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Views of Māori and Pasifika Men Involved with Gangs and the Criminal Justice System on Masculinity

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

New Zealand has one of the largest gang populations in the world per capita, and Māori and Pasifika men are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and prison population, with high recidivism rates. Research internationally on masculinity tends to be from a hegemonic Western perspective. Although there is research on international gang and prison populations, and on masculinity of Māori and Pasifika men in New Zealand separately, there is a lack of research on Māori and Pasifika gang members' views on masculinity. This research looked to fill the gap in the current research by looking into whether these men's views on masculinity and how and where they learnt it, contributed to their gang and criminal justice system involvement.

Constructivist Grounded Theory Methodology was used to conduct semi-structured interviews. Eight Māori and Pasifika men were interviewed to find out their views on masculinity; what it means to them to be a man; how and where they learned these views; how being in a gang and prison influenced their masculine ideals; what their views on masculinity are now; and what they would teach future generations about being a man.

Several themes and subthemes emerged from the data. These included: Views on masculinity before and during gang involvement; the influence of role models; reasons for joining a gang; masculinity within gangs; ethnic culture and masculinity; the influence of the criminal justice system; catalysts for change; toward a better future. The themes were discussed in view of the literature; limitations of this research are acknowledged; and recommendations for future research are outlined. This research found that Māori and Pasifika men's views on masculinity did contribute to their decision to join a gang and their subsequent criminal justice system involvement.

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Table of Contents

Abstract…… 2

Acknowledgements…… 3

Table of Contents…… 5

List of Tables…… 9

Chapter 1: Introduction…… 10

Chapter 2: Literature Review…… 14

The Masculinity Paradigm…… 15

The Toxic Masculinity Postulate…… 17

The Male/Female Dichotomy…… 18

The Colonisation Polarisation…… 21

The Sportsman Warrior Juxtaposition…… 24

The Gang Conjecture…… 27

The Prison Conundrum…… 30

The Retention/Desistance Hypotheses…… 32

Summary, Hypothesis and Research Aims…… 34

Chapter 3: Methodology…… 36

Objectives and Rationale…… 36

Research Design: The Road to Constructivist Grounded Theory…… 36

Grounded Theory Methodology…… 36

Constructivist Grounded Theory…… 37

Literature Review…… 38

Interviewing…… 39

Coding and Memo Writing…… 40

Consideration of other Methodologies…… 41

Kaupapa Maori…… 41

Pasifika Methodologies…… 42

Participants and Sampling…… 43

Participant Sample Size.......... 43
Snowball Sampling.......... 43
Screening and Criteria.......... 44
Limitations to the Sampling Strategy.......... 45
Data Collection.......... 45
Semi-Structured Interviews.......... 46
Data Analysis.......... 47
Analysis.......... 47
Reflexivity.......... 48
Ethical and Cultural Considerations.......... 51
Chapter 4: Results.......... 55
Views on Masculinity: Making Meaning of Being a Man.......... 57
Before and During Gang Involvement:.......... 57
Real Men Are Hard.......... 58
Real Men Don't Cry.......... 58
Drink Til You Drop.......... 59
Men Vs Women.......... 59
The Present:.......... 59
The Softer Side of Masculinity.......... 60
Putting Family First.......... 60
It's All On Me Now.......... 61
Violence as a Man:.......... 61
During Childhood.......... 62
Toward Their Own Families.......... 62
In Gangs and Prison.......... 63
Learning to be a Man: The Influence of Role Models.......... 64
Male Role Models.......... 64
The Influence of Women.......... 65
The Role of Friends.......... 65
Grandparents as Positive Influences.......... 66
The Lure of Gangs: Reasons for Joining.......... 66
The Need to Belong: The Search for Community/Family.......... 67
Fatherlessness.......... 67
Money, Fame and Power.......... 68

Getting Out of Poverty………………………………………………………… 68
Masculinity Within Gangs……………………………………………………….. 69
How Culture Fits in with Views on Masculinity……………………………………… 70
Māori Culture and Masculinity……………………………………………….. 70
Pasifika Culture and Masculinity……………………………………………… 71
Criminal Justice System Influence: Help or Hinderance?.. 72
Catalysts for Change…………………………………………………………….. 73
Family……………………………………………………………………….. 73
Prison……………………………………………………………………….. 74
Spirituality…………………………………………………………………... 75
Toward a Better Future: Changing the Narrative……………………………………… 76
Influencing the Next Generation……………………………………………… 76
Teaching Men to be Fathers…………………………………………………… 77
The Role of Schools…………………………………………………………… 78
Chapter 5: Discussion…………………………………………………………………… 80
Introduction……………………………………………………………………… 80
Masculinity In Real Life………………………………………………………… 81
Hegemonic Dispositions……………………………………………………… 81
Violence and Toxic Masculinity Intertwining………………………………… 82
Culture and Colonisation……………………………………………………… 83
The Warrior/Sportsman Revisited…………………………………………... 84
Why Join A Gang?...85
The Belongingness Deficit…………………………………………………... 86
The Fatherlessness Factor…………………………………………………….. 87
Money, Money, Money………………………………………………………… 89
Teaching Boys to be Men………………………………………………………… 89
The Role Model Effect………………………………………………………… 90
The Violence/Abuse Perpetration……………………………………………… 90
The Friendship Connection……………………………………………………… 91
The Criminal Justice System Let-Down……………………………………………… 92
Change and the Future……………………………………………………………… 94
Changing Circumstances……………………………………………………… 94
Flipping the Role Model Deficit……………………………………………….. 96
You Can Be a Better Man……………………………………………………… 98

School Responsibility……………………………………………………… 99
Conclusion………………………………………………………………………. 100
Limitations……………………………………………………………………… 104
Future Directions……………………………………………………………….. 105
References……………………………………………………………………………. 108
Appendices…………………………………………………………………………… 126
Appendix A: Participant Information Form……………………………………….. 126
Appendix B: Consent Form………………………………………………………….. 129
Appendix C: Interview Questions…………………………………………………. 130

List of Tables

Table 1: Descriptive Information of Participants 44
Table 2: Themes and Subthemes 56

