Orange, 2010). It was irrefutable at the time that representatives of the Crown did not intend to preserve traditional Māori society but destroy it (Humanitarian Movement, 1830 as cited in Orange, 2010), ultimately resulting in a community built upon British values and law.

The ongoing contest of sovereignty continued into 1872, war was rampant in New Zealand as British forces fought for settlement whilst inter-tribal wars escalated over resources and establishing mana (Smith, 2012). Early contact with the British saw a flood of weapons that increased inter-tribal violence and war, the concept of utu (repayment) and muru (justice) aligned with that of European warfare (Smith, 2012). In traditional Māori society, compensation and retribution was reciprocal (Tāhū o te Ture, Ministry of Justice, 2021). If a whānau, iwi or hapū took the property of another, offenders welcomed the victims to take their property as compensation. This was not met with animosity as it allowed justice and status to be restored (Tombs & Finsterwalder, 2021). The protocol included collective decision making between the whānau, iwi and hapū on both sides to determine compensation as well as awhi (support) when a decision had been made.

Cultural assimilation was inevitable part of the British colonial project. The introduction of the Native Schools Act in 1867 was founded in support of European ideals of societal norms, morals and ways of being (Stephenson, 2006). Such institutionalisation was an attempt by the British to reaffirm their agenda to successfully “civilise” and assimilate Māori into a British belief system (Stephenson, 2006). Prior to this new legislation, they were unsuccessful, as Māori remained resistant to being alienated from their land and cultural practices. The Act supported radical methods to enforce European beliefs and cultural primacy by allowing the beating of tamariki Māori who spoke Te Reo Māori in the classroom (Hoskins, Toker & Jones, 2020). Many Māori petitioned for the schools to educate their tamariki on how to “cope with the Europeans” in a progressive way which still encompassed Māori education (Simon, 1998, p. 12 as cited in Hoskins, Toker & Jones, 2020). However, Māori parents initially opposed to the coercive notions of European punishment, but Māori teachers subsided to the practice as well, which, ironically, was to show care for the welfare of tamariki at school (Soloman, 1999 as cited in Hoskins, Toker & Jones, 2020).

Despite great attempts to ascertain their political dominance, the British still faced uncertainty in retaining the political power they had gained over the previous years of colonization. During this period, the Tohunga (traditional Māori healer) Suppression Act 1907 was passed. The British claimed this was to reform Māori health, through westernised medicine, as the Māori population has decreased to the point of extinction from introduced diseases (Stephens, 2001). Arguably, this health reformation failed in its’ intention, resulting in one subsidised doctor for approximately 3,500 Maōri, in a rural area where hospitals were inaccessible (Ward 1995 as cited in Stephens, 2001). This act symbolised the British’ efforts to neutralise Māori autonomy over their health and cultural practices, as well as revoking any importance of spiritual health as this did not fit the westernised view of health (Stephens, 2001).

It is clear that colonisation impacted significantly on Māori. This has heavily influenced the state's involvement in the welfare of tamariki Māori, particularly as traditional structures became fragmented and whānau support systems dislocated, which previously had contributed to the collective health and well-being of Māori for generations (Reweti, 2022).

Compounding these issues, the impact of World War II instigated not only a rise in birth numbers but also mass urbanisation (Woods, 2002 as cited in Ahuriri Driscoll, Blake, Potter, McBreen & Mikaere, 2022). Māori modes of social organisation, such as the concept and practice of whāngai, was diminished in favour of re-building a nation focused on the nuclear family (Labrum 2002; Woods 2002; Ahuriri-Driscoll et al., 2022). Mass urbanisation of Māori further challenged whānau structures, as grandparents and extended whānau were more absent and there was no collective incorporation of culturally patterned social practices or Te Reo Māori (Collins and Wilson, 2008).

For tamariki this meant their whānau were forced to change their lifestyle to a rely on a nuclear family structure (Tangaere, 1989 as cited in Collins and Wilson, 2008), alienated from broader whānau structures, customs and values that contributed to stabilising their identity and well-being (Collins and Wilson, 2008). Furthermore, intermarriage resulting from urbanisation, between Māori and Pākehā reaffirmed the adoption of European parenting values and practices by Māori as well as the nuclear family structure (Moeke-Pickering, 1996).

This became the catalyst for the introduction of The Closed Adoptions 1955 Act in New Zealand which considerably effected whānau dynamics in Māori society for many decades (Labrum 2002; Ahuriri-Driscoll, 2022). As a result, many tamariki Māori were severed from their whakapapa and exposed to a fictitious narrative in the form of fake birth certificates and adoption records (Haenga-Collins, 2019). This was not to suggest that tamariki Māori were “unwanted” by their whānau, hapū and iwi. Whānau Māori made applications through the court system to “legitimise” whāngai in a legal sense but were often rejected due to imposed income

testing and age (Haenga-Collins, 2011). Although this was not written in statutory law, it was a working policy fuelled by the notion of superior Pākehā nuclear families (Savage, Moyle, Ahuriri-Driscoll, Hynds, Maraki & Leonard, 2021). As tamariki Māori were considered “undesirable” for adoption by Pākehā families, this allowed tamariki to be placed with families who were not prioritised for adopting due to concerns raised by social workers.

Early accounts of Māori society indicated that women and tamariki were highly valued in Māori society and violence was not tolerated within the whānau (Jenkins & Phillip-Barbara, 2002). However, colonisation and urbanisation have contributed to a particular shift in violent behaviour within whānau, hapū and iwi by way of eroding traditional sanctions and cultural practices (Cooper & Wharewera-Mika, 2009). This loss of protective factors for tamariki Māori has notably reduced Māori community’s ability to impose and enforce their sanctions against their own people which has dwindled as Pākehā institutions continue to resource, legislate, and assert their right to define social norms and standards (Balzer, Haimona, Henare & Matchitt, 1997, p.23 as cited in Cooper & Wharewera-Mika, 2009). Assimilationist policies and genocidal influence between the 1950’s – 1980’s, saw Māori impoverished through the confiscation of land, alienation from their culture and across the board racism (Taonui, 2022).

Furthermore, Māori housing was deliberately scattered amongst Pākehā housing in the hope that through inter-marriage, Māori would be subsumed within the European ethnic category (Love, 2002). Thus, internalising their experiences manifested in generations of urbanised Māori who entered a generational cycle of poverty, substance abuse and domestic violence (Taonui, 2022). As a result, tamariki Māori were removed from their whānau, done “in the best interests of the child” and placed with Pākehā middle class families with a view to provide them with opportunities that their own whānau and community were seen as unable to provide (Love, 2002). With an overwhelming number of tamariki now in need of care, a child welfare system, developed through Eurocentric ideals replaced traditional Māori care practices,

displacing them from their whānau and institutionalising them. Māori researchers argued that this monoculturalism did nothing to advance Māori, rather it perpetuates their disempowerment (Moyle, 2014; Libesman, 2004; Tauri, 2010).

In providing an understanding of the historical and cultural background of traditional whānau structure in traditional Māori society, particular emphasis was placed on the implications arising from colonisation on whānau structure and how this greatly influenced the formation of the child welfare system in Aotearoa. Despite the over-representation of tamariki Māori in state care today, it was also important to highlight that tamariki were always viewed as taonga to Māori. Despite Te Tiriti committing to partnering with Māori to protect their taonga, evidently the Crown failed to incorporate these Māori traditional ways of caring (Worrell, 2021, p. 200). As stated previously, the intergenerational impact of forced assimilation has led to the formation of a child welfare system, developed through Eurocentric ideals instead replaced traditional Māori care practices, displacing them from their whānau and institutionalising them.

History of the child welfare system in Aotearoa New Zealand

Building on ideas presented in the previous section, within this section, I explore in more detail the historical development and nuances involved with the emergence of the child welfare system within Aotearoa New Zealand. This is important because the system that developed within New Zealand is not restricted to events specific to New Zealand, but also embody and continue legacies developed in Britain. During the 1800's, the UK revoked laws that supported single mothers, resulting in a high rate of infanticide (Taonui, 2022). This reformation gave rise to the controversial practice of "baby farming" into New Zealand, where babies were taken from single mothers or unmarried couples and placed in the care system (Dalley, 1998). As Eurocentric values prevailed with mothers of illegitimate children shunned

from society, most caregivers were married, European women seeking monetary compensation for child-minding (Davis, 2015).

During the 19th century, “baby farmers” came under scrutiny due to the high numbers of children dying in their care (Davis, 2015). This uncovered numerous child abuses cases in New Zealand which were widely reported in newspapers, re-enforcing the stereotypical imaginings of baby farmers (Davis, 2015). To prevent this, the state paid caregivers for their service and were subject to regular police inspections under law. The introduction of the Infant Life Protection Act 1893 required caregivers looking after infants under two years old for more than three consecutive days, to register themselves and their homes (Davis, 2015). Less than three years after this legislation passed, the system tightened again in response to many infant death cases at the hands of these caregivers (Dalley, 1998).

To better police the welfare of children, statutory intervention occurred under the Child Welfare Act 1925 (Ministry of Social Development, 2006), permitting the opening of numerous residential institutions or reformatories for children in need of care or exhibiting “uncontrollable” behaviours (Dalley, 1998). These institutions were often run by Catholic Orders who deemed children in these institutions as “posing a danger to the moral fibre of society” due to exhibiting behaviour that was considered defiant against Catholic values (Dalley, 1998, p. 24). During this period, more than 4000 children resided in more than 80 institutions across New Zealand. The 1950’s-1960’s heralded significant economic change such as higher rates of unemployment and poverty (Savage et al., 2021). Especially for Māori moving into urban settings, subjected to marginalisation in a Pākehā dominated world which at times impacted on Māori benefitting from urbanisation (Stanley, 2016). Many tamariki Māori were institutionalised in response to the socio-economic disadvantages of their whānau, comprising approximately 80% of the population in one institution (Stanley, 2016). Horrific abuse was endured at these institutions, such as physical violence. Notably early release was

considered freedom however tamariki Māori had already lost their already limited whānau network and, in many cases, could no longer remember their full names (Stanley, 2015).

It is important to highlight that these institutions were applauded by the New Zealand government for their management, as it was insinuated that many of these children had arrived “with irreparable marks of disease, of sin, and degradation; to humanise them, they had to be sorted out, broken in” (Stanley, 2016, p. 16). This clearly indicated that children needed to be ‘broken in’ to Eurocentric ideals of a model member of society to be accepted. In providing specific examples of these institutions, this will demonstrate how the state attempted to “fix” children who came from ‘uncivilised and unsafe’ whānau structures (Labrum, 2002; Mirfin-Veitch & Conder, 2017; Stanley, 2016).

Te Oranga Home for Girls was a well-established institution in 1927, for both Pākehā and Māori, despite the name loosely translating to ‘welfare’ in Te Reo Māori. This institution in particular resembled a British workhouse in which the girls were often subject to harsh punishment, neglect and unsanitary living conditions (Matthews, 2002). Parallel institutions such as Burnham Industrial School were established for boys who were also subject to the same treatment. Within these institutions, children had no contact with their families and depending on the severity of their behaviour, legislation could detain them in these institutions until the age of 21 (Dalley, 1998). The causes of their behaviour were rarely investigated, and they were often released back into society at 21, having not received support for any underlying trauma.

These institutions remained an active component of child welfare until inquiries of concern over these allegations were made into these institutions, shifting government policy in favour of “fostering out” children into the community (Hughes, 1988). Institutions remained an acceptable form of addressing child welfare concerns until 1974, when they came under scrutiny for the high levels of child abuse occurring internally (Ministry of Social

Development, 2006). This demonstrated that the state did not seek to address these claims for close to 50-60 years until reformations occurred during the late 1970's-1980's.

Amendments to child welfare heightened in 1986 when The Children and Young Persons Residential Care Regulations was introduced and contained detailed standards of residential care (Ministry of Social Development, 2006). Furthermore, the children's courts became autonomous with its own minister to investigate cases (Tenant, 2008). However, concerns around neglected children in foster homes and institutions continued to grow with charities as well as the state demanding an overhaul of the child welfare system (Tenant, 2008). Prior to 1989, the New Zealand Child Welfare system existed under the Department of Social Welfare, formed from the amalgamation of the Social Security Department and the Child Welfare Division of the Department of Education (Ministry of Social Development, 2021). This system had the statutory mandate to investigate into notifications of child abuse and intervene when children are in need of care and protection. Similar to other OECD countries, this system had transformed into a child protection system with emphasis on risk and evidence gathering edging out a focus on need and helping families become strong protectors and providers (Doolan, 2011).

The 1980s and 1990s in New Zealand was characterised by high rates of social and economic stress, including the rising number of tamariki in state care (Baretta-Herman, 1994; Ernst, 1999). Voluntary organisations and Māori communities urged the government to increase their role in the delivery of child abuse and neglect services (Baretta-Herman, 1994; Ernst, 1999). The ongoing impact of urbanisation on Māori revealed not only a significantly higher number of tamariki in state care but also a trend in placement breakdown and instability (Mackay, 1981; Ernst, 1999). Tamariki with fairer skin were also more easily placed and in demand for transcultural adoption with Pākehā families. In this way, the adoption could better serve the purpose of assimilative policies promoting the ideal nuclear family over whānau

based kin systems (Bradley, 1997; McRae & Nikora, 2006). In 1985, The Minister of Social Welfare established a Māori Perspective Advisory Committee, tasked with producing a report that would advise the Minister on developing an approach that would meet the needs of Māori in policy, planning and service delivery in the welfare department (Boulton, Levy & Cvitanovich, 2020).

The resulting report was entitled “Pūao te Āta tū” signifying the heralding light of the new dawn (The Māori Perspective Advisory Committee, 1986), recognising issues facing Māori stemming from failing welfare systems underpinned by colonisation, racism and structural inequity (Boulton, Levy & Cvitanovich, 2020). A specific recommendation from the report was the Matua Whāngai Programme which once again emphasised the importance of the tamariki being within their iwi, hapū and whānau kinship (The Māori Perspective Advisory Committee, 1986). However, the implementation and delivery of this programme failed to recognise the true value of Māori customary care processes and the state reverted to placing tamariki with state approved caregivers due to funding issues (Montgomery, 2009). The Matua Whāngai ultimately continued for another two years, until it ceased in 1991, with nothing to replace it, tamariki Māori were still placed with non-kin despite the recommendations of Pūao te Āta tū. (Montgomery, 2009).

A significant lack of progress to meet the needs of tamariki in care resulted in the emergence of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families (CYF) Act, 1989. The new legislation was explicit in its intent and in procedures to empower families to be part of broader resolutions and to strengthen community relationships and the sense of community (Levine, 2000). For Māori whānau this means they were able to take control in the care of their tamariki with less reliance and dependency on the state. Despite New Zealand’s newfound commitment to family and cultural responsiveness in law, Connolly and Smith (2010) maintained that risk focused and managerially dominated 1990s left its mark on New Zealand. The focus in child

welfare still remained on processes and state approval rather than focusing on the best interests of the tamariki (Connolly & Smith, 2010). However, the new Act recognised the Māori concept that the primary responsibility for care and for protecting the child is not only with the birth family, but with its whānau, its hapū and its iwi (Levine, 2000). This acknowledged that support for care of tamariki did not fall solely on the immediate whānau which had been conceptualised as a nuclear family, the Te ao Māori concept of whānau had been recognised and legitimised in this legislation (Levine, 2000). Arguably, an essential component of this shift is the implementation of power – sharing partnerships developed between the service agencies, Māori and providers (Moyle & Tauri, 2016), diverting the power of decision making back into the hands of the whānau.

During the period of the 1990's, Māori children made up approximately 42% of the Care and Protection population despite only making up approximately 25% of the New Zealand population (Royal Commission of Inquiry Report, 2020). Māori activists had argued that this state centred regime had failed to take into account their culturally distinctive techniques for being a family and had failed to support culturally specific practices of decision making or conflict resolution (Cohen & Gershon, 2015). Concerns were raised around the current system focusing on parents as primary caregivers and that extended family, more likely than not, would have been unaware that the child had been subjected to statutory intervention (Connolly, 2006). As a result, the importance of child protection and welfare conceptualisations emanating from family, cultural and community perspectives was disregarded and placed with the agencies and professionals (Renouf, Lagzdins & Angus, 1989 as cited in Doolan, 2011).

In reviewing the current literature, it is clear the New Zealand welfare system from its conception, has been an abusive institution. This is highlighted throughout this section where the state constantly labels tamariki Māori as needing to be “fixed” by Eurocentric ideals through the introduction of children’s homes and closed adoptions. As evidenced by the Pūao

te Āta tū enquiry, the abuse still continues today, with a significant lack of progress to address the concerns outlined in the enquiry report. Thus, whānau continue to be disempowered to participate in child welfare decision-making and subject to institutional racism as reflected in the child welfare system.

Emergence of the FGC process

The FGC process was formally incorporated into the 1989 Oranga Tamariki Act as a direct response to the Pūao te Āta tū report recommendations. Māori communities argued that the existing system failed to see children in the context of their whānau, hapū, iwi, and community connections; according to Māori values, these groups should have more decision-making power as traditionally they were responsible for the welfare of their children (Hassall, 1996; Frost, Abram & Burgess, 2014). Upon reviewing the current policies around child welfare, The Ministerial Review Committee acknowledged these concerns, stating that “there was a profound misunderstanding of ignorance of the place of a child in Māori society and its relationship with whānau, iwi and hapū, and iwi structures (Ministerial Review Committee, 1986, p. 7; Fulcher, 1999). Thus, the FGC process was promoted as a whānau-led, decision making forum inspired by the concept of whānau rangatiratanga (whānau-decision making and voice) and reflecting traditional Māori whānau problem solving methods (Nordstrom and Stanfield, 2021).