Views of Māori and Pasifika Men Who Have Been Involved in Gangs and the Criminal Justice System on Masculinity

Chapter 1: Introduction

Men's studies, later called masculinity studies, came to the fore in the 1980s- mostly as a reaction to feminism and feminist studies- through the social sciences (Reecer, 2015). Since then, there has been prolific writing on the subject, with initial studies responding to the idea that masculinity is natural and essential (Hobbs 2013; Reecer, 2015). Unfortunately, this has predominantly been from a Western viewpoint (Reecer, 2015). Masculinity itself has been difficult to define. Traditionally it refers to "pertaining to or characteristic of a man or men; having qualities traditionally ascribed to men" (Dictionary.com, 2022) with roots in the early 1300s. According to Merriam-Webster (2022), it was first defined in 1613 as "the quality or nature of the male sex: the quality, state, or degree of being masculine or manly." The American Psychological Association (APA) (2023) defines masculinity as "possession of social role behaviors that are presumed to be characteristic of a boy or man".

Hegemonic masculinity refers to the dominant form of masculinity in a society, granting access to power, prestige, and resources, but can undermine other forms, such as Indigenous, Asian, black, or working class, making them subordinate and increasing oppression (Eisen & Yamashita, 2019). Although referring to Western masculinity, Waling (2019) makes the point that theories of masculinity stem from categories produced, resulting in a deficit of critical discussion. Masculinity has been theorised and categorised by using descriptive and categorical signifiers to account for men's lived experiences.

Despite the popular narrative, not all men benefit from patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity. There are ranks within masculine discourses, i.e. black, gay, or working-class masculinities. More power and prestige come from masculinities closely aligned with hegemonic masculinities, while traditional cultural representations of masculinity show men as aggressive, emotionally distant, independent, and linked to male dominance and sexism, with hypermasculinity and violence being glorified in sport and the media (Eisen & Yamashita, 2019).

Masculinity is more often discussed and researched at the structural level, leaving out the importance of what strategies men may use to negotiate their everyday lives (Coles, 2009). Men's ideas of what constitutes masculinity and what it means to be a man are constantly changing. Through things such as aging and life changes, identities shift to

accommodate these changes. Ideas of what it means to be a man also change across societies, historically and culturally, and individual concepts of these change as well (Coles, 2009).

There has been a rise in the popularity of masculinity studies, and a broadening of critical masculinity studies in the past decades, including frameworks of hegemonic masculinity, metrosexuality, and toxic masculinity, in the Western world (Harrington, 2021; Traister, 2000; Waling, 2019). However, these terms refer to categorical experiences that can be accepted or rejected by men, and do not take into account Indigenous and/or marginalised populations (Connell, 2016). Conversely, research on masculinity in Māori and Pasifika cultures in New Zealand has mostly been related to mental health, sport, colonisation, displacement/immigration, and cultural appropriation in forming current masculine dialogues surrounding their views on masculinity (Hokowhitu, 2004; 2007; 2008; Rodriquez et al., 2015). Although there is some research into New Zealand gangs and the criminal justice system's impact on men,[1] there is no specific research on how views of Māori and/or Pasifika men on their masculinity contributes to their gang and criminal justice system involvement.

While this study does not intend to lump all Māori and Pasifika cultures together, acknowledging the differences they have, they also have several things in common. They are collectivist societies with strong family interdependence, have a holistic worldview, and spiritual connectivity, where all parts of a person need to be in balance to function properly (Mark & Lyons, 2010; Kingi-Ulu'ave et al., 2016; Williams & Cleland, 2016). Their cultural identity is gained through traditional customs, practices, and kinship structures, which are vital to wellbeing (Shepherd and Ilalio, 2016). Extended family networks play an important role in identity formation, along with cultivation of individual and community roles, spirituality and responsibility. For Pasifika peoples it is important to include both family and their religious views, as the Christian Church is a strong part of their culture and ways of being (Kingi-Ulu'ave et al., 2016). Likewise, Māori have Te Ao Māori, the Māori world view, which includes tikanga, encompassing *whakapapa* (genealogical connections) and *whanaungatanga* (family relationships), which includes connections to people, land, nature and spirituality (Rameka, 2018)

New Zealand has an extremely high gang affiliation which has doubled in the last five years (2017-22), according to the New Zealand police, hitting record numbers in 2022

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[1] See Jarrod Gilbert's book Patched: A History of Gangs in New Zealand
https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=xUrlAQAAQBAJ&source=gbs_similarbooks
Work by Armon Tamatea on gangs (see reference section)

(Maher, 2022; New Zealand Parliament, 2022). Youth gangs are also on the rise, from one listed by police in 2018, to 47 in 2021 (Bassagre, 2021), with research showing that youth gangs mirror adult gangs, and youth gang members are highly likely to transition to adult gangs (Rodriguez, 2011). New Zealand has more gangs per capita than any other country in the world, with a count of over 8,300 registered members in 2022, a 56% increase from 2017 (Maher, 2022).

There are a disproportionate number of Maori and/or Pasifika men in the New Zealand prison system (Shepherd and Ilalio, 2016). Department of Corrections (n.d.) statistics show the number of Māori men in prison was 53.4% in March 2022. Yet Māori represent only 16% of the population of New Zealand (FigureNZ, 2023; Ministry of Justice, 2021). Pasifika men have a prison representation three times higher than NZ European men, despite being only 8% of the total NZ population (FigureNZ, 2023; Cowlishaw, 2014).

There is a lot of blame placed on why gang membership has risen so dramatically, the increase in crime- especially violent- over the last several years, and the number of Māori and Pasifika men in prisons (Bassagre, 2021). Blame has included the disconnect between social services- specifically for children (Oranga Tamariki, 2022; Pullon et al., 2015)- lack of police presence/power, the government not taking the issue seriously (McCullough, 2019), the cost of living, poverty, homelessness, and childhood issues such as increased truancy/lack of education, deprivation, neglect, abuse, substance abuse, and an existing family gang association (Kelly, 2023; Sharpe, 2023). Yet the reasons for this relating to views on masculinity and what it means to be a man in New Zealand today for Māori and Pasifika, are neither looked into nor talked about.