The first FGC in New Zealand and the world was facilitated by Raewyn Nordstrom who continued to work as an FGC co-ordinator for the last 30 years, globally it has become a “best practice model” (Veneski, 2009, p.1 as cited in Cohen and Gershon, 2015). Many jurisdictions across the world have adopted the New Zealand FGC as a way of operationalising notions of partnership and empowerment with success (Connolly, 2006). Although the FGC process appeared to be the preferred method of addressing care concerns in comparison to former dispute resolutions (Cohen & Gershon, 2015), the true purpose of FGCs remained

uncertain. Families were supposedly given the opportunity to propose a safety plan for children, however authority for these plans remains with the statutory social worker, and the judicial system (Nordstrom & Stanfield, 2021). Thus, rather than an empowering process for families it was still oppressive and pre-determined by the judicial system (Nordstrom & Stanfield, 2021). It is important to note that both youth justice and care and protection FGCs differ in their processes, however the outcome of agreeing to a plan which addresses concerns and puts matters right as much as possible, is the same (Harris, 2008 as cited in Moyle, 2013).

For this research, the focus is on the emergence of the Care and Protection FGC. Whilst older research suggests that the FGC process has achieved many desired outcomes such as strengthening whānau and their partnership (Gilling, Patterson & Walker, 1995 as cited in Kanyi, 2013), challenges around the side-effect of ‘professional helping’ describes how an institutionalised system carved in westernised legislation is at most times unable to withdraw and leave decision-making to the lifeworld (extended family and kinship) (Burns & Fruchtel, 2014). Not only do FGCs change the power relations between the state and families, they can also change the power balance within families, whilst this could be positive it may also risk vulnerable family members remaining powerless despite the aura of self-determination (Connolly & Masson, 2014).

Traditional Māori decision-making processes are family-centred, acknowledging that whānau know their members best and are usually the best sources of expertise on what should be done about their children (Pakura, 2005 as cited in Olson, 2009). Pūao te āta tū indicated the need for policies to draw upon this strengths-based approach as observed in traditional Māori principles. Saleebey (1997) highlighted that social work practice often focused heavily on deficits, labelling people with their problems thus devaluing the service user (families) and demoralising the social worker. Furthermore, seeking to repair the harm done to people rather than seeking out people to blame (McCold & Watchel, 2003 as cited in Frost, Abram &

Burgess, 2014). The strengths-based model as observed in the FGC process, adopts the stance that social workers should recognise and develop the strengths and resilience of families (Frost, Abram & Burgess, 2014). Akin to solution-focused therapy, professionals and families should approach FGCs with the belief that change is possible, drawing out strengths and confidence to find solutions rather than problems, helping change feel more tangible (Shazer 1985 as cited in Frost, Abram & Burgess, 2014). The common theme amongst these theories is that FGCs are a tool to motivate and empower families to change their situations, building upon existing strengths and resources (Frost, Abram & Burgess, 2014).

The cultural understandings of the FGC process place importance on the relationship between celestial knowledge; mātauranga (cultural knowledge) and wairua (spirit) and terrestrial knowledge; incorporating laws that govern the physical world in which Māori live in (Fulcher, 1999). Celestial knowledge is referred to as Te kauae runga (upper jawbone) and the space between the upper jawbone and lower jawbone (terrestrial) is referred to as Te kauae raro, without the interaction of both jawbones there would be no life and this establishes the very foundations for whānau, hapū and iwi (Fulcher, 1998). The story of Ranginui and Papatūānuku could be regarded as the original family group conference, in which the tamariki of the two atua (gods) were denied knowledge of and the ability to traverse outside of the universe, instead they lived in total darkness. It was not until the tamariki held a hui amongst themselves to develop a plan to free themselves from their confines (Cairns, Fulcher, Kereopa, Nia Nia & Tait-Rolleston, 1998).

This highlighted that in traditional hui, tamariki had an active participatory role in these hui and as they were considered tapu (sacred), this instilled a sense of confidence in their own abilities (Jenkins & Harte, 2011:3; Smith, Napan, Perkinson & Hunter, 2021). Furthermore, tamariki were encouraged to ask questions, negotiate respectfully, resolve debates, and treat their elders with respect whilst their inherent mana was respected by those listening (Smith et

al., 2021). Although FGCs are promoted to be inspired by aspects of Māori dispute resolution, critiques have been linked to a mystification process in which FGCs lack a meaningful reflection of cultural meanings and understandings due to becoming imbued with managerialism (Palys & Victor, 2008; Moyle & Tauri, 2016; Roguski, 2020). This is further argued by Becroft (2017 as cited in Roguski, 2020) as only some aspects of tikanga are incorporated rather than tikanga in its entirety, which would then include active participation of tamariki instead of sole managerialism by the state.

In briefly providing an overview of the theoretical and cultural underpinnings of the FGC process, it would also be valuable to provide additional insights into the structure of the current FGC process and its implications in practice. This is because theory and practice can differ significantly, particularly as the FGC process is underpinned by mātauranga (cultural knowledge) within the realm of teā o Māori yet is still facilitated and organised by the state. The implementation and structure of FGCs relies on family and professional collaboration to promote safety within a family and cultural context to be successful and contribute to positive change (Olson, 2009). To use statutory powers for the purpose of convening FGCs, care and protection co-ordinators were introduced as a neutral profession (CYPFA, sections 18 and 245, 1989; Burns & Fruchtel, 2012). However, the role of an FGC co-ordinator does not coincide with the theoretical and cultural underpinnings of the FGC process therefore causing a power imbalance between Whānau and professionals.

It is important to provide an overview of the structure of the FGC process to juxtapose between the theoretical underpinnings of the FGC and the practical implications of the FGC. Drawing on Burns & Fruchtel (2012), the stages of the FGC process as can be summarised as follows. To begin, the co-ordinator will receive a referral from the social worker which they will screen to determine if it is appropriate to convene an FGC. Once again, this highlights sole managerialism by the state as they determine whether it is appropriate or necessary for whānau

to come together for a hui regarding their tamariki. Further to this article, whānau cannot hold a legitimate FGC unless it is recognised and agreed to upon by the state. In making this referral, social workers will be focused on ensuring the presence of existing support networks and whānau. This also includes inviting professionals from sectors such as mental health, community services and education services. Prior to the FGC itself, the co-ordinator meets with all possible attendees to inform them as best as possible to describe the process as well as outline the concerns to be addressed during this time.

It is important to note that the article did not state that whānau would be meeting with possible attendees prior to the FGC to share their views and concerns regarding their tamariki. The whānau and FGC co-ordinator will decide who will attend the FGC, the venue, time and date, and any special traditions or cultural practices they wish to include. The co-ordinator also needs to be aware of any whānau dynamics that may marginalize or disempower other members, in this case an FGC may not be appropriate, and another type of meeting may serve the whānau needs better or possibly a hui prior to the FGC.

After this planning stage, is information sharing in which professionals and whānau share the information they have gathered so that the whānau are capable of developing a plan that addresses the shared concerns. As stated previously, whānau may not have met with possible attendees prior to the FGC which can cause gaps in information during this information sharing period. Thus, a sense of disempowerment is already felt by whānau before the FGC has started. Following on from this, the next stage is “whānau or family time” in which the whānau have time away from the professionals. The FGC co-ordinator and professionals are not involved during this time, however, may be required to intervene if whānau are unable to reach a consensus or display aggressive behaviour towards each other. FGCs typically do not exceed three hours in duration therefore placing time constraints on whānau decision

making, yet in the story of Ranginui and Papatūānuku the brothers debated about their decision for a long period of time and were persistent in executing this decision.

A complex stage in this process is the negotiation stage, in which the whānau present their plan. If there are still concerns held, professionals may send the whānau to meet again or work together to modify the plan. Professionals have veto power, there is a safety net in which practical and manageable decisions can be made (Doolan, 2004 as cited in Burns & Fruchtel, 2012). However, the boundaries surrounding when professionals can exercise this power are not clear which can potentially lead to an abuse of this power and overriding any decisions made by the whānau. Finally, the implementation stage is where the plan is actioned and implemented. Roles and responsibilities can also be placed with certain members or professionals to be held accountable to; this is also formalised into a legal document submitted to court and subjected to regular 3 monthly or 6 monthly reviews depending on the urgency of when a review is needed. It is also important to note that usually tamariki older than 10 years old are engaged in decision making, however this also depends on the sensitivity of the matters being discussed and whether it may cause more risk of surfacing trauma for the tamariki.

This section explored the emergence of the current FGC process, following the Pūao-te-Āta-tū enquiry and its recommendations for change within the child welfare system. It also provided the theoretical and cultural underpinnings of the FGC contrasted with the implementation of the FGC process in social work practice. Although the current FGC process attempts to empower whānau in decision making, it is still a flawed system in need of improvement.

Within this chapter, I have provided context surrounding the whānau structure of Māori prior to colonisation and consequently the historical impacts of colonisation for Māori regarding child welfare, eventuating into the emergence of the current FGC process widely

implemented in the child welfare system today. Over an extended period, child welfare has been largely controlled by the state and recently whānau and iwi reclamation of child welfare processes has been highlighted. Comparatively, little research has been conducted with iwi and community providers regarding their experiences with the FGC process. The intention of the current research is to provide insight into these experiences and contribute to small steps of change in this process for kaimahi and whānau Māori by amplifying their voices. The subsequent chapter following this will provide an overview on the methodology of the current research and why it was specifically chosen and appropriate in the context of this research.

Chapter Two: Methodology

The participants in this research, as well as analysing my own personal experience as a kaimahi working within the context of the FGC process, are of Māori descent and are employed by Kaupapa Māori based organisations. Due to this, the experiences of kaimahi were often constructed and perceived through a cultural lens, therefore it was paramount to understand these experiences within a Te ao Māori worldview which legitimises the knowledge, cultural practices and concepts underpinned by a Kaupapa Māori approach (Tipa, 2019). Often conventional Eurocentric approaches to research such as positivism are utilised to legitimise the research within a Westernised framework.

Positivism is a broadly defined paradigm which relies on empirical evidence, such as experiments and statistics, to formulate universal laws on the operative dynamics of the social universe (Turner, 2001). Thus, positivism objects to accounting for ‘supernatural’ events and beings for which knowledge is by definition unknowable by humans (Kolaski, 1966 as cited in Nickerson, 2022) and further states that research should be detached from subjective feelings and interpretations. Extensive influence of structured methods such as deductive and inductive

approaches have termed research as ‘methodolatry’ (Chamberlain, 2000 as cited in Carrera-Fernandez, Guardia-Olmos & Pero-Cebollero, 2014).

Within this concept, the attitude adopted is more of a ‘how to do’ research compared to ‘what to do’ or the ‘way to the goal’ (Chamberlain, 2000; Curt, 1994; Reicher, 2000). Willig (2013) argues emphasises that the direction of research is determined by how well methods are matched to research questions in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. Hence, transforming qualitative data into numbers and objective measurement that may feel like the research is guided in the right direction (Carrera-Fernandez, Guardia-Olmos & Pero-Cebollero, 2014). Despite inductive reasoning utilising participants’ views to generate theories, it draws on existing theories in an attempt to find “universal truths.”

As a result, the tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) of participants is simply not acknowledged nor valued and Māori voices marginalised. Thus, by adopting a Kaupapa Māori research approach, informed by elements of case-based autoethnographic research that involved go-along interviews, consultation and collaboration with cultural supervisors/kaumātua, and positioning myself within the context of the research became central to the research process.

A Kaupapa Māori informed approach was drawn on to ensure meaningful research that brings about transformative change for kaimahi Māori and whānau in the FGC space. There is some research in the FGC process, however it is typically from the perspective of social workers. The current research focuses explicitly on kaimahi who are youth workers, alternative course tutors and advocates, as there is minimal research undertaken on these community based kaimahi but there is a growing area for examining in detail whānau and community perspectives (Moyle & Tauri, 2016). Therefore, by disseminating the outcomes of this research as well as consulting with kaimahi, kaumātua and cultural supervisors, the present research aims to make a small but meaningful step forward in highlighting the experiences of

these kaimahi and understanding them in their own context, one that is not presumed by other research.

I whakapapa to Te Hiku o te Ika a Māui (far north), specifically Te Rārawa and Ngāpuhi in Te Tai Tokerau. The North is known for prominent Māori leaders who have brought about transformative change and revival of Māori culture, such as Dame Whina Cooper and her role in the Māori land marches. This has inspired me to contribute my own small step towards the same change and revival of Māori culture through this research. It is also fitting that the kūaka (godwit bird) is a symbol for the Muriwhenua (collective of six far north iwi) as they migrate and flock together as a whānau unit (Taonui, 2017). In conducting this research, I am journeying alongside the kaimahi participants to the destinations they led me to conduct my own Kaupapa Māori research appropriately and ensure that the methods used continue to uphold the mana of the participants through the principles of manaakitanga, whānaungatanga and tino rangatiratanga.

The whakataukī (proverb) “He mauri tō te tangata, he whakapapa tōna, he mana motuhake” (Everyone has mana, everyone has a whakapapa, a genealogy, heritage and identity that makes that person no more and no less important than the next person) emphasises that the participants and the relationships with participants involved in the current research are central. This chapter begins by outlining how my research was informed by a Kaupapa Māori approach and by introducing participants. Following this, a rationale for selecting an autoethnographic case study design will be provided. Next, the research process will detail my involvement with the FGC process, participant recruitment and consultation with kaumātua and cultural supervisors. The implemented methods such as go-along interviews and reflexive journaling, will be also justified. Additionally, ethical considerations will be considered in light of the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (Massey University Human Ethics Committee, 2017), however there will also be

a strong focus on relational ethics when engaging with Māori participants as outlined in Te Ara Tika (2010). Finally, the process of analysis, which took place following interviews and engagements with participants will be described and affirmed.

Kaupapa Māori Research

Mainstream research epistemologies are often located within the cultural preferences and practices of neo-colonial paradigms (Bishop,1999). Too often this dominant view has misconstrued Māori cultural practices and meanings as unable to cope with human problems, thus undervaluing tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) and amplifying the “authoritative” voice of methodological “expert” which akin mātauranga as myth (Bishop, 1999). Kaupapa Māori research challenges the dominance of this discourse and worldview to revitalise the legitimacy of a Māori way of doing, thinking, knowing, and being. The current research project focuses on kaimahi Māori experiences with the FGC process, emerging from these experiences kaimahi Māori may potentially discuss what changes need to occur within this process to benefit Māori whānau who are subject to a generalised process.

Thus, a Kaupapa Māori informed approach would be essential to understanding and legitimising the knowledge of these kaimahi and forestalling possibilities of marginalising rangatiratanga and mātauranga (Mane, 2009). Central to Kaupapa Māori research is the concept of whānau, as outlined by Smith (1990), where relationships to one another and the world are paramount to Māori culture and that the researcher is obligated to nurture these relationships. This level of engagement with Māori whānau requires “researchers to act from our hearts and minds, acknowledge our interpersonal bonds to others, and to take responsibility for actions and their consequences” (Ellis, 2007, p.3; Hodgetts, Rua, Groot, Hopner, Drew, King & Blake, 2020). In the current research, I had already built relationships with the kaimahi, but I continued to nurture these relationships by utilising research methods that did not put restraints on them or pressure to not speak freely. Such examples included go-along interviews which do not have

the typical time constraints or close-ended questions of standard interviews, ultimately the kaimahi act as guides in this process rather than the direction decided entirely by the researcher. Furthermore, cultivating relationships contributes to not only researching kaimahi Māori experiences with the FGC process but also how these experiences have allowed them to develop their own knowledge of the FGC process. In doing so, this fosters an inclusive and ethical relationship of trust to both ‘show and tell’ (Hodgetts, Stolte, King & Groot, 2019).

It is important to acknowledge that Kaupapa Māori research does not completely exclude Western epistemologies and knowledges but does subsume it, rejecting colonialism attempts to generate mātauranga (Bishop, 1999). Therefore, the current research project does not seek to eliminate westernised knowledge in the conceptualisation of my research topic, its methodological design, or points that may emerge from participants’ experiences or accounts. Knowledge production and sharing through practical engagements is not linear and the process of engagement is often unpredictable and complex. The current research project has a strong emphasis on tino rangatiratanga of the participants to contribute to the overall research and design as well as building and maintaining whānaungatanga throughout the design process.

A principle identified by Linda Smith (1999), is Taonga Tuku Iho (cultural aspiration) which legitimises the centrality of Te Reo Māori, tikanga and mātauranga which within a Te ao Māori world view are considered valid in their own right has contributed to how this research project has been guided. This core concept will be demonstrated in the research by kaimahi guiding the interview process, this includes giving them the space to kōrero freely about their experiences without constant prompting to answer certain questions, time restraints or locational restraints such as sitting in a room for the entire duration. Thus, by giving kaimahi the ability to define their own space, guide the interview process, and allowing them to practice their own tikanga when moving in and out of this space, it does not intrude in or claim this space they have claimed (Kennedy & Cram, 2010).

As discussed in this section, Kaupapa Māori research is built upon the concept of whānau and whānaungatanga where there is an obligation to build and nurture relationships with participants. This is central to understanding kaimahi experiences through a Te ao Māori view and upholding the tino rangatiratanga of kaimahi to participate in and guide the research process. In the next section, I will broadly discuss how utilising autoethnography is a valuable method to understand the experiences of these kaimahi as both an observer and participant. Furthermore, it will also discuss how reflexive journaling was utilised to help reduce my own subjective biases of working within the same field filtering into the interpretations of kaimahi experiences.

Autoethnography & Reflexive Journaling

Grounded within a Kaupapa Māori approach, I also drew on elements of autoethnography and reflective journaling to embrace my personal entanglements with this particular area of research. For me, this area of research is not simply an academic exercise in producing knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but a reflection of my own involvements with working within Māori social service provision that includes facilitating FGCs and seeing first-hand some of the cultural issues that can emerge from these processes.

The concept of “subject positioning” parallels to that of “role” within traditional social psychology yet encompasses a more fluid and dynamic sense of the multiple “selves” one has and how these are called forth and/or constructed, in conversations between people, in jointly produced storylines (Davies & Harré, 1990). Utilising myself as an example, I am not just a female, I am also a mother, Māori, a student and other descriptors which point to the many social contexts in which my ‘positioning’ and ‘identity’ has been constructed through various descriptions that give experience meaning (Pinkus, 1996). Prior to colonisation, there was no concept of a “Māori identity” or dominant Māori “hegemony,” distinguishing features were

attributed to tribal affiliations and the natural environment (Meredith, 1998; Walker, 1990; Durie, 1998). Thus, it is important to acknowledge and understand that there is no singular or uniform self that is maintained at all times in all places.

Davies and Harré (1990), argue that various selves provide the dynamic for understanding this as an unfolding narrative in which we may be constituted in one position or another in one narrative or another, or perhaps standing in multiple positions or negotiating new ones. In the current research, my positioning as kaimahi Māori and a researcher as well as the other participants will be relational, implicating otherness such as being Māori and non-Māori, urbanised Māori compared to tribal Māori and so forth (Meredith, 1998). This debunks the idea of that there is a reduction of “Māoriness” to a fundamental idea of what it means to be authentically Māori and totalising concepts such as the “Māori way” which devalues and excludes broader and more complex notions of self.

Webber (2009) emphasised the need to recognise complex transitional spaces as valid spaces to occupy, particularly for those who are Māori researchers who are bound to institutional standards of ethical, reciprocal and beneficial research practice rather than occupying a space inside of and in between a Te ao Māori worldview and western (Cheung, 2008 as cited in Webber, 2009). Therefore, in the current research I acknowledge that I take a multiple-subject positioning stance, against the idea of “essentialism.” With this resides the potential to gain an in-depth understanding of one’s experiences in this new space.

The anthropological roots of ethnography can be traced back to ‘New World’ colonisation where anthropologists became interested in observing tribal cultures and races outside of Europe (Ryan, 2017). However, Howell (2013) and Ryan (2017), proposed there are three core philosophical approaches to ethnography: positivist which requires observers to be detached from the object of inquiry, post-modern constructivist which emphasises that reality is created through human interaction, perceptions and experiences of the world to create

multiple realities subject to change and finally critical which seeks to consider how participants and communities are represented, the constraints of injustice and rely upon a high degree of reflexivity from the researcher (Madison, 2012 as cited in Ryan, 2017). Due to its focus on contextual understanding, meanings, and social change, it has crossed interdisciplinary boundaries to areas within psychology such as community psychology (Case, Todd & Kral, 2014). As highlighted, it does not constitute a single perspective or definition, however various definitions of ethnography tend to share an emphasis on capturing culture and context through the researcher's immersion in that setting (Atkinson, Delamont, Lofland, Lofland, 2001; Miller, Hengst & Wang, 2003; Case, Todd & Kral, 2014). It is often used to bridge universal questions with the particularities of people and groups bounded in time, physical location and social location thus enabling a rich and deeply contextual in-depth understanding of how social change and action occur within communities (Case, Todd & Kral, 2014).

A defining feature of ethnography is that it is often small scale, focused on a single setting with long term engagement by the researcher in the participant's setting (Hammersley 1990; Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015). Participant observation allows for the emergence of knowledge that is not predetermined by the original research position or paradigm, the meanings attached to the data collected vary depending on differing epistemologies (Willis, 1980; Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015). Rather than testing pre-assumed theories or ideas as in deductive research, researchers immerse themselves in the participant's every-day lives so that ideas are developed inductively from observations of participants (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015).

Historically, research produced knowledge about indigenous peoples, it shaped popular perceptions of them, and fed racist ideologies of them that were fed back to indigenous peoples defining for them who they were and what attributes they should possess in order to be indigenous (Smith, 1999, pp. 1-3 as cited in Houser, 2007). Research methods such as anthropological based ethnography have devalued and subjugated indigenous knowledge

(Houston, 2007). Kahotea (2005), highlighted that the link between anthropological ethnography and colonialism in Aotearoa emerged over four distinct phases, the first being the ‘encounter’ (1769 – 1840) regarding Cook’s discovery of Aotearoa to Missionary Marsden’s visits when ethnological descriptions were made between British and Māori.

Secondly, the ‘Missionary’ phase (1815 – 1840) where missionaries lived amongst Māori and wrote accordingly, thirdly the ‘colonial’ phase (1840 – 1870) represented by the signing of The Treaty of Waitangi when writers on Māori issues were colonial officials such as George Grey. Finally, the ‘scientific phase’ (1870 – 1950) where anthropology was in the hands of museums. It was throughout these phases that 19th century anthropological ethnography in Aotearoa used the narratives of the colonised ‘native’ to construct theories of Māori origins (Kahotea, 2005). Thus, suppressing indigenous epistemologies that focuses on their own ways of seeing, knowing, and doing (Houston, 2007). George Grey was an admired ethnographic writer and eventually the governor of New Zealand in the late 18th century, had a particular articulation between ethnography in settler colonies and the art of governmentality, which produced a discourse and a policy of assimilation which he termed as ‘amalgamation’ (Lester, 2016). Grey produced very persuasive, ethnographic reports to the colonial office, once indigenous people were declared British subjects, he stated that “British laws are to supersede their own customs” as they were likely to suffer under these customs and British civilisation was an escape route from imprisoning customs (Grey, 1840; Lester, 2016).

Thus, Grey invoked an evangelical human narrative of anti-slavery which was favoured by the colonial office (Lester, 2016). His ethnographic studies had convinced both him and a large trans-imperial constituency that ‘amalgamation’ of indigenous people was the only humane alternative to extermination (Lester, 2016).

Furthermore, concerns were raised regarding the increase in systematic bias of this approach if researchers were in a profession or political establishment who sought to further

the interests of marginalised, exploited, or dominated groups (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). Contemporary and critical ethnography calls for attention to ethics, fairness, positionality, dialogue, power and control, decolonization, and indetermination in the relations with the people we study (Hammoudi & Borneman 2009; Madison 2005; Case, Todd & Krol, 2014). There is a focus on the whole person; health or a focus on personal, relational and collective well-being (Prilleltensky 2012). It is evident that ethnography with a goal of social action through collaboration adheres to the values of Kaupapa Māori research. An advantage of this approach is that the combination of long-term observation and the collection of diverse forms of data provide understandings within the complex sociocultural worlds participants inhabit that more traditional methodologies may not have succeeded in capturing (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015).

Autoethnography, informed by ethnography, is a research method that uses personal experience to interpret cultural texts, experiences, beliefs and practices. Researchers who utilize this method believe that personal experience is infused with political/cultural norms and expectations and they engage in reflection (reflexivity) in order to identify the intersections between the self and social life (Adams, Ellis & Jones, 2017). Autoethnography allows the researcher to be both a participant and observer, the researcher and the subject and an insider using an outsider's view or perspective (O'Hara, 2018). Insider knowledge does not necessarily mean that an autoethnographic researcher has more truthful or accurate knowledge compared to an outsider, however a person who has directly experienced institutional oppressions and/or cultural problems, such as racism, loss, or illness, can talk about these issues in ways different from others who have limited experiences with these topics (Adam, Ellis & Jones, 2017). There is no specific criteria to adhere to, the characteristics of autoethnography mean that a personal narrative cannot be foreseen and the interpretation may be varied (Bochner & Ellis, 1996; Mendez, 2013). Given the focus on personal experience, autoethnographic researchers speak

against, or provide alternatives for harmful and dominant cultural scripts and stereotypes (Boylorn 2014; Adams, Ellis & Jones, 2017). This can contribute to bridging gaps or adding to existing research when generalisations at times conceal implications of cultural issues.

I have worked within the FGC process space through a Kaupapa Māori NGO (non-governmental agency) which has allowed me to function as both an observer and participant in capturing the contexts within my experiences as well as other participants. Due to the nature of autoethnographic research, the engagements I have had with other participants as well as myself have been less exploitative than others that seek to provide an objective account of the truth (Bochner & Ellis, 1996 as cited in Mendez, 2013). This is a crucial element when conducting Kaupapa Māori research with Māori who have experienced the exploitation of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge). Often western epistemology treats indigenous knowledge as “relevant only to the extent that they have something to offer existing theories and discourses” (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 72 as cited in Broughton, Porou, McBreen, Waitaha & Tahu, 2015).

In doing so, this neglects Māori values and ways of life that are essential to identity, existence and survival as a people. Autoethnography represents for many the right to tell their truth as experienced without waiting for others to express what they really want to be known and understood (Richards, 2008; Mendez, 2013). Furthermore, it aims to alleviate participants “being colonized by others and subjected to their agendas or relegated to the role of second-class citizens” (Richards, 2008; Mendez, 2013, p. 1724). Thus, autoethnography became a preferred method of choice to examine cultural experiences due to the personal experience and reflexivity components within the method (Adams, Ellis & Jones, 2017).

Reflexivity is a term debated across qualitative researchers, for traditional researchers a reflective approach is utilized to combat suggestions of bias and is a widely accepted in qualitative research practice. Researchers are urged to talk about themselves, “their

presuppositions, choices, experiences, and actions during the research process” (Mruck & Breuer, 2003, p. 3; Ortlipp, 2008) with the aim of making the researcher aware of the constructed nature of research outcomes. From an indigenous perspective, reflexivity can enable the researcher to create a bridge between researcher, participant, new knowledge and view the relationship with participants as one of consultancy and collaboration where voice is given to experiences to create a sense of power and personal agency (Hertz, 1997; McLeod, 1997; Etherington, 2004). For some researchers, reflective journals are utilised to help researchers manage the boundary between closeness to the research topic and the distance required to carry out the research in a professional manner (Walker & Priest, 2013). For others, reflexive journals extend beyond accountability to professionalism to create transparency in the research as they cannot claim that what is described is true or valid because particular strategies have been put in place through method. Instead, the aim is to make the process of data analysis as visible and transparent as possible (MacNaughton, 2001; Ortlipp, 2008).

The approach I had to reflective journaling was inspired by Moeke-Maxwell, Nikora and Te Awekōtuku (2010). Entries from Te Awekōtuku’s journal highlighted a struggle with freely expressing the subjective self when attempting to maintain objectivity. Especially when academic research is considered “successful” if utilising such reflexive methods makes an academic contribution or impact. It is also pointed out that we are homogenised, which occurs when individual voices are suppressed by the voice of science and makes it difficult for researchers to put themselves in their own texts and at the same time claim to “know” something with what consequences (Moeke-Maxwell, Nikora & Te Awekōtuku, 2010). When conducting Kaupapa Māori research, subjectivity is embraced to promote a deeper understanding of issues faced by whānau, there is a shift from the academic obligation to be a neutral observer to being a Māori researcher, living research and research living (Moeke-Maxwell, Nikora, Te Awekōtuku, 2010). Thus, when I write my journal entries or reflect on

what I have already written, I am reminded that I have a social and ethical responsibility to make important adjustments so that my research uses the most positive and appropriate methods when engaging with Māori Whānau. The structure of my journal follows Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, who emphasises the importance of keeping records of community, Whānau and everyday experiences, media observations and visual and illustrative elements to capture how these are relevant to my research and own journey.

Case Based Research

Complimenting my use of autoethnographic and reflexive journaling techniques, I also drew on case-based research (or case studies), which allow researchers to study social phenomena within a particular social event, situation, event or condition and to provide insights into the underlying processes that explain how the particular event or situation came to be (Small, 2009; Swanborn, 2010). These studies are carried out within the boundaries of one social system (the case) or within the boundaries of a few social systems (the cases) such as people, organisations, groups, individuals, local communities (Swanborn, 2010). Unlike other research methods which may require controlled and generalisable laboratory settings, case studies investigate phenomena in their natural context to determine the impact these contexts have on social processes (Swanborn, 2010).

A common misconception of case-based research is that it is labelled as a “weak” method due to the lack of scientific rigor (Tasci, Wei Wei & Milman, 2020). In past research, concerns have been raised regarding the validity of case studies as a research design, particularly their generalisability to other populations (Tasci, Wei Wei & Milman, 2020). Similarly, case-based research has been misused in practice and misunderstood as relying on a single data source therefore about a specific object (Tasci, Wei Wei & Milman, 2020). Nevertheless, research is conducted in a context such as a specific place or destination however

this does not require or specify it to be case study research (Tasci, Wei Wei & Milman, 2020). Case-based research is considered expansive, with multi layered methods of yielding rich data such as interviews, observations and journals thus contributing holistically to theory development (Tasci, Wei Wei & Milman, 2020). The process of theory building through modelling real-world phenomena deems case-based research instrumental in this as it requires researchers to explore the phenomenon by placing themselves in the context of real-life situations (Ketokivi & Choi, 2014; Yin, 2013; Tasci, Wei Wei & Milman, 2020).

However, the purpose of case studies is not to seek universal truths or be generalisable to other populations but to provide particular knowledge about specific contexts and human action to facilitate a deeper understanding of what is happening in this context and what can contribute to addressing people's concerns and needs (Hodgetts and Stolte, 2012). Thus, case-based research can be incredibly useful in areas of research where areas of best practice strategies are considered a complex phenomenon (Tasci, Wei Wei & Milman, 2020).

The focus of case-based research is well suited and appropriate to study within community dynamics and community efforts to promote social change. Often responses to issues at the local level are over-looked in Anglo-American psychology due to the alleged invalidity of the research findings within the case-based research method (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012). Each person shapes their own social world within themselves and through their interactions with others, which construct a social reality which constitute shared meanings (Rosenwald, 1988).

It is acknowledged that Kaupapa Māori research is founded on collective consciousness, historical and cultural concepts that are not necessarily reflected in qualitative-quantitative or positive interpretive research (Henry & Pene, 2001). Through the field of critical, qualitative enquiry, fundamental differences between indigenous and mainstream western research have been established (Rowe, Baldry & Earles, 2015, p. 297 as cited in Henry

& Foley, 2018). This does not negate the applicability of other quantitative or qualitative methods of research, but speaks to the underlying assumptions, processes and application of research for the researcher and participants (Henry & Pene, 2001). Within the context of this research, case-based research has been identified as an appropriate design to explore how kaimahi Māori understand and perceive the realities of FGCs within their own context. Despite the experiences of the researcher and participant never being identical, the researcher's voice can be grounded in the participant's experiences to reflect a shared understanding of the participant's world that is socially constructed through communication with the participant during case-based research (T.Burgess-Limerick, 1998).

Central to Kaupapa Māori research, the acquisition and construction of mātauranga (knowledge) is informed by traditional Māori epistemology and tikanga to uphold the mana of the collective (Henry & Pene, 2001). Comparatively, "scientific" research methods perceive knowledge through a Eurocentric epistemological lens, to discover universal laws with universal applicability across cultures and disciplines (Seuffert, 1997; Henry & Pene, 2001). As stated previously, case-based research does not seek universal truths but rather focuses on the deeper understanding of a particular context. Research that uses a Kaupapa Māori approach focuses primarily on generating answers to questions that are of particular relevance and importance to Maori (Hudson, Milne, Reynolds, Russell & Smith, 2010). This social change and community action requires a responsive research approach that can be exemplified by case-based research which is considered successful when a close relationship between the researcher and participant allows participants to add to the research in ways that are meaningful for them (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012).

Furthermore, building and maintaining relationships with participants is crucial to moving beyond just consultation with Māori to ensuring Māori participation in the research which aligns with community aspirations and tangible benefits (Hudson et al., 2010). In

aligning with Kaupapa Māori research, case-based research is less exploitative in engagement than other methods. The focus of the engagements is with the research participants in contrast to on research subjects (Hodgetts, Drew, et al., 2010). The result is a dialectical view of knowledge generation, drawing on knowledge and expertise from not only the researcher but the participants as well to amplify marginalised voices back into societal dialogues (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012).

For the current research, three cases were constructed based on each participant's experiences. As stated previously, case-based research is well suited and appropriate for community dynamics and efforts to promote social change, which is within all the participants' context, and where they can provide glimpses into the phenomena occurring within their contexts. In this way, a shared understanding of the participant's world can be reflected through these experiences, that is socially constructed through communication between the researcher and participant during case-based research. All three participants in this research have whakapapa Māori (Māori genealogy), surrounding the FGC process for kaimahi Māori, the three participants were engaged with for over two years when the first initial conversations regarding the current research were discussed.