Questions of what, who, and how shapes Māori and/or Pasifika men who have been engaged in gangs and the criminal justice system cognitions are vitally important to enacting change in New Zealand society (Mataira, 2008). If how people think determines their actions, then understanding is needed to change mindsets and behaviours. A move toward restoration and reconciliation to gain internal peace is needed for Māori and/or Pasifika men and their communities to work toward eliminating violence. For this to happen there needs to be a critique of the dominant cultural discourses, and a change in the direction of public policy and opinions away from the propagation of a fear-based view, which only highlights the negatives. There needs to be a radical change in the paradigm and practices, a working toward building a new image of men from marginalised cultures in New Zealand. Ideally, self-confidence and self-respect are pathways to change (Mataira, 2008).

The police National Gang Registry says gang membership had risen from 4,361 in 2016 to well over 8,000 in 2022, with the majority being Māori. Gang members in prison have also increased from over 1,200 in 2010 to almost 3,000 in 2022, with 4,500 on community-based sentences. Over three-quarters are Māori and 8% are Pasifika (Maher, 2022; New Zealand Parliament, 2022).

There is a gap in research that specifically covers how Māori and/or Pasifika men who are involved in gangs and the New Zealand criminal justice system view masculinity. This research will try and fill a gap in research and knowledge surrounding how Māori and/or Pasifika men view masculinity, how they view themselves as men, where they learned what being a man is, and how this fits into the current narrative. It is hypothesised that how Māori and/or Pasifika men see themselves and their masculinity, and how they learnt those beliefs, is likely to contribute to the decisions they make to become associated with gangs and potentially the criminal justice system. The main aim is to explore the cognitive relationships between concepts of masculinity, gangs, and the criminal justice system, for Māori and Pasifika men. The researcher is hoping that by looking into their views on masculinity it sheds some light on why so many Māori and/or Pasifika men are joining gangs and why they are so overrepresented in the New Zealand criminal justice system.

The rest of the thesis will be laid out as follows: The following chapter will review the relevant literature and provide context for the aforementioned hypothesis. Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology used for this study, including the research design, ethical considerations, participants' details, the procedure, and measures used. In Chapter 4, the results of the study will be presented in relation to the hypothesis. Chapter 5 outlines the findings, which will be discussed in the wider context of previous research. The research limitations will be outlined along with highlighting directions for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Most of the literature on masculinity in Māori and Pasifika cultures to date has been related to their association with sport in NZ, and how that impacts their views on masculinity (Hokowhitu, 2004; 2008). Research also looks into colonisation, migration/displacement, and cultural appropriation in forming current masculine dialogues (Hokowhitu, 2007). However, there is a dearth of research looking into Māori and Pasifika men's views on masculinity in general, and specifically those with gang/criminal justice system involvement.

International research on gangs has found that gang life is an expression of marginalised masculinity, entrenched in institutionalised racism, poverty, and urban marginality (Flores & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). In socio-economically excluded contexts the gang becomes an attractive place for men to enact masculinity. Gang researchers in the US posit that gangs act as a vehicle for achieving manhood (Baird, 2012). Part of masculine identity in gang life is drug/alcohol misuse, drug deals, arrogance, fights, sexual conquests, and physical abuse and control of women, in order to assert dominance (Flores & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013).

Gang membership invariably leads to criminal behaviours, criminal justice system involvement, and prison. Gangs internationally are known to involve violence and crime. While masculinities alone do not account for violence within gangs, they play an integral role in the reproduction of violence (Baird, 2012). Gang members use negative masculine identities associated with criminality and violence to create status for themselves when it cannot be achieved through legitimate means. Within this context, hyper-masculine, aggressive displays of criminal violence within the gang can be used to regain a hegemonic masculine status (Deuchar & Weide, 2019). For men who are marginalised through disadvantaged social backgrounds, negative peer networks, and lack of employment opportunities, criminal behaviours can provide a way to enact masculinity when other resources or opportunities are unavailable (Agnew, 2006; Deuchar & Weide, 2019).

Violence and criminal behaviours can be said to partly be the result of early emotional attachment to others which form character structures. Psychological structures that form views of what it means to be a man, and the outworking of masculinities, are manifested in childhood (Mataira, 2008). The roles of protector, breadwinner, decision-maker, leader, and disciplinarian are all common denominators of expressions of masculinity for Pasifika men (Masters-Awatere & Gosche, 2017). When these roles cannot be enacted through legitimate enterprises, some of these men turn to criminal activity to achieve them. For

Māori, colonisation and a stripping of their culture have left some enacting aggression and violence, instead of being able to make fulfilling intimate connections, loving relationships, and taking care of their families (Pita & Robertson, 2017).

Gang research over several decades has identified several statistically proven risk factors that increase future violent or problem behaviours (Howell & Egley Jr, 2005). For example, past violence, childhood abuse, exposure to crime or criminal caregivers, peer group affiliation, low education and employment, and behaviours such as impulsivity, remorselessness, and substance use (Shepherd & Ilalio, 2016). The likelihood of offending for Māori and Pasifika men could be increased by several unique factors, including cumulative stressors, which can include colonisation and migration. This causes a disconnect from their culture and a search for identity in gangs and law-breaking activities, leading to criminal justice system interactions, including prison. Early school leaving has also been a key risk factor in criminal activity for Pasifika and an observed life event for adult offenders. Other factors explaining criminal justice system and prison involvement include family relational breakdown, generational cultural tension, and financial difficulties (Shepherd & Ilalio, 2016). Disconnection from family and socialisation with similarly disaffected peers increases the risk of criminal activity involvement internationally (Howell & Egley Jr, 2005).

The remainder of this literature review will cover the topics of masculinity in general; toxic masculinity; traditional male/female roles for Māori and Pasifika cultures; the colonisation and migration of Māori and Pasifika men; the idea of these men as Warrior and sportsman and the effects this has on them; gang membership and affiliation, including the rise of youth gangs; Māori and Pasifika men's over-representation in the criminal justice system, including prison; gang retention and desistance.