The nurturing of these relationships over this period of time have been central to maintaining trust, accountability and transparency throughout the development of the research process. These participants were comprised of one youth worker, one advocacy worker and one educational programme tutor. The inclusion of participants from various areas allowed for a broader understanding kaimahi Māori working within their respective roles and how this shaped their perceptions of their experiences within the FGC process.

The first participant, "Wero" (pseudonym) was born in Whangārei and has whakapapa connections to Ngāpuhi. He speaks openly about his experiences as a whāngai and is especially focused on building and enhancing the cultural identity of taiohi and instilling the practice of

tikanga Māori for not only the taiohi and their whānau, but all other services involved. His mahi includes working in youth services, particularly with teenagers in the youth justice and care and protection space where he mentors taiohi and supports their journey as they exit the care and protection system. As part of his role, Wero often attends FGCs to provide information, progress reports and recommendations moving forward for taiohi, their whānau and other professionals involved.

The second participant *I wish I was skinny*² (pseudonym), has whakapapa connections to Ngāpuhi and Tainui. *I wish I was skinny's* mahi includes providing advocacy support and amplifying the voice of care experienced taiohi of various ages. As part of his role, 'I wish I was skinny' is invited to attend FGCs in the care and protection system to not only amplify the voice of the taiohi but ensure that they understand what is being said during the FGC and to clarify any uncertainty so that the taiohi and their whānau are informed about any decision-making processes. Part of his advocacy role is to consider the needs and well-being of the taiohi as a whole, including any cultural or whānau needs, often these are over-looked by institutionalised processes such as FGCs.

The third participant Aroha (pseudonym) was born in and has whakapapa connections to Ngāpuhi and the far north. Her past mahi included tutoring at an alternative education course which previously operated out of the Whāngarei area. Education is not limited to school-based subjects such as mathematics and English and has strong tikanga Māori values as well as teaching life skills. As part of Aroha's role, she would alongside care experienced youth and support them in their learning journey. Aroha has extensive experience in both the alternative

² The participant and researcher have built an extensive relationship over four years. His chosen alias: *I Wish I Was Skinny*, demonstrates that he feels safe and comfortable within the relationship to share humour and engage in raw, authentic conversations without creating barriers. It has purposely been italicised for the reader to distinguish from the subsequent text.

education field as well as youth work with care experienced taiohi, presently she attends FGCs in both the youth justice and care and protection system.

Research Process

My experience with being immersed in a Kaupapa Māori based working environment informed this research process as I was familiar with the tikanga and ethics that underpin Kaupapa Māori research, however I was aware of my own limitations and wanted to ensure the current research project was true to Kaupapa Māori research and accountable in its intentions to do no harm (Smith, 1999). Research ethics when engaging with Māori are expanded upon from principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This document provides a framework (Te Ara Tika) which identifies Māori ethical issues in terms of; rights, responsibilities and roles of researchers and Māori communities (Hudson et al., 2010). Guided by the principles of whakapapa and whānaungatanga, as I would in my own life, I sought knowledge and guidance from a kaumātua and expert, whom I already had established a relationship with and discovered we had whakapapa links to our iwi; Te Rārawa and Te Aupouri, which helps to add layers of accountability throughout my research. I met with this supervisor in 2021, the process of meeting was similar to that of a pōwhiri that I noted in my journal:

I had put out a karanga (call of welcome) to my cultural supervisor for a hui in which they could possibly provide some guidance and knowledge in my research. (Journal entry, Jaycie Bradley, 3 August 2021)

Ka can be understood as energy and ranga as weaving, thus weaving of energies, connecting to tupuna and through iwi and hapū (Rameka, Ham & Mitchell, 2021). Often in the pōwhiri process, a wero (challenge) can be presented along with a peace offering, this acknowledges

that the engagement is bound by mana and that mana is protected by manaaki and an element of trust is strengthened. I further noted in my journal entry:

We exchanged kai together after an intense and challenging conversation around best practice when engaging with Māori whānau (Journal entry, Jaycie Bradley, 17 November 2021).

This demonstration of manaaki ignited a transformation in our relationship as it strengthened the level of trust.

Go-along interviews

Semi-structured go-along interviews allow the opportunity to for researchers to generate understandings of the participants' subjective experiences (Burns, Gallant, Fenton, White & Hamilton-Hinch, 2020). In comparison to conventional Eurocentric interview methods in which the aim is to extract information from participants, go-along interviews provide the opportunity to increase co-participation of the participant (Agar, 1976; Kirsch, 1998; Kirby, Greaves & Reid, 2006; Carpiano, 2009). The participant serves as a "tour guide" role within their real or virtual space and the researcher is able to explore the context with the participant in real time (Kusenbach, 2003; Jones, Bunce, Evans, Gibbs & Ricketts Hein, 2008; Carpiano, 2009).

Participants can choose the location in which their interview takes place, it can be mobile and not confined to a particular space and is not restricted by time. The go-along interview helps to reduce power dynamics that exist between the researcher and participant as interactions are conversation and dialogical in nature, allowing for unstrained gaps and pauses, relaying between topics whilst removing the pressure to converse about certain topics (Ross,

Renold, Holland & Hillman, 2009). These interactions contribute to establishing and maintaining rapport between the researcher and participant as opposed to focusing solely on information collection.

Go-along interviews were utilised in this research as they are person-centred, contribute to reducing any perceived power imbalances and orientate towards maintaining relationships. Go along interviews, like Kaupapa Māori research, focus on building and maintaining whakapapa. Unlike conventional Eurocentric interviewing methods, there is less pressure to fill silences with answers and provides researchers the opportunity to explore non-verbalised knowledges and practices (Riley, 2010). Therefore, researchers can formulate more careful and culturally sensitive follow up sessions based upon the non-verbalised experiences they have observed. Upholding the mana of the participant is the cultural and social responsibility of the researcher (Hudson et al., 2010) to treat the person with aroha and care in spite of what can be observed or not.

Through these interviews, the goal is to understand aspects of human experience and practice in its own right. This aspect of go along interviews contributes to the recognition of a Māori world view and way of doing which helps researchers to view the world and organise their researcher differently from a westernised approach (Bishop, 1999; Smith, 1999). They can facilitate deep insights into a participants' perceptions and highlight cultural and social structures, generating knowledge that is "truer to life" (Hall, 2009). In Kaupapa Māori research, an ideal relationship between the researcher and participant should empower Māori to take a kaitiaki role within the research with a view to ensuring that tangible outcomes are realised within Māori communities (Hudson et al., 2010). Go along interviews recognise participants as experts leading researchers within their own discoveries, engaging participants to actively reflect within places they already operate thus fostering personal growth and advancing social change (Carpiano, 2009).

The current research project had three go-along interviews which constitute most of the formal research. However, my engagements with kaimahi extended beyond these three interviews through ongoing conversations, pondering over ideas and talking them through my analysis process. The first interview was focused on whānaungatanga and more general conversations about the research project. The participants are from my own professional network, and I already have existing relationships with these participants, however informed by Kaupapa Māori research, it is still essential to nurture these existing relationships and it would not seem appropriate focusing the first interview primarily on the research without general conversation and a process of Whānaungatanga beforehand.

During this interview, the whakapapa of the participant was also be explored. Often during this process, whakapapa connections people are not aware of can sometimes emerge as well as removing the general pressure of interviews. Building a sense of trust and demonstrating an element of care and aroha is necessary when participants share their experiences and knowledge, this can at times be missed in initial research interviews. The second interview was a follow-up session regarding any reflection the participant has had about their previous interview. Since the interview is guided by the participant, there are no target areas of conversation in this second interview, rather I asked them to elaborate further on their statements or experiences they have had.

The aim of the research was not to pry participants for answers or recommendations for change but understand how they have come to decide and generate knowledge around these areas of concern. The final interview built upon policy, structural and cultural changes that the participants wanted to see occur in the current and future FGC process. This was also an opportunity for participants to combine the experiences and kōrero they had shared in previous interviews and discuss any implications arising from these changes for whānau and participants.

Process of Analysis

In Māori culture, forms of mātauranga comprise knowledge generated using methods and techniques developed independently from other knowledge systems (Hikuroa, 2017). After their arrival in Aotearoa, Māori developed various forms of codifying knowledge – many based upon oral delivery, some narrative forms including whaikorero (speech-making) and pūrākau (stories), each with its own categories, style, complex patterns and characteristics (Lee, 2008 as cited in Hikuroa, 2017). Pūrākau provide explanations for the foundations of social interaction, epistemological constructs and worldviews that are fundamental to Māori identity (Ware, Breheny & Forster, 2017). Yet historically they have been misappropriated, misrepresented, and misinterpreted as “fables” (Lee, 2008 as cited in Cliff-Tautari, 2020) despite a significant pedagogical potential to allow us to transcend time and space (Lee, 2005 as cited in Cliffe-Tautari, 2020).

The current research will be drawing from two Māori methods of analysis, the first being as it provides an indigenous construct for Māori to unpack their own perceptions about their cultural locatedness in a modern era (Cliffe-Tautari, 2020). Furthermore, it enables opportunity for Māori to contribute to a growing body of new mātauranga where relationships and connections to social circumstances are fostered and shared (Mikahere-Hall, 2015). A platform through pūrākau is provided for not just Māori leaders, but all Māori, to relay their personal experiences and convey their unique stories to understand together, particularly when this engagement is tōna kanohi – in the face of the other (Mikahere-Hall, 2015).

In the context of the current research, the application of pūrākau follows Wirihana (2012), who describes Pū as the source, rā as the light, sun or day, ka as the past, present and future, and ū from within. Similar to Wirihana (2012), understanding the participants’ stories draws from this structure. Pū was used to interpret their life experiences which provided the source of their kaimahi roles within the FGC process. Rā was used to examine participants’

stories to identify periods of enlightenment during their experiences with the FGC process which influenced, guided or defined their roles as kaimahi within their communities. Ka was used to used to examine how the intertwining of the past, present and future provided a foundation for understanding how their experiences influenced their current or future aspirations for the FGC process. Finally, ū is used to identify individual strengths within the participants and their mahi, which fuelled their desire to change the FGC process for the betterment of Māori communities and future generations.

The second Māori method of analysis the current research will be drawing from is Kaupapa Kōrero. The root of the word Kaupapa is derived from kau meaning to come into view, and papa shortened from Papatūānuku (earth mother) from whom Māori descend and are nourished (Ware, Breheny & Forster, 2017). Therefore, Kaupapa is both fixed in Māori traditional understandings but fluid in being able to respond to contemporary phenomena (Ware, Breheny & Forster, 2017). When applied to the current research, Kaupapa Kōrero is a tool to locate individual kōrero within a web of interrelations and analyses the the layering of kōrero and kaupapa that influences each participant's story (Ware, Breheny & Forster, 2017). The structure of Kaupapa Kōrero is comprised of layers of kōrero, the first being Tōna ake ao which focuses on constructing identity, resisting, challenging and countering negative stereotypes (Bamberg & Andrews, 2004; Ware, Breheny & Forster, 2017). In the context of the current research, kaimahi being a kaitiaki during the FGC which challenges dominant discourses of Māori being stigmatised as unable to break the cycle of being in care.

Tōne ake whānau describes relationships whether intergenerational, with friends or with professionals. Place is also key to understanding these relationships as places can structure power dynamics, governing who can speak and when. In the context of the current research, the intensity and location of these relationships can be affected when whānau and kaimahi are subject to an FGC.

Te ao Māori emphasises the importance of cultural identity and participation in whānau, hapū and iwi whilst considering the ongoing impact of colonisation, institutional racism and cultural revitalisation in light of the Māori-crown relations. This is especially relevant to the experiences of the participants as they are also kaimahi and professionals, that are subject to the impact of these factors.

Te ao Whānui which links self with the wider connections, in this case interweaving kaimahi pūrakau, is a key element at this layer. Deconstructing assumptions highlights the intersecting marginalisation of being Māori, coming from disadvantage and being in the care system. As stated previously, Māori are over-represented in the care system and their whānau are stigmatised as incapable of caring for their own or able to demonstrate they can work through their issues collectively as a whānau.

This chapter outlined how Kaupapa Māori research cannot be appropriately conducted using traditional methodology approaches such as positivism, which has dominated psychological research and has played a critical role in science development over a number of years. Knowledge production and experiences of kaimahi cannot be reduced to universal laws due to the complexity surrounding how they generate knowledge, perceive and understand their experiences in their own context as well as their dynamic every-day lives (Turner, 2001). Thus, this approach would not be able to capture the complex phenomena or offer interpretations that provide insight into the experience (Chamberlain, 2000). Resorting to either of these approaches, opposes the aim of Kaupapa Māori research which is to assert the centrality and legitimacy of Te Reo Māori, tikanga and mātauranga and that these Māori ways of knowing, doing and understanding the world are considered valid in their own right (Smith, 1990)

Chapter Three: Analysis

The analysis is presented in three sections, the three kaimahi are each their own case study as explored in the three sections. These case studies will be showcased as Pūrākau under the headings: Tonē ake ao: Qualified by experience, Tonē ake ao: Unsung heroes, Tonē whānau: Many houses not always homes, Tonē ake whānau: Nurturing the seed, Tonē ake whānau: A kiaitiaki and Tonē ake and Te ao Māori: Nga kete mātauranga (looking back to look forward) where kaimahi will be telling their stories, guiding the researcher through layered stories to distribute knowledge that is transformative. Pūrākau can provide encouragement for this, not necessarily through answers but reflection in way that many kaumātua so well carry out – through many pūrākau that intertwine with other pūrākau (Elkington, 2011). These pūrākau reclaim storytelling as a way of sustaining mātauranga and a Te ao Māori worldview to resist the colonisation of indigenous ontological and epistemological constructs (Lee, 2009). The case studies will document kaimahi experiences with the FGC process, how they have constructed their identities as kaimahi in this space and how this challenges dominant societal discourses surrounding their expertise.

It is expected that kaimahi will discuss their own experiences from their own lives and this is certain to influence their identity construction as pūrākau are not considered to be fixed traditional narratives that only exist in the past (Lee, 2015). Ultimately, they can, and should be, narratives that continue to be crafted to provide the information and inspiration core to kaimahi identity. Further to this, relationships both current and transcending generations, will be explored to determine their impact on their experiences and how these are situated within a Te ao Māori world. This will enable me to locate unique kaimahi narratives within layers of interrelated korero, whilst bringing the cases together in a composite analysis to link to Te ao whānui (wider world) and deconstruct the marginalisation of being kaimahi. As addressed in chapter two, case- based research does not seek to answer universal truths but provide a deeper

understanding of specific contexts. Therefore, it is incredibly useful for exploring kaimahi experiences at the community level as these are often over-looked by anglo-American psychology due to the alleged scientific invalidity of the findings.

The four sections that follow will explore how three community based kaimahi perceive their experiences with the FGC process, and the ways in which they come to be in this space, are affected by and, changes they want to see happen within the FGC process. Many kaimahi have built and maintained relationships with whānau they work alongside within the FGC system, it is not simply just a means of employment. They also develop as people, seeing similarities between their kōrero and the kōrero of the whānau they work alongside in turn identifying collective strengths. Of note, the pūrakau of kaimahi vary considerably as they are unique to each kaimahi. In aligning with the purpose of my research, I did not expect kaimahi to convey more or less than what they had provided through their pūrakau.

The first case study features '*Wero*', who identified his humble beginnings as a troubled youth, mirroring many of the youth he works alongside with in the care and protection and youth justice system. He is passionate about addressing intergenerational trauma, whilst also fearlessly addressing his many years of yearning for connection and identity, much like the youth he works alongside. Wero's accounts of his FGC experiences is enmeshed within the relationships he has built with 'his youth' and their whānau and his feeling of responsibility to 'do better by them' as a kaimahi. Wero is a highly empathetic person, his kōrero reflects this as he would go to great lengths to ensure his youth felt supported, empowered and nurtured. His disdain for certain aspects of the FGC process stemmed from state injustices and institutional racism which impacted heavily upon his youth. By his final interview, Wero raised many ideas about how the FGC process could be redesigned in a way that was appropriate for whānau Māori.

Tōna ake ao (Wero): Qualified by experience

The concept of youth work varies both conceptually, in terms of types of youth work and professionally, with respect to distinctions between those who are youth workers and people who work with youth (Fouché, Elliot, Mundy-McPherson, Jordan and Bingham, 2010). Arguable, the perception of youth workers is that they did not achieve well academically, therefore illustrating youth workers as ‘unskilled and uneducated’ and de-valuing the vital role they have in the positive development of young people (Tallon, Hay and Smith, 2022). In Wero’s kōrero, he refers to himself as not having a good education or good literacy but a wealth of life experience. Wero believes that shared life experiences lay the foundation for building whakawhānaungatanga and trust, which eventually leads to exploration of whakapapa.

My education isn’t that great, having life experience has helped me to connect better with Whānau, with the young taiohi and their whānau, so with all the whānau. All the grandparents and all their aunties and uncles you know, that was my generation.