The Masculinity Paradigm

Most of the current theoretic work around men and masculinity is based on the concept of hegemonic masculinity, which refers to the dominant form of masculinity in Western society, as introduced to the mainstream by Carrigan, Connell, and Lee in 1987 (Coles, 2009; Reecer, 2015). They state that it "is a question of how particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance" (Coles, 2009, p. 31). According to Connell, (1997) one form of cultural masculinity is exalted over others at any time, idealised, and used to legitimate and maintain dominance of one group of men over women and other men (Abacioglu, 2021).

The study of masculinity comes partly from the social science idea of sex role theory, where masculinity is seen as essential and natural, but also positions it as uniform and stable. Men are seen on a continuum of defined traits or characteristics deemed appropriate. Psychological sex typing is used to operationally define how men should behave or perform through learned behaviours (Reecer, 2015).

It is important to understand the concept of hegemonic masculinity, especially in relation to Indigenous and minority masculinities, the differences between them, and the effects dominant discourses have on other cultural groups. Hegemonic masculinity is used not only over women in society but over marginalised masculinities and subordinate racial and ethnic groups (Abacioglu, 2021). Eisen and Yamashita (2019) state that being a man cannot be reduced to simply being male, but is instead a political act. More of this will be discussed in the section on colonialism and migration. There are differences between the theory of hegemonic masculinities dominance and real lived experiences. Coles (2009) posits a model that includes multiple dominant masculinities. He suggests hegemonic masculinities are produced and reproduced through struggles between dominant and subordinate groups in societies. Not only with ready-formed groupings, but also their formation and the construction of social relations linked to psychological and socio-historical factors (Reecer, 2015).

Hegemonic masculinity itself, when describing culturally dominant ideas, considers only the structural concepts of dominant versus subordinate or marginalised groups of men, leaving out the struggles that happen over power in and between subpopulations of men. It does not take into account their personal lived experiences in relation to their own concepts of what it means to be a man. Therefore men in subordinate groups may view their own masculinity as dominant in relation to other men, even though culturally they may be seen as subordinate (Coles, 2009). In fact, there may only be a small amount of impact on the lives of men who disassociate themselves from hegemonic masculinities, choosing instead to operate in a social sphere where their masculinity is dominant. For example, in a gang or prison population, working environment, sports team, or religious group. Consideration of the subtle interplay in these men’s lives becomes necessary.

There is a move away from the concept of a singular masculinity, to the concept of multiple masculinities (Reecer, 2015), which makes sense when different cultures are taken into account. In recognising there may be many different masculinities it is important not to stereotype or overly-simplify men into various categories. Class, race, and gender stereotypes all need to be factored in (Coles, 2009). With this in mind, all gang members or those

associated negatively with the criminal justice system or prison population cannot be assumed to have the same views on their own or others' masculinity, and what it means to them to be a man within these groups. Especially as the relationships these masculinities operate through and within involve levels of dominance and subordination (Coles, 2009).

Subordinate groups can resist hegemonic masculinity, forming their own dominant masculinity within their social group or culture. There can be a conflict with the 'whiteness' of hegemonic masculinities within Western culture, disputing their normative definitions of masculinity and opposing them (Reecer, 2015). Coles puts forward the view that subordinate or marginalised men may view their concepts of masculinity as "natural" or "true" (p. 39), especially if surrounded by men with the same dispositions or actions as themselves. These men may choose which parts of their understanding of what it means to be a man they choose to support or reject. This can depend on resources, relationships, and whether they believe their concepts of masculinity are legitimate (Coles, 2009).

While there has been growth in non-Western research and studies, it has predominantly been through a Eurocentric lens, where non-Westerners are classified as 'others' (Reecer, 2015). There has been increased interest in both how masculinity is constructed in diverse cultures and how these travel from one cultural setting to others, yet "the study of masculinity remains marginal within the analysis of race and culture" (Edwards, 2006, p.64). Although there has been research on different minority masculinities and their opposition to dominant discourses, there has been almost no research into Māori and/or Pasifika men's understanding of their own unique masculinities.

The Toxic Masculinity Postulate

Men's violence and sexism in recent times, approximately since 2013 (Harrington, 2021), has been attributed to toxic masculinity (Salter, 2019). However, it has its roots in the 1980s and '90s, when masculine spirituality and a protective warrior masculinity was promoted to combat toxic masculinity (Salter, 2019). It is a generally undefined blanket concept for explaining gender in relation to social problems. It is not, however, an analytical concept (Harrington, 2021). In principle it distinguishes toxic traits from healthy masculinity and the American Psychological Association (APA) has introduced guidelines addressing extreme forms of traditional masculinity such as misogyny, self-entitlement, aggression, and violence, as they may have negative health outcomes (Salter, 2019).

According to Harrington (2021), a professor of gender-based violence studies at Victoria University in New Zealand since 2000, the term toxic masculinity is often used to

refer to marginalised men in individualising discourses. The term 'toxic masculinity' has been used by policymakers, therapists, and those working with troubled men to individualise discourses on reforming marginalised men (Harrington, 2021). These men were consequently labelled as toxic because of violence, lack of education, and disengagement with family life. Media has portrayed gang members and those in the prison system as toxic, attributing criminal and violent undertakings to this concept of masculinity. Toxic masculinity itself has not been shown to be the cause of rape, murder, gang violence, mass shootings, bullying, or even climate change, as the media have posited (Salter, 2019).

Psychologists such as Pitman (1993) and Biddulph (1997) posit toxic masculinity as an issue in certain cultures, citing lack of fathering as leading men to need to prove their manhood in toxic ways. Research on men in prisons by Kupers (2005) argued that toxic masculinity was the reason men were aggressive, competitive, and felt the need for dominance, accounting for their worst proclivities. Used in this way, by Kupers and others[2], the term toxic masculinity has become a framework for marginalising men from some cultural backgrounds as aggressive criminals (Harrington, 2021). Kupers did later clarify that he believes prison brings out those toxic traits, but they are already present in men's cultural contexts (Salter, 2019). Recognizing differences in learned behaviours and lived experiences is paramount to understanding the roots of these behaviours and enacting changes.

The Male/Female Dichotomy

It's important to note that despite being part of a Western nation, both Māori and Pasifika cultures do not view women through the same Eurocentric lens, and the issues surrounding men and women in these cultures are not always the same. Men and women in Māori culture have distinct gender roles based on interrelationship which promotes universal balance (Mikaere, 2019). In many Pacific Island nations men are the head of the family and seen as providers (Rankine et al., 2015). This could be confusing due to the high rates of domestic violence seen in New Zealand, with the vast majority being perpetuated by Māori and/or Pasifika men. Although this is a vast topic in and of itself, and every Pacific Island has slightly differing cultural traditions of male/female roles, this section will be an overview of how women are seen through a Māori and Pasifika cultural lens. Te Ao Māori represents the Māori worldview, and Te Ao Pasifika represents the Pasifika worldview. Both are very

[2] see Bhara, 2005, research on Black South African schoolboy violence on toxic masculinity and poverty. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1097184X20943254

holistic cultures, where body, soul, spirit, and family relationships are of equal importance and fit together to give overall health to an individual person, family, and wider community (Mark & Lyons, 2010; Kingi-Ulu'ave et al., 2016; Williams & Cleland, 2016).

In a sweeping generalisation, in Western cultures (England and her commonwealth countries, America, and Canada) women have struggled to become equal with men. New Zealand was the first country to give women the vote in 1893, over twenty years before any other country (Schaeffer, 2020). However, women are still paid less than men for the same work, the glass ceiling is alive and well, and the patriarchy is still dominant in all areas of society (Employment NZ, 2022; Haan, 2023; Ministry for Women, 2022; Nash, 2020).

In most Pacific Islands the husband is traditionally the authority figure, wives obey their husbands and men are politically superior. Men are the head of the family and feel a responsibility to provide (Rankine et al., 2015). In parts of their culture women have the same rights and status as men and are held in high esteem, and Pasifika women can hold leadership roles. For example, Tokelau is a matriarchal society where women have high status; in Rarotonga women can be chiefs; eldest daughters in many Pacific Island cultures have leadership roles in their extended families. Women are often revered as being close to divinity, and a brother-sister covenant is one of the most important relationships, characterised by respect and avoidance of sexual discourse and bodily contact. This is seen as the opposite of a Westernised view of male/female relationships (Masters-Awatere & Gosche, 2017; Rankine et al., 2015).

Although violence is not accepted or supported in NZ Pacific Island communities, women here also feel they cannot refuse sex with their husbands, and are often treated the same as children, without full adult status (Levenson, 2021). Violence is not seen as an individual problem or issue, but as part of the whole family and community (Rankine et al., 2015). For example, community and Church leaders are involved in domestic disputes (Masters-Awatere & Gosche, 2017). However, migration to New Zealand has led to less support for women and children involved in domestic violence, disrupting the collectivist communal responses and safeguards that are in place in their native Islands (Awatere-Masters & Gosche, 2017; Rankine et al., 2015). Where extended family networks provide safeguards in the Islands against violence, these have been eroded through urbanisation, globalisation, and cultural changes from assimilation into New Zealand culture (Awatere-Masters & Gosche, 2017). Women may find it hard to leave as collective relationships are important culturally and women depend on their spouses. For many Pasifika, men are the head of the family and feel a responsibility to provide, putting pressure on them. Young Pasifika men in

New Zealand have also shown different views of violence than do older men, or those who still live in the Islands (Rankine et al., 2015).

There has been a myth perpetuated through popular discourse that Māori women did not hold leadership roles. This is not the case, pre- or post-colonially. Part of the lack of research on this is that Māori women take more roles in other spaces such as whanau (family), volunteer sectors, and Māori trusts and incorporations (Forster et al., 2015). Traditionally Māori women can be kaumatua (leaders), tohunga (experts in a skill, including religious) and wahine toa (warrior) (Keelan et al., 2021). The concept of mana wahine is the power and authority of women, which acknowledges the importance of Māori women in society. In a meeting, a woman of status gives the karanga (call of welcome) (Forster et al., 2015).

Te Ao Māori recognises the natural order of the universe, the interrelationship of all living things, and balance. Therefore men and women were both essential to society as a collective whole. Male roles were not seen as superior to female roles, with each having intrinsic value (Mikaere, 2019). Although Māori culture and society are holistic and collectivist in nature, men and women did have different roles, but there was no hierarchy of the sexes. Female roles involve nurturing, protecting, caring, and as guardians of knowledge, teachers, and mentors (Forster et al., 2015). Assault, including sexual, on a woman was taken very seriously and could result in death. Women dressed the same as men, kept their own names upon marriage, were able to get divorced, and kept their own whanau ties even if they moved in with their husband (Mikaere, 2019). Western patriarchy has effectively silenced, undermined, and disadvantaged Māori women.

The formation of gangs in New Zealand came partly from the breakdown of traditional support networks of extended families that both Māori and Pasifika value, through colonisation and/or migration (Newbold & Taonui, 2020). For Pasifika, insecure employment, unemployment and benefit reforms, alongside substandard housing and overcrowding, led to low socio-economic status and high rates of social problems, including domestic violence (Master-Awatere & Gosche, 2017). With the treatment of women, gang culture supersedes traditional culture. Violence and the threat of it pervade gang life and there is a code of behaviour which is seen as appropriate for members' wives/partners (Dennehy, 2003). Gangs are a male domain, with a cultural base and masculine ethos, and women are not allowed to become patched members or be involved in any gang business. Men view women as "weak, pathetic and unreliable…easily frightened, unpredictable, likely to break down under pressure and prone to gossip" (Dennehy, 2003, p. 98).

Women are often classed as servants there to meet the needs of men and raise the children. Women's roles are subject to the position of their man and he needs to keep her in line to show he has control of her, usually through fear tactics. This is part of an outworking of showing their masculinity. There are myriad reports from women on the extreme abuse and violence this entails, including being beaten, stabbed, raped, burned with cigarettes, and having their hair cut off (Dennehy, 2003). Part of the difference in how Māori and Pasifika men treat women in their cultures traditionally- and both domestic violence in the home setting, and in gang culture- can be attributed to colonisation and migration (Levenson, 2021, Masters-Awatere & Gosche, 2017).