As Wero has stated, he is part of the same generation as the aunties, uncles and grandparents of the taiohi. To recount one’s whakapapa sometimes means re-visiting personal history leaving the taiohi vulnerable to past trauma (Paipa, 2010). It is imperative that a strong foundation of whānaungatanga is built, which Wero achieves through sharing relevant stories from shared life experiences. The life experiences you know, stuff like going to jail, relationships, uh probably not having any confidence, tryna take shortcuts when making money and then even coming from a broken home. Just having that emotional, I suppose that emotional barrier around relationships.”

As Wero shares a small glimpse into his shared experiences, taiohi are familiarised with similar themes of struggle in their experiences. This offers a type of cognitive life raft which aids in healing (Hood, 2001; Paipa, 2010). The effectiveness of engagement through building whanaungatanga requires an understanding of life experiences that have shaped these beliefs and the ability to work within the reality of young people’s worlds (Atwool, 2020).

As Wero discusses further about his early experiences, he highlighted that as a child, he was always sick. He attributes this to being a result of unresolved issues, manifesting as physical illnesses impacting on his overall health. Māori view health as a holistic process,

emphasising the interconnectedness between tinana (physical health), wairua (spiritual health) and hinengaro (mental health) as well as to whanau and the environment (Mark and Lyons, 2010). All living things have mauri (life force), which has connotations of internal balance and well-being (McLachlan, Waitoki, Harris & Jones, 2021). Poipoi wairua (spiritual nourishment) encompasses Māori understandings of trauma as causing injury to the spirit, as well as body, mind, emotions and relationships (Kiyimba & Anderson, 2022).

Essentially, trauma weakens mauri and the wairua of a person. Failing to nurture these prevents the restoration and maintenance of physical well-being (Valentine, Tassell-Mataamua & Flett, 2017). Similar ways of thinking about and understanding these modalities of holistic health can be seen across other indigenous traditions. For example, a study on trauma responses in native women, highlighted that psychological and emotional distress was embodied through experiences of poor physical health (Pihama, Reynolds, Smith, Reid, Smith & Te Nana, 2014). The significance of this is whānau are in a state of overall poor wellbeing during FGCs and from Wero's own experiences, he endeavours to put processes in places that account for a wide range of issues contributing to a poor state of wellbeing as he explains:

I always had real bad eczema and asthma when I was young and what I learnt from that was a lot of it was unresolved stuff with my family and I even seen some of that in my own children because of the stuff I've had with their mums, but that's stuff we can work on. Cause I've noticed the change and I've wanted to put something in place that I suppose makes it more healthier and the outcomes better for my children.

Wero states that he often observes unresolved issues in his own children due to history with his mother. Historical trauma theory argues that for indigenous people, collective trauma such as colonisation can transcend intergenerationally, manifesting as family violence aided by westernised heteropatriarchal ideologies (Kiyimba & Anderson, 2022). Wero is transparent in his kōrero about having unresolved issues with his whānau, however he also highlights that it is something he can work on. The concept of resilience refers to the maintenance of healthy and successful functioning or adaption within the context of a significant adversity or threat (Martinez-Torteya, Bogat, Von Eye and Levendosky, 2009). Building resiliency allows one to adapt despite adverse circumstances, which can be a catalyst for substantial spiritual development (Tassell-Mataamua, Lindsay, Moriarity and Haami, 2021). Wero further states that he wants to apply his learnings from his own life and children to when he is working with youth, as he notes:

That's the kinda stuff I probably put in place when I'm with the youth.

Exploring resiliency often focuses on risk factors evident in one's life, however resiliency can be further understood by exploring protective factors, which can assist in minimising risk or avoiding negative consequences (Hewlett, 2018). Protective factors can be described as innate assets inherent in an individual, such as coping skills, and resources such as external positive factors which support youth in overcoming risk, such as mentoring or parental support (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Hewlett, 2018). However, within a Māori context, resilience can be understood as not just an individual factor, but a trait possessed by the wider community which manifests practically through things like tikanga and everyday social practices (Penehira, Green, Smith & Aspin, 2014). Wero concludes his kōrero with the perspective that the youth are like his own children.

I think of them as mine own to be honest.

Though the above expression can appear as mundane to most people, Wero's acceptance of taiohi as his own serves as a protective factor for taiohi to assist in counteracting the impact of trauma they have experienced. Protective factors at the level of the whānau have identified that a relationship with a caring adult or similar, is the child's greatest protective resource (Masten, 2014; Osofsky, 2004; Walters, 2016). This affirms that whanaungatanga is a protective factor in which relationships are the platform for any change to occur (Mauriora ki te ao, 2010; Makoare & Cram, 2021). To build connections with others is to strengthen collective resilience and whanaungatanga gives taiohi a network of people they can call upon in times of crisis or despair (Makoare & Cram, 2021). Wero brings focus to the importance of seeing the similarities between shared life experiences through relationships and how this can bring about positive change.

Throughout Wero's kōrero, he has continuously referred to the taiohi he works with as "his boys." It is clear Wero considers the taiohi as part of his own whānau and assumes a fatherly figure role. The adaption of fatherly roles appears to be shaped and influenced by the life experiences Māori fathers went through, these lived experiences appear to affect the way in which societal expectations of roles and responsibilities are prioritised (Elkington, 2017). Wero shared his experiences of coming from a broken home and rarely being surrounded by positive role models, it is expected that this shifted his prioritisation to showcasing aroha and

building whānaungatanga with his taiohi. Further to this, Wero highlighted that the many whānau he was part of included elders who carried the attributes that Wero desired to emulate as a role model and fatherly figure. As he outlines:

You know some of the stuff we share with our young people is experience, and experience of being a role model that's with them, like a father figure. But they don't know how to take that cause they've never had that."

Elders provide living role-models for positive parenting; it is proposed that wellbeing stems from the influential role of elders in the community and the transmission of traditional and historical knowledge (Rua, Hodgetts & Stolte, 2017). Wero indicates in his kōrero that the knowledge elders have taught him, fuel his desire to pass this knowledge down to future generations. The views and attitudes of Māori fathers aligned with Māori worldviews of belonging emphasise the importance of looking to the past, for guidance in the present and future (Walker, 1996; Elkington, 2017). Wero indicates that he has been exposed to a wealth of transmissible knowledge, affirming the importance of Māori remaining connected to extended networks:

I come from a place where I didn't have whānau, so I wanted to be a part of many families and I just took the best out of each one. I've lost a lot of good people, old people that have looked after me and taught me their ways and it's something that I've always wanted to share.

Wero acknowledges that such experiences and generational knowledge have helped him to navigate difficult pathways with taiohi, Wero indicates that he too is familiar with these pathways. However, Wero specifies that although many issues taiohi face now are similar to those experienced by older generations, it is in the context of a modern and evolving world:

That kinda experience actually helps me to navigate with our young people now. They still have the same areas or issues that they carry, it's just that we're in a modern world now, it's evolved. But it's still the same pathway.

Following on from this, an area of growing concern is the silent mental health pandemic, in which rates have increased substantially since 2018 (Mezies, Gluckman & Poulton, 2020).

Youth suicide in New Zealand has some of the worst statistics amongst other youth in the developed world (Tallon, Hay & Smith, 2022). As Wero stated issues like this are not new, however social media and technology have developed rapidly (Youth19 Survey, 2020), likely widening the platform for virtual bullying and consumption of drugs and alcohol. When coupled with contextual determinants such as early life experiences, trauma, family and social factors, the risk of suicide and poor mental health is significantly increased (Mezies, Gluckman & Poulton, 2020).

Expanding on these ideas, taiohi were also blindsided by the Covid-19 pandemic which physically isolated many from their whānau and imposed social distancing restrictions in which the absence of interconnectedness became apparent (Freedom, Ergler, Kearns & Smith, 2022). Ultimately, these restrictions put a strain on the capacity of Māori to sustain whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and other key cultural concepts (Carr, 2020). It is likely for many taiohi this threatened their connection to mentors and trusted parental figures such as Wero and created a barrier to positive change.

Tōne ake ao (Wero): Unsung heroes

The engine room of a Marae is often people who work in the back, this is encapsulated as “Ka tika ana a muri, ka tika hoki a mua” which translates to “get the back right, and the front will be a success” (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora & Leggat-Cook, 2011). Learning to work in the back is an important part of manaakitanga and these people display the capability of the Marae to look after the manuhiri (guests) (Morris, 2023). Similar to ringawera, (workers on the Marae who prepare the food), youth workers are often working behind the scenes to prepare the sustenance for taiohi to create positive change and build resilience. Ultimately, the success of a taiohi is often dependent on the collective efforts of socio-cultural practices that have emerged from the Marae (Morris, 2023). In Wero’s kōrero, he addresses that youth workers often feel powerless to create change as they do not sit in the same place as those considered the front:

I suppose from where we sit we can see a lot of holes in the system and probably you know because we’re not with those providers, or those services, we can’t really make...I don’t know a change in that service because we’re not from there.

As highlighted previously, Marae are often governed from the back. However, Wero has identified that the front (government agencies) are not working collectively with the back (community agencies) to not only support the success of taiohi but to provide a blanket of aroha. Typically, people hold more than one role on the Marae. However, notions of Mua and Muri break down and are dependent on the presence and willingness of people to contribute (Groot et al., 2011). The role one has on the Marae will be associated with many responsibilities and as Māori people they would want ensure they are demonstrating manaakitanga and aroha when in these roles. Each role would carry some extent of pressure for people to do their individual part to contribute to the collective success of all involved. Wero spoke about these mounting pressures and the emotional challenges of being a kaimahi, he further added that although ethical boundaries are implemented to prevent professional “burnout” it is difficult to know when to step back:

It’s actually about processes and systems, and to be honest when you’re in your Te ao Māori stuff, cause I believe in that, it’s hard for me to accept processes, it’s hard for me to accept boundaries.

Wero describes the pressure kaimahi feel to help those in a state of emotional distress as they are often the conduit to return them to a state of overall wellbeing. In early Māori society, the presence of unusual behaviour associated with stress and other mental health issues was described as Pōrangī; linked to the concept of Te Po (lifelessness, darkness) but also synonymous with the concept of Rangi (light, day) (Mika, 2021). Ultimately, a state of being between two realms. Regression into this state can result in a loss of self, time and space (Metcalf, 2020). Furthermore, one can be in a state of wairangi; where the wairua goes wandering leading to an inability to communicate surrounding people (McAllister, 2021; Taitimu, Read & McIntosh, 2018). Those who exhibited such behaviour, were cared for and included within the whānau unit (Metcalf, 2020). Wero’s kōrero aligns with this in which he firmly believes whānau should be cared for in all states of wellbeing and it is the responsibility of the whānau unit to discover a means to do this:

So, as for myself, yeah there are times as kaimahi we do put pressure on ourselves. But you know for me I’m a believer that if we don’t try something you know, if we’re gonna go in there and do nothing then you know what’s the whole purpose of actually being

in the service? I mean we're there to provide a service and provide help, we're there to be a conduit between health and wellbeing and also whānau.

In Wero's kōrero, he emphasises that ensuring the wellbeing of the whanau he works with is central to his mahi, often assuming a conduit role to bridge the gap have to achieving an overall state of health and wellbeing. However, his kōrero also highlights the lack of attention given to the well-being of kaimahi who exert unwavering energy, aroha and mana into their mahi and not always being supported with their own wellbeing. People serving occupations such as youth work, is emotionally laborious. It requires one to leave their own challenges "at the door" (White, DeMand, McGovern & Akiva, 2020) and fully engage their attention towards the taiohi and how they can best support them. Although youth work can be fulfilling, the emotional labour required can result in high stress, burnout and turnover (Kim, 2011; White et al., 2020) To combat some of these issues, professional supervision is often encouraged in which the worker and supervisor discuss ethical and best practice, individualised needs and the wellbeing of the worker (Khosa & Engelbrecht, 2021). This is a regular occurrence and often a mandatory requirement in social worker practice. As Wero explains:

You know all of that work, all of that relationship and all that time, is gonna be costly especially on the worker. So having the right supports in place from your work is essential, having regular triage meetings with your teams, having good communication with your supervisor and your leader. Just so that if things do trigger yourself off then you have support.

In Wero's kōrero, he identifies that support which aligns with the guidelines of professional supervision, are essential for the wellbeing of workers. The health and well-being of the youth sector relies primarily on the health and well-being of the workers (Bruce, Boyce, Campbell, Harrington, Major & Williams, 2009). However, in youth work there is no formal requirement to undertake professional as opposed to social work in which hours of supervision must be logged regularly to maintain their registration as a social worker. Thus, support for kaimahi is not as prominent nor is their well-being as heavily prioritised.

Ara Taiohi (Body for Youth Development) created a Youth Code of Ethics to provide an agreed set of guidelines for youth work in Aotearoa to ensure that youth work is carried out in a safe, skilled and ethical manner (Ara Taiohi, 2022). It was framed within Te Tiriti o Waitangi to reflect the cultural values of Kaupapa Māori such as whanaungatanga,

manaakitanga and mātauranga. Within the clause of mātauranga, is kaitiakitanga (supervision), in which supervision should be resourced and initiated by the youth worker's organisation (Youth Code of Ethics, Clause 22.2, 2019). Wero recognises the importance of having such guidelines for his practice:

Sometimes we do need the guidelines, we do need the constant stuff around the rights of what we do because we do forget and it's because our compassion takes over. And this is where the education part comes in, so um, you know you'll get burnt a few times and realise, yeah I overstepped... You know, so it is a learning process, we're just like them, but we just don't know when those challenges are gonna happen.

Wero states that compassion takes over and these guidelines can be forgotten, which can present a common dilemma for Māori who work within social services, in that cultural obligations of care can sometimes conflict with standard operating practices. When building whanaungatanga with whānau, it challenges the 'synthetic separation of the personal and professional' that pretends workers are somehow separate from the community they work in (Eketone, 2021). This is not to disregard the guidelines of ethical practice but instead guided by Māori customary values, although the work may 'finish' a relationship may never finish. Part of the issue here is that kaimahi Māori are often put in a position where they are caught between cultural norms of care and institutional policy.

Tōna Whānau (Wero): Many houses not always homes

In recent years, Oranga Tamariki has struggled to recruit non-kin care and protection caregivers. Since most households consist of two working parents, an intensive drive has been carried out where caregivers must be paid commensurately for the work they do as well as the 24-hour responsibility they hold (Schofield, Beek, Ward & Biggart 2013; Worrall, 2021). As a result, taiohi spend uncertain periods of time in multiple placements and can often change social workers. This does not provide an opportunity to build whanaungatanga with taiohi. Taiohi fall through the cracks in the system where there is no knowledge of their whakapapa or identity as Wero highlights in his kōrero:

I think with care and protection stuff it's very hard, because a lot of information we get isn't the whole thing. We're not getting the whole background, the history, yet we're

working with the kid as we see where we're going. Then we get to the end of our time with that child, we realise that for a longer period of time they've been in care they've never got the supports or the help.

To centre whakapapa would strengthen a view that taiohi and whānau are intrinsically linked, reframing whānau as part of the solution not the problem (Fitzmaurice-Brown, 2022). As Wero states without knowing the history of the taiohi, they will always miss out on obtaining support and be stuck in the cycle of falling through the gaps in the system. Therefore, Wero acknowledges that identifying underlying issues that can only be explored in whakapapa to focus on intergenerational solutions:

With just that stuff there, you're able to navigate anything cause you actually have all of the whakapapa... cause they're still holding onto that *take* (issues) from their experiences. How do we change that? How can we make that safe for them?

As mentioned previously in this research, the recommendations of the Pūao te Āta tū report were clear in incorporating Māori values such as whakapapa and whānaungatanga into future policies. However, it is argued there is such a focus on risk that it has displaced participation and the use of family decision making from the FGC process (Keddel 2019; Young, McKenzie, Omre, Schjelderup & Walker, 2020). This demonstrates that there is a clash of biculturalism, in which there appears to be a struggle between co-existence of Māori and westernised values in social policy. In Wero's kōrero, he shares his view of the current FGC system and compares it to a "war" in which taiohi are fighting an uphill battle to attain positive outcomes in a system they no faith in:

But when we go into an FGC and there's been no uh interaction, or no communication, or relationship, we're actually going into war. So for me, hence the reason why our outcomes take so long...and hence the reason we end up recycling the young person back through that same system to get the same outcome, when they're not engaging or not willing to complete anything.

Some Māori scholars advocate for biculturalism in practice, having the belief that only Māori have the cultural resources needed to meaningfully support Māori and that it is possible to advance the wellbeing of Māori within crown institutions if certain aspects of tikanga are

acknowledged and upheld (Williams, 2017; Fitzmaurice, 2022). Mikaere (2011, p. 271) argues that “injecting aspects of tikanga into the Western legal framework has the potential to mask the Crown’s ongoing abuse of power” and further use of kupu Māori in social policies can dilute from their true meanings. This is reflected in Wero’s kōrero where he states that young people are recycled back into the same system to get the same negative outcome. It is clear the Crown continues to dominate decision making policies involving Māori, with blatant displays of resistance towards Māori autonomy.

Many politicians argue for a ‘needs not race’ policy (Pirsoul & Pirsoul, 2020), categorising Māori as poor people with needs rather than indigenous people with rights (Hill, 2010; Pirsoul & Pirsoul, 2020). As Wero further explains, taiohi still deserve to know and be connected to their whānau. This extends beyond the issue of taiohi just being in “need” of care and being removed from harmful environments but to also account for their rights to re-navigate this environment should they choose to do so:

Even to our young people that get hurt from their own whanau, they still yearn in their heart for their whanau.