The Colonisation Polarisation

The study of masculinity has focused on the emasculation of minority men through Western colonisation (Edwards, 2006). Gender identity or native masculinity for Māori and Pasifika cannot be separated from the general historical context of colonialism, and the post-colonial era within which it was formed (Rodriguez et al., 2015). Through colonial policies, multiculturalism for both Māori and Pasifika in New Zealand has been overshadowed by the push for assimilation, encouraging a process of deculturalisation (Hill, 2010). Externally defined masculinities were created around the formation of the new colonies of both New Zealand and the Pacific through colonisation (Rodriguez et al., 2015). Masculinity under colonialism has become an internalisation of subjectivity to the dominant culture (Hokowhitu, 2007). Postcolonial masculinities have been constructed around hegemonic masculinities, and Māori masculinity in colonised New Zealand became something to be conquered and made civilised (Rodriguez et al, 2015). Pasifika[3] masculinity has been portrayed as lazy, emotionally immature, unintelligent, inarticulate, and lacking communication skills (Hokowhitu, 2007; Patrick, 2012).

Current Māori and Pasifika understanding of masculinities cannot be fully understood without a baseline of colonialism and its effects on these cultures. Although Māori and Pasifika cultures are different, they also share many similarities. One of which is colonisation, and for Pasifika, the negative effects of migration, which is similar in its outcomes. This includes poverty, and lack of education, employment, and opportunities (Hill, 2010).

[3] Pasifika refers to men in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, including those men who class themselves as Māori, Pasifika, or Polynesian. Alternatively Māori and Pasifika will also be used separately and together.

Significant immigration by Pasifika began at the same time as urban Māori migration, with the quest for economic progress. Both Māori and Pasifika peoples shared socioeconomic disadvantages and strove for social inclusion during this time period (1960s & '70s). Māori and Pasifika peoples saw themselves as trying to carve a unique space for themselves and their cultures in a Eurocentric society (Hill, 2010).

Prior to the colonisation of New Zealand, Māori masculinity was focused on tribal epistemologies encompassing whakapapa (genealogy) and mana (power/respect/prestige). The British depicted Māori men as immoral savages who needed to be civilised to Western culture. Post-colonisation produced a hybrid masculinity including British patriarchy, which became seen as authentic Māori masculinity (Hokowhitu, 2008). Māori pre-colonially had a tribally based hierarchical leadership structure that included women. This was stripped away by British colonisers, who assumed tribal male leadership was the apex of Māori society (Hokowhitu, 2012). Modern Māori masculinity could therefore be seen as a European construction.

In pre-colonial Māori culture, which was largely oral, men were never silent and had a holistic way of life. The colonisation of New Zealand by the British has effectively silenced Māori men's voices, leading to what Hokowhitu (2007) terms the "voicelessness of Māori men" (p. 66). When this natural masculinity got subverted by British rule men were not only placed in a box that the colonisers were comfortable with, but this led directly to some of the current problems of Māori men joining gangs and engaging in criminal activities. If you are misunderstood and silenced as a man, how then do you make yourself heard? Part of the current issues facing Māori and/or Pasifika men's masculine identity is their acting out against colonialism and its effects on their cultures.

For Pasifika migrants to New Zealand, this post-colonial identity also leads to cultural dislocation. The Pacific Islands are widely dispersed and vary in size, resources, and culture, and many are patriarchal in their social structure. Gender roles vary and are influenced by culture, religion, social systems, and local institutions. In most Pacific communities men have more power and resources, making household and community decisions (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, n.d.). Culture is vitally important as it forms the Pasifika identity. Since the 1960s, partly due to post-colonial neglect, large numbers of migrants have left to find work opportunities not available to them at home (Rodriguez et al., 2015). The largest number have come to New Zealand, leaving behind some cultural traditions and roles, especially in the 2nd and 3rd generations to assimilate to New Zealand Western culture.

New Zealand's masculine culture post-colonisation has been for both European and Pasifika centred around violence, physicality, stoicism, and sport. Whereas in European masculinity in New Zealand the masculine prototype of the ‘kiwi bloke’- encompassing traits of beer, rugby, and racing- is lauded, the opposite is true for Māori and Pasifika with those same traits (Hokowhitu, 2007). Post-colonial masculinities constructed around hegemonic masculinities reinforce the idea of the Warrior (see the next section), where excellence equals physical prowess in labour markets, the military, and sport (Rodriguez et al, 2015).

Māori and Pasifika masculinity in New Zealand has been stereotyped as hyper-masculine, portraying them as aggressive warrior types, prone to violence (Jolly, 2008). Traits that are seen in hegemonic masculinity as assertive or muscular have been externalised as aggression, violence, or reliance on the physical for Pasifika men (Hokowhitu, 2007). Contrasting this is the Hawaiian Polynesian feminised or emasculated man (Jolly, 2008). Current narratives of Pasifika masculinity are narrow and based on a post-colonial interpretation of hyper-physicality. Part of the problem of how Māori and Pasifika men view themselves as men, and how they envision and act out their masculinity is the colonial portrayal of these men as hyper-physical, and the disregard of intellect (Jolly, 2008). This has been reinforced through what are seen as the masculine enterprises of sport, manual labour, the military, and the physically violent gang member or offender. The perpetuation of physicality over intellect in post-colonial NZ has led to overreliance on communication through physical means, normalising dysfunctionality (Hokowhitu, 2007).

Hokowhitu (2004) points out that in pre-colonial Māoridom, virtues such as oratory capacity, wisdom, and compassion were valued. The suppression of Māori and Pasifika epistemologies, where the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical are not compartmentalised but given equal importance, has led to the current dysfunctional Māori masculinities (Hokowhitu, 2007). Masculine identity was sculpted through predominantly British colonisation in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, with enhanced focus on physicality to meet settler ideals and needs, effectively quashing the diverse, complex, and compassion of pre-colonial masculinity (Hokowhitu, 2004; Rodriguez et al., 2015). This can be seen in the perpetuated stereotypes of Māori and Pasifika men having been seen as fierce ‘Warriors’ in the army during the first and second world wars, the physical labour workforce starting in the 1960s, the increasing pressure to perform as elite sportsmen, and the simultaneous dissuasion from academic pursuits (Hokowhitu, 2004; Jackson & Hokowhitu, 2002; Rodriguez et al., 2015). Māori Pasifika men have quite literally taken the colonisers'

concept of what masculinity should look like for them and made it their traditional masculinity (Hokowhitu, 2007).