Tōna Whānau (Wero): Nurturing the seed

The inability of the state to work bi-culturally within the FGC process has contributed to a ‘patch and dispatch’ practice in which the needs of Māori whānau were not appropriately assessed to account for the impact of intergenerational trauma, thus whānau would repeatedly come to the attention of the care system (Moyle, 2013). Wero highlights that when he attends an FGC, unresolved issues surface from previous engagements with the care system:

What I’ve seen in the past is we’ve gone to an FGC and it’s all about this child and their issues about care and protection. But the mum or the whānau that come, it becomes about the issues they had with the service the boy’s in. And the whole thing changes you know and then you start seeing the things the parents never got help with their mental health or their issues. And they’re still going back to that space you know, when they were young. They still can’t leave that and then you see the cycle of it becoming the same issue with the young person that we’re working with.

Wero discusses how this ‘patch and dispatch’ approach to FGCs becomes cyclic, where taiohi are not nurtured, shown aroha or have their cultural needs addressed resulting in the same issues exhibited from their parents. The current FGC process is still monocultural in some aspects, embedded within the one “right” culture and one size fits all (Moyle, 2014). If a common solution cannot be found for an issue they are pawned off to the next worker until something works as Wero states:

You’ve been in care, you’ve had no one. Different people in, or even ones who have passed away and then you find it hard to move on cause you’re always getting passed around. It’s a bit like a used cup I suppose when you’re not wanted anymore, you’re just thrown into the rubbish. That’s how young people feel when they’ve been in the system, hence the reason why they can’t wait to be outta there. It’s a constant barrier and challenge you know with their confidence and their own well-being on are they valued?... it’s like a hereditary cycle of dysfunction.

Following on from this, the Ara Taiohi Youth Code of Ethics describes mana as the authority taiohi inherit at birth, it accrues over their lifetime and determines their right to have agency, a voice and recognising the reality of their world (Ara Taiohi, 2019). Wero discusses how taiohi question their value and are discarded when they are “too hard.” In deliberating on this clause, it would appear to takahe (trample on) on one’s mana goes against the mana enhancing practice supposedly embedded within the current FGC process. The true essence of mana enhancing practice is concerned with manaakitanga and Māori ethics of care which Wero captures in his concluding kōrero:

They’re frustrated they didn’t have a voice... Like we’ve got to give time to these young people, we’ve got to be kind, we’ve got to be compassionate.

Tōna Whānau (Wero): A kaitiaki

Kaitiaki is aligned strongly to the connectedness between the metaphysical, physical and human realm. It’s root word ‘tiaki’ relates to nurture and to taking care of as well as to grow, develop and guide (Beverland, 2022). Wero refers to himself as a kaitiaki, trying to put taiohi on the right path and support them:

I think you know the perception of FGC and being in care for our taiohi is a lot different to we're kaitiaki I think and we're trying to put them on the right path and support them. They are stuck, within their situation so for them they're still in struggle and survival...once they get free they usually relapse and then they do worse.

The term Kai can be interpreted as 'to facilitate a pathway towards understanding' (Pipi, Spee, Were, Porima, Hamiton, Marama & Hamilton, 2006). However, when Kai is placed before tiaki, it risks reduction to an individual responsibility rather than the collective (Beverland, 2022).

You could still have your FGC person who facilitates but have the kaitiaki to either step in for the young person. You know, so if the young person had to step-out they could talk about he was getting wound up, or go and talk to the young person and come back and let the services know what's actually going on, so they understand.

It would appear from the above kōrero, the term kaitiaki has been heavily distorted to reflect a more institutionalised definition thus placing responsibility on kaimahi. Although in Te Ao Māori there is a strong emphasis on collective responsibility, it is clear the current FGC process still aligns with the nuclear family structure, with individuals tasked with responsibilities. Without hesitation, Wero shoulders this by being responsible for "identifying when a young person is going to trigger off, how to calm them, how to de-escalate them." Matua rautia "a hundred parents" (Morgan, Penitito, Mane & Eruera, 2021) speaks to the collective responsibility that taiohi need to be cared for by many adults to transmit knowledge, enhance their mana and promote change. Wero raises awareness that there needs to be a greater collective effort by those involved in a the tiaki of the taiohi, that it's about "trying to change a whole mindset" not just for taiohi but all those involved in their journey:

To try empower them with the mana or the power to move forward while being vulnerable, that's a real delicate thing. But I believe with some of our people and our community that have been doing that in their trade, I believe that if we put it all together in such a way that flows that we're actually teaching our family our taiohi.

Kaitiaki (guardian) and tiaki (to nurture) are terms loosely tied to Māori frameworks and practice in which Oranga Tamariki are confident are enough (Beverland, 2022), to address

years of institutional racism suffered by Māori in the care and protection system. It remains a fundamental flaw that workers do not have the competence nor the motivation to implement Te Ao Māori through these frameworks (Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency, 2020). Furthermore, the concept of Kaitiaki and tiaki has aligned more so with meeting competency standards, rather than a relationship of integrity (Beverland, 2022).

Te ao Māori (Wero): Ngā kete mātauranga (looking back to look forward)

As mentioned previously, there is minimal implementation of mātauranga or Te Ao Māori in the current FGC process. Rongoā (traditional Māori healing) includes the cultural concepts of the and relationships with the environment, cosmology, the atua (Māori gods), wairua, ancestors and tikanga (Mark, Johnson & Boulton, 2018; Mark, Boulton, Allport, Kerridge & Potaka-Osbourne, 2022). Often it is narrowly understood as herbal medicines, rather it is to restore and strengthen the mauri (life essence) and requires a holistic perspective of both. Essentially, rongoā is a taonga tuku iho (ancestral treasure) of intergenerational healing of the people that connects them to their identity and values. Wero explains in his perception of rongoā in his kōrero, often utilising rongoā in diverse ways to help taiohi relieve the maemae (hurt) they have been holding on it and in turn strengthening their mauri (life essence):

Rongoa is medicine so we could be rongoā kōrero, could be Rongoa tangitangi (cry) could be rongoā haka or rongoā waiata. Whatever it is, rongoā could be attached to it, could be Rongoa kai, cause we know that young people are always hungry. So, you know usually when they're heightened we give them a kai and then they calm down and then you know if something's been on their mind for a long time, it might just be one word and next minute they're crying.

Wero stipulates that rongoā could also be informed by haka, waiata and other approaches to expressing emotion. Teaching mātauranga through haka, waiata and other approaches forms the basis of healing methods from grief, loss and heartache (Emergy, Cookson-Cox & Raerino, 2015; Wirihana, Smith and Smith, 2017). Trauma, understood in Te ao Māori, had the potential to lead to pōuritanga (depression) and would be passed down to subsequent generations if it remained unaddressed in one's lifetime (Smith, 2008; Wirihana & Smith, 2014; Wirihana, Smith and Smith, 2017). Wero captures this understanding of rongoā in his kōrero and also highlights that the taiohi often have a story to tell, whether it's his own or his whānau:

If we use that stuff we might be able to identify things better in that process. Oh, he's angry, he's doing a haka. What's he actually haka-ing about? You know, he's telling a story and for us I think we gotta read into the story. They're not gonna tell us directly what it is but we've gotta give them the tools to express it.

The current FGC system process does not acknowledge that the wellbeing of Māori is intrinsically linked to the environment and cosmology. This is clear through tick box processes that only implement part of Te Ao Māori and disregard what does not fit into westernised models of social work and competency levels. Wero emphasises:

You know our Māori people, we're very receptive to the earth's motions and what's going on in the world. Even though, we don't realise it, you know. our own biological system is always behind.

In envisioning a new FGC system, Wero spoke about taking taiohi on a hikoī to obtain a pounamu that would represent them and their journey so far:

We wanna take our young person to take a greenstone. So, they've been displaced from their whanau, we wanna take them to the South Island, take them up the river, learn about the history, find one and then that greenstone actually represents them. Around their value, their mana, you know, and then with pounamu, you connect with pounamu with your spirit. It's about taking care of that. How do you find time for yourself and you know how do you channel your feelings and stuff through it when you're not able to cope?

Māori have always viewed tamariki as precious taonga that are significantly important and represent connections to whakapapa, whenua and a myriad of other relationships. Moreover, people know their value and care for their taonga. Taiohi often do not realise their own value which is lost amongst the care and protection policies and disconnection from their identity. Wero is determined to empower taiohi to see their value and care for their pounamu as they would for their own well-being.

Further to this, he wants there to be something tangible taiohi can take home from FGCs through traditional practices such as gathering kaimoana (seafood) or harvesting the maara kai

(food garden) In this way taiohi can remain connected to these practices as well as demonstrate manaakitanga by contributing to the collective:

Might be we go and do that and do our FGC, you know? Might be we go and grab kumara, might be that we're harvesting. I mean, at the end of the day when we finish, we're all gonna be taking something home.

The second case study features *I wish I was skinny*, who fiercely advocates for youth empowerment and voice to be reflected during FGCs. *I wish I was skinny* is passionate about guiding his mahi by Kaupapa Māori values and similar to Wero, highlighting the institutional racism that occurs during FGCs. *I wish I was skinny's* accounts of the FGC process were deeply insightful, from the perspective of both a community based kaimahi and a former clinician. Through this, *I wish I was skinny* desired to bring awareness to other aspects of the FGC process such as a disregard for the expertise of kaimahi as opposed to other professionals. *For I wish I was skinny*, this highlighted a lack of emphasis on the strength of the collective or "taking a village" to raise and support a child.

Tonā ake ao (IWIWS): Qualified by experience

Throughout his mahi, *I wish I was Skinny* is uniquely positioned as being Māori and an academically qualified professional in the social services field. His practice is juxtaposed between upholding the mana, tikanga and values of being Māori and being accountable to the ideology of his profession (Hollis-English, 2012). Being placed between two spaces, practitioners can experience constraints within Eurocentric settings, it can be difficult to incorporate innovative approaches that draw from mātauranga and tikanga which prioritise relationality and connection (Latimer, Le Grice, Hamley, Greaves, Gillon, Groot, Manchi, Renfrew and Clark, 2022). This is reflected in *I Wish I was skinny's* kōrero in which he is constantly asked:

What qualifies you? What are your qualifications? Oh, we all do advocacy.

Arguably, advocacy in eurocentric practice is often professionals advocating on behalf of whānau for what they believe is right. Comparatively, in Kaupapa Māori practice, kaimahi seek

to empower whānau to be autonomous and promote self-advocacy. *I wish I was skinny* is confident in his identity as a Māori practitioner as opposed to a practitioner who is just Māori, the interweaving of his identity and practice has created an integrated space that is attributed to reclaiming indigenous Māori practice (Roberts, 2020). He states this clearly:

You have to have confidence about yourself I feel as a kaimahi Māori. Also, by way of being Māori, that you know you have a right to be in some space cause sometimes we're not invited into these spaces.

Similar to a korowai which cloaks one in their culture, whānau and mana, *I wish I was Skinny* is cloaked in indigenous practice denoting that indigenous culture informs indigenous practice thus reclaiming this space and decolonising Eurocentric practices (Roberts, 2020).

Tonā ake ao (IWIWS): Unsung heroes

Māori understandings of time and space have been marginalised by Western-centric understandings that have become dominant through their privileging and embedding into structures and institutions (Matamua, 2020; Winter, 2020, Kidman, MacDonald, Funaki, Ormond, Southon & Thomlins-Jahnke, 2021; King, Cormack, Harris, Paine & McLeod, 2022). *I Wish I Was Skinny* emphasises how the Ministry places timeframes on taiohi and whānau to achieve goals:

I think in particular that Oranga Tamariki must stop saying is you're turning 18 soon, so therefore we've got to get things done by December for example. I've actually called out the Ministry in several hui and go that needs to stop being your catchline or your end product to get across the line. Cause now what you're saying to that young person is that they're only important up until that time.

Māori continue to be reprimanded if they do not conform to the boundaries of this system such as the timeframes, failing to recognise Whānau within these systems and echoing colonial narratives of assimilation (Durie, 2001; Latimer et al., 2022). Similarly, colonisation has attempted to re-configure time to prioritise productivity rather than relationality (Sugarman &

Thrift, 2020; Hamley, Le Grice, Greaves, Groot, Latimer, Renfrew, Parkinson, Gillon & Clark, 2022). This constrains the ability of Māori to facilitate whānaungatanga which is fluid, interactive and does not happen within a predetermined amount of time (Bishop & Ladwig, 2014; Latimer et al., 2022). *I Wish I Was Skinny* highlights that if systems want to focus on achievement, then time will need to be adjusted to suit the taiohi and their whānau to prevent undermining whānau and kaimahi:

I think that definitely needs to change too, and I think if you start focusing on the outcome that they want to achieve then we'll just have to adjust our timelines personally.

As stated previously, Māori cultural values need to be exercised through related indigenous understandings of time and space (Smith, 1999). *I Wish I Was Skinny* discusses how he has organised professional hui where professionals and whānau have not attended but has reflected on genuine invitations to hui rather than time constrained invitations to meet:

I've called professional hui where someone doesn't show up and they play a vital role. And you think cool how do we get their how do we get their service voice into the hui? And I've also called a whanau hui where important whānau haven't shown up but you think shucks what can we do better here? I've now settled on the concept of going; if you are given a genuine invitation...be really manaaki to journey alongside people and it might take longer. But I also feel too that hui or any wānanga is really, really important and give time to those spaces too.

This is important as the conception of time needs to be differentiated from the perception of time. As individuals, we can sense the rate at which time passes to change in relation to emotional state or growing older (McKay and Walmsley, 2003). For many state professionals, attendance at these hui or wananga is dependent on an overwhelming amount of information and trauma being condensed into an "efficient" timeframe. However, for Māori, past and present are both at the forefront. As described by the term mua which is mentioned through this research, meaning both past and front (Williams, 1971; McKay and Walmsley, 2003). In this timeframe, Māori have before them the living, their forebears, the dead, ancestors, atua and other considerable figures (Ranginui Walker; McKay and Walmsley, 2003). Thus, hui and

wananga about the present and past will never fit into the Eurocentric constraints of time and space.

Tonā whānau (IWIWS): Many houses not always homes

Having a home is fundamental to physical and social wellbeing and a sense of self (Groot & Hodgetts, 2011). Definitions of homes should encapsulate a wide array of places with emotional connection and not ignore spiritual dimensions of homelessness (Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora & Rua, 2011; Groot, Hodgetts, Nikora, Rua & Groot, 2015). *I Wish I Was Skinny* discusses how the taiohi he works with view homelessness in both a physical and spiritual sense:

Homeless to me looks like being moved to 16 different placements in two years, having no idea what my whakapapa is. Again, I can't even I don't even know how to attain the world homelessness cause I've never had a home.

It is important to note that although Oranga Tamariki identify and arrange for taiohi to make connections with whānau, this is not evidence that the connections will be made (Turner, 2022). As stated previously, time constraints cannot be placed on whānaungatanga and frequent placement disruptions revoke any sense of belonging (Moton, Paine and Wright, 2022). *I Wish I was Skinny* emphasises that for care experienced taiohi, homelessness is perceived differently. Removal from whānau by social services in childhood has been attributed by many taiohi as their earliest entrance into homelessness (Shiloh, Vandenburg & Hodgetts, 2017).

Youth homelessness looks very different for them cause they can't attach themselves. They've never been a part of a home to feel homeless cause they've always been disassociated from a solid foundation.

Loss of whānaungatanga and wairuatanga is a form of spiritual homelessness (Shiloh, Vandenburg & Hodgetts, 2017) resulting from Ministry uplifts is a form of and to focus on homelessness as just an absence of physical shelter denies Māori understandings and experiences of homelessness (Groot & Mace, 2016).

Tonā whānau (IWIWS): Nurturing the seed

Participation for taiohi is more than them being in attendance or being asked for opinions, it is about meaningful incorporation and decision making that requires systems to facilitate this involvement rather than fitting taiohi into existing processes (King & Cormack, 2022). I wish I was Skinny discusses how many taiohi have had multiple plans created for them but have lacked follow up from the professionals involved:

I've had a young person say I've had so many plans developed with me um and they've all failed because no-one follows through. So they expect this from me, but when you don't know show up, or when I don't hear from you or when you are not co-ordinating amongst yourselves as professionals, to align with me still trying to be a kid of course they're gonna fail.

The principle of utu is to reinforce the reciprocity of whānaungatanga (Jones, 2016). By not demonstrating manaaki towards taiohi on their journey, the practice of a professional is not tika and pono thus impacting on taiohi ability to thrive and not achieve utua ki ea (Abuse in Care, Royal Commission of Enquiry, 2023). There is a definitive tone behind “of course they're going to fail” stated in *I Wish I was Skinny's* kōrero, the mana of taiohi is already impacted through tūkino (abusive trauma) and to be denied utua ki ea fails to restore mana and carries with the implication that professionals do not care.

I think that one of those gaps is that you can't have relationships with young people by association, you have to have journey I feel journey relationships. I quite often in our mahi often referring to us or ringing us about stuff like hmm I don't think you should be using us like that I think you should be making that judgement yourself. Cause I think there's places where young people are sharing things with us that they wouldn't share with OT and vice versa and I get that.

Tonā whānau (IWIWS): A kaitiaki

Part of the essence of kaitiakitanga is: are people “mai” or “atu” referring to the process of selecting in or out of the kaupapa. This suggests that kaitiakitanga cannot be a theoretical

endeavour alone but involves mahi, commitment and practice (Beverland, 2022). As *I Wish I was skinny* points out:

When you introduce, when you walk into a hui and go well kia ora koutou my name is blah blah blah blah and this is the format of blah blah blah, by rights of the Act we've got duh duh duh. So already you've got the ngākau (heart) of someone or the headspace of someone with a whole bunch of terminology that you and I have had time to study, um as a part of the professions that we've chose to live by but for whanau they're already overwhelmed or switched off by the time we get to the nitty gritty stuff.

Te ao Māori (IWIWS): Ngā kete mātauranga (looking back to look forward)

The sustenance of Te Pā Harekeke is the centre shoot or “te rito,” which represents the central importance of the child. The removal of the centre shoot can potentially destroy the plant itself, signifying that tamariki are the centre of whānau, critical to the survival of our people and any harm bestowed upon tamariki is destructive to the whānau as a whole (Pihama, Campbell & Greensill, 2019). *I wish I was skinny* acknowledges the maemae (hurt) iwi and hapū are experiencing. Similar to the outer fronds of harakeke, iwi and hapū carry the responsibility of protecting the vulnerable and strengthening connections for future generations (Watson, 2020) as *I wish I was skinny* explains:

I feel we would have to wrangle in our iwi and our hapu to better involved. Cause I also think they've been a distance counterpart to this whole process. Um, and one of the things I feel quite aroha about with our iwi and hapu is that they haven't been connected to some of our young people for a very long time and sometimes they didn't know that their mokopuna had existed.

The State often assumes when tamariki reunite with their whānau it will be a smooth transition. However, the long-term consequences of rehabilitation and reuniting tamariki with their whānau can be equally as stressful as the initial separation (Bullock, Little & Millham, 1993 as cited in Cootes, 2007). As a result, the transmission of mātauranga is disrupted and taiohi

are unfamiliar with the everyday practices, roles and responsibilities undertaken by iwi and hapū on the marae.

I wish I was skinny discusses the importance of valuing all involved for their contribution to a collective kaupapa. As mentioned previously, the back of the marae is the engine room in which those people are often invisible and their mahi remains unseen but without their contribution the front of the marae would not function as effectively:

We will see the value of like those cooking the kai on the marae valued as much as those that are lawyers or doctors. We will see the value of our kuia and kaumātua being just as valued as the different receptionists at the ministry. Or that we'll see the value when you're asking our people to do a karakia, is it the same payroll as your co-ordinator? You know? Where our people are valued, where our young people feel more confident about themselves as people that can recite their whakapapa, their pepeha confidently.

The importance of *I wish I was skinny's* kōrero is that it is a starting point to decolonise ideologies of assimilation (Pihama, Campbell & Greensill, 2019) and believing that certain individuals are worthy of more recognition due to their status or academic qualifications. In this way, mātauranga continues to be marginalised and measured through an academic lens. Mātauranga is not found in books but in Māori cultural concepts and spaces, there are stories in the land and stories are knowledge (Jackson 2011, as cited in Rangiwai, 2018).

Subsequently, the last case study features Aroha, who has been a community based kaimahi in many areas such as alternative education and the care and protection system. Similar to Wero, Aroha spoke boldly about her childhood experiences and how this ignited her passion for youth work. As with all three cases, Aroha placed whānaungatanga at the forefront of her mahi and Kaupapa Māori values as her guide. As previously highlighted in the prior two cases, Aroha believes that the FGC process does not provide the safe space that it promotes for taiohi to have a voice, nor does it encapsulate the essence of a whānau led decision making framework.

Tonā ake ao (Aroha): Unsung heroes

The underappreciation of kaimahi and their mahi continues to be normalised by the Crown. Reportedly lack of trust, differences in values, lack of communication and power differences between Oranga Tamariki and NGO agencies are still prevalent. These issues have consequent effects of loss of trust with whānau and the devaluing of information from NGOs who often had the best relationships with the families (Keddell, Cleaver & Fitzmaurice, 2021). Aroha highlights that:

Some people just kinda underestimate what we do in this space...like we actually do so much more than what's on the paper as well

This clearly reflects a deficit lens imposed upon kaimahi despite them knowing how to best support the community they work within and completely disregarding the whanaungatanga they have built with those in their community. To counteract this negative discourse, the Crown promotes the rangatiratanga of community agencies to shape policies. However, rangatiratanga continues to be redefined to impose subtle forms of control. Often reflected in attempts to diminish connotations of rangatiratanga and confuse this with some form of whanau “empowerment.” (Fitzmaurice, 2020). This shift in perception is reflected in Aroha’s kōrero:

Things have changed from in the day of youth work and I think they fail to see that and sometimes don't even acknowledge how things have changed and how ramped up our youth and their needs are.

Aroha highlights that current system does not work for taiohi and it almost becomes a type of recycling centre for taiohi who are trapped:

The young ones we get and obviously seen have been in the youth arena for a long time

It is clear from this kōrero that taiohi will repeatedly cycle through the system until the Crown acknowledges the position of rangatiratanga when promoting social change

instead of favouring partnership. It is the loss of Māori ways of decision making in relation to whānau, the loss of tikanga in relation to whānau that may cause the most harm in the long term not just the breakdown of individual whānau, improving outcomes for Māori children and whānau requires doing things in a Māori way (Fitzmaurice, 2020).

Tonā whānau (Aroha): Many houses not always homes

Children are less likely to have a secure attachment style and more likely to have an avoidant attachment style as a result of exposure to violence (Levendosku, Huth-Bocks, Shapiro & Semel, 2003; Walters, 2016). Although there is a significant drive for tamariki Māori to build and heal relationships with their whānau, sometimes taiohi are not ready to reconnect and whānau can be trigger for negative behaviour as Aroha highlights:

In a sense cause I think they might just look at it in one kind of way whereas some whanau members can be more triggers to young people. It's not always a good thing to have their whanau there, I think it's tuning into what the young person wants and not assuming that whanau are there for them no matter what cause it's not always the case.

As a response, taiohi will readily assume social interactions will be hostile and will be aggressive towards not only whānau but likely anyone present during an FGC or hui (Alink, Cicchetti, Kim & Rogosch, 2012; Scholfield & Beek, 2005; Dempster-Rivett, 2022). It is important for taiohi to be given time to process their emotions, however neoliberalism and colonisation has redefined Māori understandings of time to have constraints and prioritise efficiency. Aroha points out that FGCs and hui should account for these times like these stating:

(The youth) probably wanted to go out and from my point of view when they're like that it should be sort of adjourned for another time or something. But a lot of the time they'll carry on and go forward with it which is a little bit sucky.

Te ao Māori (Aroha): Ngā kete mātauranga (looking back to look forward)

The whenua (land) is a fundamental source of identity, spiritual connection and a significant environmental and cultural determinant of health (Mark et al., 2022). For many taiohi living in

colonial societies, imposed education practices have contributed to intergenerational disparities, alienating māori students and undermining their learning, wellbeing and thriving (Moewaka-Barnes, Henwood, Murray, Waiti, Pomare-Peita, Bercic & McCreanor, 2019). Aroha indicates that taiohi are limited in creative expression at mainstream courses, particularly when most courses do not align with Māori practices:

But even the courses are quite limited and restricted. It's not really opening the young person's mind to say like there's other things out there. It might be like hauora out in the bush cause you know like I just feel like the whenua does something to not always counselling. Like giving them more options to be able to explore themselves and not more professionals.

Connection to whenua can give rise to different practices than those of clinical settings or even community-based centres. In particular being outside can activate different senses and experiences in contrast to dominant spaces of confinement. These an often have specific environments that resonate with taiohi and may include stories associated with their ancestors and whānau, as such providing opportunities to connect with taiohi meaningfully (Hamley et al., 2022

Through the pūrakau shared in this section, the expertise of kaimahi which is often overlooked, revealed the importance of “looking back” to the mātauranga passed down through generations and implementing this into policies and processes moving forward. Being constrained within Eurocentric practice continues to be a challenge for kaimahi as they advocate for Te ao Māori practices as a means of expressing trauma. Furthermore, kaimahi identified that there was an imminent need to action rehabilitation of whānau who still suffer from the impact of intergenerational trauma. Though once again, this proves to be a challenge for kaimahi as time constrictions imposed by the State prevent the facilitation of whānaungatanga and manaakitanga between whānau and kaimahi to really delve into the difficult conversations and promote healing. In the final chapter, I will expand on key findings in regard to the aims of this research and literature to explore their wider implications.

Chapter Four: Discussion

The current FGC system seeks to redress years of institutional racism perpetrated by the care and protection system against whānau Māori. Despite the recommendations arising from the Pūao te Āta tū report, it is evident throughout the pūrakau of the kaimahi in this research there is still a disregard of mātauranga in the decision-making process and whānau continue to have their mana taken away. In many respects, whānau still experience degrees of disconnection from their whakapapa and are continually recycled through the care and protection system until they reach the age of eighteen and are considered an adult. The majority of Psychological literature focuses on the impact of the care and protection system on whānau and the perspective of governmental social workers but little recognition is given to Māori community kaimahi. This thesis cannot fully demystify the multiple and complex layers of the FGC system and its intergenerational impact on Māori but acknowledges the often forgotten kaitiaki who journey alongside whānau and experience the same maemae (hurt). Through understanding the pūrakau of kaimahi in the context of Kaupapa Māori research, this instigates a small but challenging and meaningful step forward for change in future FGC policies to legitimise mātauranga and enhance the mana of whānau, of which this concluding chapter further explores.

Through my engagements and cultivation of relationships with kaimahi, whom I had maintained relationships with over four years prior to this research, they were able to share their pūrakau of being community kaimahi in the FGC care and protection space. Drawing on these pūrakau, I was able to address the research aims of this thesis. Firstly, I was able to gain an in-depth understanding of how kaimahi shaped their perceptions of FGC in the context of Kaupapa Māori research. Secondly, I was able to document, explore and acknowledge the valuable mahi of kaimahi with whānau and recognise their unique positioning between agency and community. Finally, current negative discourses around Māori and associated policies that obstruct responses to ongoing institutional racism are emphasised and steps towards transformative changes are provided.

This chapter expands on key findings presented in chapter three by considering these in regard to existing research and wider implications. First, interweaving the pūrakau of all the kaimahi into a composite analysis where they locate themselves in the narratives of the taiohi they support will be discussed. Second, the profound meaning of ringawera (those working in the back) will be further elaborated upon in relation to the importance of having a network of

relationships to support whānau in the care system. Finally, prominent barriers to effectively addressing institutional racism in the current FGC system will be drawn together and considered with reflection on how this this thesis can potentially contribute to future research.

Te ao whānui: I am one of them: interweaving pūrakau

For taiohi and whānau to flourish, whanaungatanga cannot be bypassed with the expectation to arrive at a positive outcome. Creating trusting environments allows taiohi to be able to explore possibilities and make considered decisions in a space that balances their agency with guidance and counsel (Latimer et al., 2022). All kaimahi in this research relate strongly to the trauma of disconnection experienced by the taiohi they support. Aroha compares her childhood to the New Zealand film, “Once Were Warriors,” where gangs, domestic violence and poverty were prevalent issues in her upbringing which in Aroha’s view led to unhealthy coping mechanisms. As she began her journey into her mahi as a youth worker, she hoped that taiohi could resonate with her struggles which in turn would become a catalyst for change and breaking the intergenerational cycle of trauma for their future families. Similarly, in chapter three, Wero stated he wanted to be a trusted and consistent support person for taiohi as he never experienced having a mentor in his childhood which he believed may have guided him down a more positive pathway. I wish I was skinny also shared his desire to reconnect to his marae and Te ao Māori, which he believes has many holistic benefits particularly as one transitions into adulthood. He continues to emphasise the importance of this connection to the taiohi he supports as it was an aspect of his life that he took for granted in his childhood.

The importance of relational experiences provides an opportunity to see taiohi and kaimahi embedded in networks of relationships, identifying layers with different interpretations of the same kōrero which provides a more contextualised understanding of these experiences (Ware, Breheny & Forster, 2018). There is a shared vulnerability when connecting through whanaungatanga to let go of control. There is an understanding that no experience is individualised, whilst individual taiohi experience the outcomes others are still drawn into the shared meaning-making and effects (Carlson, Mullholland, Jensen-Lesatele, Calder-Dawe & Squire, 2022). This is illustrated throughout the pūrakau of kaimahi in which they do not separate their experiences from those of the taiohi they support. Instead kaimahi locate themselves within the narratives of taiohi which not only shapes their current perceptions but supports them to make sense of their experiences during their own childhoods.

In contrast, more mainstream or Eurocentric forms of analyses, such as thematic analysis, can often fragment and compartmentalise stories through fine grade coding (Carlson et al., 2022) ultimately revoking attempts at holistically understanding shared, relational experiences between kaimahi and taiohi. However, here their pūrakau remain strong and voiced, aligning with Kaupapa Māori research, pūrakau is a way for taiohi and kaimahi to collectively construct shared understanding of the values, outcomes and experiences they see as significant and meaningful (Carlson et al., 2022). For instance, all kaimahi in this research view successful outcomes as important but the ngākau (heart) of their pūrakau are centralised around the relationships they have built throughout their journeys.

As discussed in this section, kaimahi never isolated themselves from the narratives of their taiohi, rather, they worked to locate themselves within those narratives as well as weaving the experiences of taiohi into their own pūrakau. This highlighted that shared experiences are embedded within layers of relationships to not only each other but places, histories, and cultural traditions that often transcend time. Kaimahi strived to build reciprocal relationships with taiohi to actualise their potential and challenge the negative discourse of taiohi lost to the care system. Moreover, it is paramount to understand these experiences through a Te ao Māori lens, acknowledging the interconnectedness between tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whānau. I will now discuss ringawera, the undervalued mahi of kaimahi that occurs in the background to propel the ‘front’ of the Kaupapa in the right direction.

Te ao whānui: Ringawera - Community led FGCs

The centrality of relational connections was underpinned by a belief that whānau decision making is contingent upon ensuring whānau relationships are sufficiently nurtured to enable decision making to take place (Roguski, 2020). This is reflected in the pūrakau of kaimahi who collectively work in the background to ensure taiohi build the skills needed to thrive and be autonomous. However, kaimahi are not always positioned in the ‘front’ to receive recognition for their collective efforts, as is often the case within Pākehā society. Kaimahi challenge the ‘top-down’ approach and ensure they do not assume the role of an ‘expert,’ preparing to work towards taking on a less significant role in the change process (Nash, Munford and O’Donoghue, 2005). This has proved challenging for kaimahi, who want to draw from mātauranga in their approaches, but are often positioned between two culturally distinctive

spaces and are consequently subjected to the dominance of Eurocentric constraints within practice.

As kaimahi are confined within these constraints of Eurocentric practice, the majority of the intervention work is focused on the child, which fails to encompass the wellbeing of the entire whānau. Furthermore, it is an incredibly triggering situation when there is an encounter between a state professional and a whānau member with current and intergenerational trauma experiences characterised by grief, loss and disempowerment (Taonui, 2010; Atwool, 2019).

As Wero explained, during FGCs professionals tend to focus on the taiohi however whānau members also want space to share and grieve about their historical experiences with the care system. This is an issue that continues to be over-looked and will undoubtedly continue to resurface until policies are inclusive of giving time and space to address intergenerational impacts on whānau. As my analysis has shown, kaimahi draw on their cultural understandings that are often grounded in Māori spaces like the marae to enhance the healing process of the taiohi they work with. These skills, knowledge, and cultural practices that are not learned from their formal training, but simply a part of what it means to be Māori, and what it means to care for others. Similar to tangihanga on the marae, the role of the whānau who are experiencing loss is to grieve (Elridge, 2014), and the people who surround them during this time act to support the whānau so that they can simply grieve. Kaimahi in this case act like the ringawera on the marae, taking part in all the roles and responsibilities needed that are paramount to the marae conveying their manaakitanga and capability to look after their own (Morris, 2023). Albeit, often unseen and undervalued by the State and at times a scapegoat for the States' inconsistency in practice and outcomes.

The State continuously retracts accountability for poor communication, follow-through and engagement resulting in poorly executed FGC plans and bicultural practice. However, for kaimahi who feel dual accountability as a Māori practitioner as well as employee of the state, this can cause many conflicting dilemmas on how they position themselves in this space (Watson, 2019). More often kaimahi are left to deal with the aftermath of whānau who have disengaged with the process and become antagonistic towards support services. Wero discussed the emotional labour that kaimahi experienced when there was no collective effort made by the state to do better by Māori and they become the sole conduit to bridge the relational gap between the State and whānau.

The pūrakau of the kaimahi emanate compassion and empathy towards all the whānau they support, despite how they may be treated in return. This is contrasted with the “patch and

dispatch” and “one size fits all” (Moyle, 2014) approach exhibited by the State who willingly discard whānau who are too complex. However, when outcomes are positive is often the State who are acknowledged for their tenacity as opposed to the kaimahi who hold space with those whānau to build relationships that eventuate to these positive outcomes.