The Sportsman Warrior Juxtaposition

The notion of Warrior attributed to Pasifika cultures is attributed to hypermasculinity and is legitimised through the status of soldier or sportsman (Hokowhitu, 2004; Rodriguez et al., 2015). The other side of the Warrior identity for those men who do not excel in the sporting arena is the masculine identity of gangbanger (Rodriguez et al., 2015). Although the association of the idea of Warrior is a source of pride, too much exposure to this masculine ideal can rule out other cultural determinants of how Pasifika men view their own masculinity.

Many Pacific Islands are predominantly Christian, and the Church also has a large influence on culture and masculinity (Hawkes, 2023). Religion and sport are both imperial British imports, Church leaders are largely men, and sport has become intertwined with the Church (Horton, 2012). Spirituality is infused into both Pasifika life and sport, and sport becomes intertwined in similar ways to faith and family (Hawkes, 2023). Sport is seen as both a way to expend aggression- taming the Warrior spirit- and as highly spiritual in itself, where glory on the field is given to God. Sport is also seen as a way to get youth interested in Church and away from other less admirable pursuits (Gordon et al, 2013; Hawkes, 2023).

The Warrior moniker, exemplified by Māori when the British colonisers found them to be superior in their combat skills, culminated in the Treaty of Waitangi [4], giving Māori a legendary status (Rodriguez et al., 2015). This led to the European narrative of Māori as warlike, their subsequent use in manual labour, and the use of sport to channel their warrior tendencies (Jackson & Hokowhitu, 2002). The historical discourse of Māori as Warrior minimises or excludes other complex and diverse behaviours that in pre-colonial New Zealand were evident (see previous section), leading to the assumption of these cultures being ‘all brawn and no brain’ (Rodriguez et al., 2015).

Hokowhitu (2007) coined two converse archetypes of Māori masculinity of humility and violence. Humility for Māori men is an outworking of colonial subjugation and submission. The opposite is the Warrior archetype, embodying traits of violence, physical intimidation, and being silent and staunch, often leading to deviant behaviours. This plays out

[4] The Treaty of Waitangi is the founding document of New Zealand, giving the British the right to rule, and Māori the same rights as British subjects.

in physical and sexual violence, and has been normalised in Māori culture and those in authority in New Zealand (Hokowhitu, 2007).

Polynesians (Indigenous inhabitants of New Zealand and the Pacific Islands) have been singled out by geneticists due to their physical makeup and history, reinforcing Indigenous inferiority ideologies in Western science (Rodriguez, 2009). A 2006 study by Lea and associates supposedly found a 'Warrior' or 'violent' gene- MAO-A[5]- among Māori men, to which they attributed aggressive impulses, poor impulse control, violent tendencies, and risk-taking behaviours (Barker, 2020; Rodriguez, 2009). Lea then went on to link his research to increased rates of criminality in the Māori community. The scientific community in New Zealand vehemently challenged the hypothesis- based only on seventeen Māori men- that a supposed 'warrior gene' is associated with contemporary violence and anti-social behaviours of Polynesian men, and generalised to the entire Māori population (Crampton and Parkin, 2007). What the research did not take into account were any other contributing factors, such as colonial oppression, and environmental factors such as urban deprivation, or the fact that other ethnic groups, including African and Pacific Islanders, had higher rates of the supposed 'warrior gene', but did not subsequently gain the label (Barker, 2020). This also links in with the historical colonial view of Māori as warriors.

Sport has become synonymous in Māori and Pasifika cultures with masculinity, bringing with it high levels of pressure to succeed (Rodriguez et al., 2015), where the epitome of masculinity then becomes sporting success. In post-colonial NZ, war and sport are brought together to coalesce into the modern interpretation of what it means to be a man. Sport is seen as a modern form of war, where pride in physical domination is legitimated on the sports field. Pasifika masculinities have consequently turned into merely the physical, and seen as 'natural', perpetuating the post-colonial stereotype of warrior. There has been an association with the hyper-masculine attributes of the warrior, such as performing physically difficult feats, legitimating bodily contact. Although sport is seen as a positive avenue for young men, it has also been associated with the destructive parts of society, allowing and encouraging unnecessary violence and gang mentalities (Hawkes, 2018). This is where a small amount of research so far has posited that another avenue that opens up is the alternative of a gang life (McDonald et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al, 2015). This brings with it power, belonging, an outlet for violence, and possible financial gain through criminal ventures.

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[5] Monoamine oxidase

The natural athleticism of Māori and Pasifika has been perpetuated through sporting achievement, becoming seen as a characteristic of masculinity. It has been for many a form of salvation, a way to gain community respect through dominant Pakeha[6] concepts of mainstream masculinity- these being the violent, physical, sports-oriented, rugged characteristics of colonised New Zealand men (Hokowhitu, 2004). A perceived lack of prowess in the sporting arena can be seen by other men as a lack of masculinity. The hyper-masculine stereotype of sportsman includes toughness and stoicism, whereas outside the Warrior trope Pasifika men are seen as modest, childlike, shy, and religious (Hawkes, 2018).

There is a correlation between sport and masculinity and an escape from poverty. Socio-economic problems from migration include reduced work opportunities, poor housing, and poverty, while the downsizing and restructuring of economic policies in New Zealand has led to a drop in unskilled manual labour wages. A 2022 report has found that Māori men earn 17%, and Pasifika men 23%, less than NZ European men do (Mare, 2022; Rovoi, 2022). Sporting success is seen as one of the few ways to gain financial security and brings with it the lure of a shortcut to wealth and security. There is financial pressure to support the extended family and even the wider community, as is common in many Indigenous and collectivist societies.