This section has highlighted the importance of the role bestowed upon kaimahi to nurture and heal broken relationships between whānau and the State. Foreseeably, this at times has impacted on the relationships between kaimahi and whānau who align kaimahi action as predetermined by the State in an attempt to “sway” them towards a preferred decision (Roguski, 2019). Despite the purpose of the current FGC process to affirm iwi, hapū and whānau engagement, the process continues to break these relationships by diminishing whānau trust in kaimahi as a result of lack of State communication and follow through. Kaimahi have proven to be resilient in upholding reciprocal relationships through manaakitanga even though they are challenged with assuming a conduit role between the State and whānau as opposed to the proposed movement towards a new community and whānau led FGC process. As will be discussed next, the hara (wrongdoing) imposed by the State is still yet to be fully addressed. It is necessary for not only awareness to be raised but proactive action to be taken to break down the barriers preventing Māori from engaging in a mana enhancing FGC.

Addressing the hara: Barriers to a mana enhancing FGC

As noted in chapter one, the care and protection system emerged as a product of colonisation that requires a process of decolonisation if outcomes for Māori are to ever be improved (Fitzmaurice-Brown, 2022). Kaimahi have indicated throughout their pūrakau that there is only a partial implementation of tikanga in FGCs, often through “tick-box” processes such as opening and closing with a karakia. Wero and Aroha both bring focus to kapa haka and the benefits of implementing kapa haka practices into FGCs. These are small symbolic acts that are added to a process that is often not grounded in things Māori. In countering such superficial texturing of the FGC process, Wero and Aroha both bring focus to Kapa Haka and the benefits of implementing Kapa Haka practices into FGCs. Through deliberate movements and voice, there is an opportunity to explore suppressed emotions and investigate the trauma the body holds and finding ways to release this (Gifford, 2021). Taiohi may not have the words to convey their story in a way that is meaningful to them, particularly when there are feelings of whakama (shame). Moreover, practices in kapa haka extend beyond flourishing individuals.

Kapa Haka gives Māori tools to surface and work through possible traumas which exist in various ways, including trauma identity; carrying trauma; anger; impaired bonding; transposition; survivor guilt; suicidal ideation; multiple traumas; and somatic symptoms (Pihama, Tipene & Skipper, 2014 as cited in Gifford, 2021). As we can see, those who work on the front lines of FGCs can see ways in which the process can be enhanced to better support taiohi Māori, but their invisible contributions and valuable insights often struggle to reach the top-down structures that exist with State care.

Despite the drive for stronger implementation of tikanga into FGCs, the kaimahi in this research are still yet to attend an FGC incorporating unique elements of Te ao Māori such as Kapa Haka. Evidently, the Crown is still reluctant to relinquish control and in a real sense subtly coerce whānau towards a preferred outcome by professionals by sweeping them along to a fast decision, thus retaining the greater power in the relationship (Swain and Ban, 1997; Roberts, 2023). Arguably, the slippage towards professionally determined practice undermines the whānau empowerment principles in which the legislation was based (Connolly & Morris, 2012 as cited in Roberts, 2023). Due to this drawn-out ideological shift, kaimahi Māori are consistently faced with conflicting cultural tensions in the tukia (collision) zone between Māori and non-indigenous worlds (Watson, 2019).

Although these issues have been apparent for years, care and protection legislation remains hyper “protectionist” in nature focusing on improving the identification of child abusers to reduce child abuse numbers whilst ignoring the effects of biases and disparities in the care system that disadvantage Māori (Keddell & Cleaver, 2020). As emphasised throughout this research, iwi NGOs continue to be undervalued and their mātauranga delegitimised to fit within the confines of a Eurocentric decision-making framework. However, kaimahi indicate they remain resilient in upholding the essence of tikanga in FGCs and continue to persevere through the rigid mindsets of State decision makers.

Derived from the in-depth accounts of the kaimahi in this research, my findings can assist in provoking Oranga Tamariki sites to delve further into the practice of their social workers and co-ordinators. Particularly, when the legislation outlines the implications of consistent bicultural practice and empowering whānau led decision making yet FGCs are co-ordinated on an individualised interpretation. For instance, Te ao Māori practices allow for creative expression to tell one’s story. As outlined previously this could be through Kapa Haka or art which prompt a more in-depth response from the support services and means of effective engagement. It is evident past attempts at getting whānau to engage through the traditional

FGC process have failed and it is pivotal this issue is circulated around different Oranga Tamariki sites to further prevent under-resourcing in this area.

Whakaaro: Reflecting on the research process

In this section I will explore further insights that emerged from the pūrakau of kaimahi that prompted me to reflect on the research and share my whakaaro from my position as a kaimahi that too has dual perspectives as a community kaimahi and state practitioner. I use the term whakaaro as it shadows on a thought rather than thoroughly clarifying it, its call to speculation is not clear cut and it insists the thinker foreclose against shedding the final light on another person's whakaaro (Mika and Southey, 2018). Moreover, the intention of this research was never to answer the unknown, instead exploring how kaimahi make sense of the unknown through their own unique perspective ascribed to their pūrakau.

Undoubtedly, kaimahi are relentless in their advocacy to push for legislative changes that integrate Māori cultural practices and ideology (McRae & Nikora, 2006; Mikahere-Hall, 2019). This was consistent throughout all pūrakau where kaimahi voiced their desire for expressive Māori practices and art to be a means of engagement and storytelling during FGCs. However, I note that kaimahi emphasised the intergenerational impact of the care system on whānau who constantly cycle through the system. Not only were they supporting taiohi themselves, they were also supporting the tamariki of those taiohi thus a new generation born into the care system. During my engagements with kaimahi, they vocalised their frustrations with the lack of Māori centred, preventative action by the state.

However, when I asked about foreseeable change in the FGC process, there appeared to be a sense of apathy and complete loss of faith in the system. Whilst kaimahi remained hopeful about future changes, they remained entirely unconvinced the system would take action across time and unlikely in the mid to long term too. Wero and I wish I was skinny touch on this apathy by referring to themselves as “dial-a-kaumātua” for the State, signifying they felt somewhat defeated by the current system. Although offensive and demeaning, they often oblige such requests, as it is about the whānau in need and how they can help, rather than about their own personal views on such State practices. This once again highlights the partial incorporation of tikanga into the FGC by only implementing the bare minimum through kaimahi, whilst easily casting them aside when this was completed.

This leads me to my next whakaaro around how open kaimahi are to adopting bicultural practice and learning how to navigate Eurocentric processes, juxtaposed with the reluctant stance of the State to engage in Te ao Māori. It is echoed throughout the research that Māori will naturally collaborate with others as they are embedded in layers of relationships and extended networks (Bishop, 1999). However, I acknowledge that how I position myself within the research brings inherent bias (Cunningham, 1998; Smith, 1999; Bell, 2006; Hollis, 2006; Hollis-English, 2012; Moyle, 2014). Particularly when my perception of kaimahi is they are open to adopting bicultural practice when this could be reflective of my own acceptance of biculturalism, thus assuming other kaimahi have accepted this.

Smith (2006, p. 7; Moyle, 2014) stressed the risks of “insider” research, stating that the potential for bias, lack of distance, lack of objectivity could mistake the research role for an advocacy role. Tauri (2010) argued that this is authoritarianism and reflects the exclusionary practices used by mainstream researchers to silence indigenous research. As such, I endeavoured to remain transparent throughout the research however being an insider contributed to the relationships I built in which kaimahi trusted me with their pūrakau. Furthermore, who I am and what I brought to the research in terms of this experience added value to it and maintains the validity and legitimacy of Māori (Smith, 2006; Moyle, 2014).

In sum, my research enabled me to gain insight into the perspectives of community kaimahi working within the FGC space, an area that has been largely unexplored in academic literature. My unique position as a Māori researcher as well as working within the care and protection space as both a kaimahi and under State, was essential in moving beyond just listening to narratives to acknowledging a profound appreciation for their mahi. This also affirmed the issue of cultural assimilation and institutionalisation still deeply embedded within the current FGC process. This was further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic in which the principles of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga were disrupted, forcibly breaking any process to hui or build networks to support care experienced taiohi and their whānau.

Although acknowledged by the Government, the lack of consistency in implementing tikanga into FGCs continues to be over-looked and is facilitated by reactivity rather than preventative or rehabilitative action. Furthermore, the adoption of Kaupapa Māori research provided a holistic understanding of kaimahi perspectives and how these are influenced by layers of relationships. Thus, permitting an extensively unique investigation of the issue and the comprehensive findings.

Nevertheless, further qualitative research, underpinned by Kaupapa Māori research principles and relational understandings on the FGC process is necessary to explore how this process continues to negatively impact on whānau Māori in the care system. Quantitative research sheds light on the over-representation of Māori in the care system, however it does not delve into the rich and compelling insights harboured within the narratives of community kaimahi. Particularly, qualitative research could identify other creative ways of expressing trauma and amplifying marginalised voices through Te ao Māori which could lead to more meaningful outcomes and intergenerational healing for taiohi and their whānau. I hope that this thesis will prompt meaningful steps forward in future research endeavours.

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Appendix A

Participant Information Sheet for Kaimahi



Tikanga or Tokenism? Kaimahi Experiences with the Family Group Conference Process

Information Sheet

Lead Researcher: Jaycie Bradley

Purpose of Project: To gain an in-depth understanding of kaimahi experiences with the Family Group Conference Process.

Master of Science in Psychology Student Thesis Project

Kia Ora, you are invited to take part in a study on **Kaimahi Experiences with the Family Group Conference Process**. It is your choice if you want to take part in the study, if you don't want to be a part of the study, you don't have to give a reason and it will not personally affect you or your work. If you choose to take part in the study, you can pull out of the study at any time.

This information sheet will help you to decide if you want to take part in the study. It also includes why I am doing the study, what your participation involves, what the risks and benefits to you might be and what happens after the study ends. I will go through this information with you and answer any questions you may have. You do not have to make a decision to take part in the study today. You may want to talk about the study with whanau, friends, iwi/hāpu, kaumātua, supervisor or others. Please feel free to do this.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign the consent form at the end of this document. You will be given a copy of this information sheet and the consent form. Please make sure you have read and understood all the pages in this document, if anything is unclear I will answer any questions you may have.

Participant's Rights

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 (maximum timeframe to withdraw is six months from the date of the first interview)*
- *Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation*
- *Be provided information on the understanding that you will remain anonymous in the research*
- *Be provided information on the storage of your confidential data, how it will be used in the research and how it will be disposed of when the research has ended*
- *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.*
- *Should you choose to withdraw from the study, this will not result in any disadvantage to you.*

Participant Recruitment: Who Can Take Part?

This study involves interviewing **three** people separately. This is because the aim of the study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the participant's experiences with the Family Group Conference Process. By focusing on three participants, this depth can be achieved.

The participant must be 18 years or older, of similar professional status to the researcher (researcher does not have professional seniority over the participant in their professional network) and have experience in the Family Group Conference Process (as a support service).

Selection will be based on this criteria, I will also consult with my supervisor and other experts to avoid any conflict of interest issues which may arise from being in the same professional network.

What are the Possible Risks of this Study?

There are no immediate risks associated with this study, however if you want to withdraw from the study (in the specified timeframe) or stop the recording, you may do this at any time.

Every effort will be made to respect your mana; you can seek awahi (support) from professional supervision/support or karakia if you wish. If there are any other tikanga Māori practices you wish to include these will be supported to the best of the researcher's capabilities. If more expertise about these practices is needed, this will be accommodated whilst still upholding your mana and privacy.

What are the Possible Benefits of this Study?

There is a benefit in which the participant will be contributing to future change in the Family Group Conference by sharing their experiences. Amplifying Māori voice is essential for this contribution which may benefit Māori whanau going through the state care system.

Compensation/Costs

Participants will not incur any costs as part of this study.

What will my Participation Involve?

If you decide to take part in the study, after you have had time to consider the information provided, you will be interviewed as part of the research.

There will be three interviews (introductory, follow-on and final). They are mobile, it does not require you to sit down or be in a specific place. It also does not involve answering specific questions. The interview can be in a place you feel more comfortable. The aim is for you to speak freely and honestly about your experiences without feeling pressured to answer specific questions or avoid talking about specific topics.

There is no specific time limit on these interviews as they do not follow a traditional interview structure but approximated to be 90 to 120 minutes with extra time if needed. There will be general discussion as well as outlining the project details before the interview which will take approximately 60 minutes. There will also be general discussion and asking/answering any questions post interview which will take approximately 60 minutes. Your participation will be for approximately 12 hours over three interviews; however interview times and locations will be decided by you.

The aim of the research is to understand your experiences in the context of your environment through these interviews which will possibly contribute to future change.

Conflict/Support

Any conflict of interest will be resolved so there will be no negative effect on the future professional relationship between myself (researcher) and you (participant). Consultation with my research supervisor and other experts will be regular to ensure you do not feel like there is a power imbalance or other conflict.

Contacts

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 21/56. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact A/Prof Fiona Te Momo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800, x 43347, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

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Appendix B

Participant Consent Form



Tikanga or Tokenism? Kaimahi Experiences with the Family Group Conference Process.

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 (please circle **one** statement) to the interview being sound recorded.
2. I wish/do not wish (please circle **one** statement) to have my recordings returned to me.
3. 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.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C

Confidentiality Agreement



Tikanga or Tokenism? Kaimahi Experiences with the Family Group Conference Process.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Full Name - printed)

agree to keep confidential all information concerning the project

.....
.....
.....
.....

I will not retain copies of this information for longer than the duration of the research project

Signature:

.....

Date:

.....

Appendix D

The Art of Journaling for Research Purposes – originally created by Ngahuia Te Awekotuku

Explaining the Journal Parts and their Relevance.

1) Introduction and auto-reflective commentary on your work.

Introduce yourself. Write something about you; your plans, expectations; then comment if your work experiences relate to them. With each entry you make, be sure to write the date! Your reflections on the experience can contribute to your analysis further down the track. Refer to any readings you have done this week about the issues.

2) Community, whanau and everyday experience.

Keep a record of hui; meetings you attend – date, who is there, who isn't, venue, weather, all that. Take notes of discussions. Also other events – kappa haka, birthdays, graduations, hui, sports, unveilings, poukai, Ahurei, weddings, regatta, exhibitions, Kday, waka ama, anything you may attend. Observe people, places you visit like marae, galleries, flea markets, museums, or other towns. Think about what is happening around you.

3) Media observations.

Watch out for, and collect or record then comment on media items that you feel are relevant to your project, or research interests. These can be films like Avatar or Precious or older examples like Mauri, Utu or Ngati. Other stuff like news clippings, advertisements, song lyrics, posters, downloaded material, photos, postcards, tickets, magazine articles, brochures (e.g. Hauora, TWoA, or Auahi Kore pamphlets). Include a brief caption. If you see anything on MTV, Te Karere or othertelelevision, make a note of it, give the date of the programme. It does not have to be Maori or Pacific. It can be Navajo or Al Jazeera or Rastafari or Clan McLeod or Saami. Describe WHY you noticed the news item, and how it was relevant to your project or your own journey. Try to do at least one or two every week.

4) Visual and illustrative elements.

Include this material to enhance, illustrate, expand on your reflections – or also because you like it! Make your own drawings or pictures, or doodles are fine. You can put in photographs,

Xerox copies, cut outs maps, original sketches, downloaded stuff, stickers, charts, anything visual. Even three dimensional material, like raranga, bling, or beading, if it fits!

5) Traditional elements.

Waiata koroua, whaikorero, karanga, notes from particular encounters, pohiri or hui – what a reo karanga may have alluded to; what a speaker may have said; all this is good, and may be pertinent later.

6) Book list and references.

At the end of the journal, list all the books, articles, movies, videos you have read or seen. If you've commented on music, list the CD by title, and artist's or group's name. If you've included videos or movies, record the title, year, and director's name.

You can write in Maori and/or English – tuhia nga reo e rua.

Appendix E

Interview Schedule

Interview/Purpose	Duration	Focus Areas
1: Whānaungatanga/Introduction	<p>Approximately 60 minutes (cup of tea, general conversation, outline project details)</p> <p>Approximately 90-120 minutes (interview) extra time if needed</p> <p>Approximately 60 minutes after the interview (clarifying any points stated in the interview, asking/answering questions)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background of the kaimahi - Background of training and qualifications - Their experience within the current FGC process
2. Follow on More specific focus on issues	<p>Approximately 60 minutes (cup of tea, general conversation)</p> <p>Approximately 90-120 minutes (interview) extra time if needed</p> <p>Approximately 60 minutes after the interview (clarifying any points stated in the interview, asking/answering any questions)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What issues (policies, cultural, general) they have come across within the current FGC process - Asking them to elaborate on any points in their interview
3. Final interview Implementing change	<p>Approximately 60 minutes (cup of tea, general conversation)</p> <p>Approximately 90-120 minutes (interview) extra time if needed</p> <p>Approximately 60 minutes after the interview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy reviews/changes they would like to see within the current FGC process - Cultural changes they would like to see within the current FGC process

	(clarifying any points stated in the interview, answering/asking any questions)	- What alternatives they believe would be better than the current FGC process.
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The interviews are conversational and semi-structured, there are no set questions or durations to allow the participant to speak freely about their experiences.

Some probing questions (“can you please elaborate more on...”) may be asked to elaborate on any particular ideas or points the participant has made during the interview.