Making it as a 'sports star' can be seen as the only option for many Māori and/or Pasifika boys, with generational pressure to achieve mana[7] through sport (Rodriguez et al., 2015). Even though sport is a way out of low socio-economic circumstances, sports players are still socio-economically marginalised, and have high rates of depression, suicide, and incarceration (Hawkes, 2018). Western concepts of masculinities continue to shape how Pasifika see themselves as men within the paradigm of Warrior. These concepts shape what is seen as acceptable and desirable, as in a soldier or rugby player, with the opposite being gang and criminal association through limited availability of more accepted forms of the Warrior representation (Rodriguez et al., 2015). There is a dichotomy between sport and gang membership or affiliation, with an increase in sports recruitment mirroring an increase in gang activity. Both can be linked to an attempt to find their identity as a marginalised cultural group.

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[6] A Maori word for New Zealand Europeans

[7] Mana is a Maori/Polynesian/Melanesian word encompassing prestige, authority, control, power, influence, and status. https://www.britannica.com/topic/mana-Polynesian-and-Melanesian-religion

The Gang Conjecture

New Zealand has more gangs per capita than any other country in the world, with a count of over 8,000 registered members in 2021, in a population of less than 6 million (Bassagre, 2021). The NZ police have stated that this has doubled from 4,000 in only five years In 2019 gangs were recruiting at their highest rates ever. Youth gangs are also on the rise, from one formally listed by police in 2018, to 47 in 2021 (Bassagre, 2021).

Sheldon used the term gang in 1989 to describe young people who created societies that engage in acts of property and violent crime in a predatory manner (Eggleston, 2000). Loosely associated with the Black Power movement in America, gangs in NZ started to take form in the1960s as part of the racial struggle against colonialism, promoting Indigenous self-determination for Māori in answer to colonial dispossession. For Pasifika who immigrated for work, gangs were their answer to the racial discrimination they faced (Shilliam, 2013).

Although police claim that gangs and violence go hand-in-hand, this is not always the case. The core role of the gang is friendship, brotherhood, community life and meaning (Newbold and Taonui, 2020). For example, the King Cobras are a community-style gang which formed from a displaced community of working-class families (Eggleston, 2000). This fits in with Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pasifika world views, meeting holistic and practical needs and standing up for what they see as gross injustices by the New Zealand government. For Māori this included socio-economic inequality, the undermining of their culture (e.g. te reo being banned in schools), dispossession from their land, and violation of rights under the Treaty of Waitangi. Pasifika faced social and economic inequality, along with marginalisation of their cultures. Both Maori and Pasifika peoples faced pressure to assimilate to European settler ideals and were united in their fight for autonomy and a multi-cultural society in NZ (Hill, 2010).

Gangs form due to lack of access to jobs, poor parenting, lack of structure in the formative years, as a rebellious protest due to exclusion from mainstream society, and for a sense of family and belonging (Newbold and Taonui, 2020). Violence is part of gang culture and is acted out not in a vacuum, but within communities and families. Violence has a damaging effect on men's perceptions of themselves, their culture, and family relationships Gang culture has perpetuated the rage, isolation, frustration, and fear of Pasifika men, placing

it onto women in violent ways, where power and control are invariably abused (Mataira, 2008).

Explanations for Māori joining gangs include colonialism, social exclusion, racism, discrimination, cultural alienation, and low socio-economic status. Ethnic bias, abusive state policies and continued marginalisation have led to suppression and disconnection (Newbold and Taonui, 2020). A post-colonial identity mixed with cultural dislocation becomes a breeding ground for gang membership. Second and third generation Pasifika immigrants are producing a large number of gang members. The presentation of cultural identity through immigration is expressed through violent gang behaviours (Rodriguez, 2011). Part of the gang appeal is to assert their masculinity and cultural identity. Gang culture can be attractive due to lack of employment, and has the benefit of belonging.

Māori and Pasifika youth were originally part of the predominant adult gangs such as the Mongrel Mob, Black Power, and King Cobras, but from the 1990s formed their own unique gangs. Youth gang members frequently go on to become members of adult gangs, such as the Mongrel Mob, Black Power, and Hell's Angels[8]. Youth gangs and the accompanied offending are steadily on the rise, with both Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Children) and the NZ Police saying there are definite links to adult gangs (Daniels, 2022). This can be seen by youth gang members being patched and having full face tattoos. They look up to their adult counterparts- many of whom are parents/relatives- seeing them as role models and emulating them (Daniels, 2022). Many characteristics of youth gangs are the same as those of adult gangs. For example, militaristic language in referring to members as soldiers, and gang feuds being labelled as wars. Regardless of gang type, other behaviours and rules are recognised, such as gang leader allegiance, gender boundaries, and that a member's lifestyle lines up with the gang ethos (Rodriguez, 2011).

Research shows youth join gangs predominantly to gain a sense of belonging and community (Curry, 2004; Eggleston, 2000; Muller, 2013; Regan, 1996). This is true for both Māori and Pasifika youth. For Māori up-lifted by social services from whanau, or in an urban setting where traditional culture is missing, they gain a new family (Kisby, 2019). For Pasifika youth, gangs can replace what they traditionally gain from church and culture in the Islands (Rodriguez, 2011). For others in low income families with a lack of parental supervision, or the use of physical punishment to instill discipline, gangs are a way to escape

[8] Prominent New Zealand gangs. The Mongrel Mob and Black Power started in New Zealand, and Hell's Angels is a US import.

(Agnew, 2015; Pardini, Waller & Hawes, 2015). They also give members the freedom to express themselves and be heard, which is often lacking in Pasifika families. For those who do not trust or have close relationships with their parents or siblings, gangs can provide guidance and belonging (Faleolo, 2016).

Interestingly, in New Zealand youth gangs, which have been steadily on the rise for several years, their affiliation does not, in many cases, take them away from their home or community. There is a paradox within Pasifika gangs in their evangelical roots, with most families being religious and attending church (Rodriguez et al., 2015). Many Pasifika youth gang members also still attend church with their families (Rodriguez, 2011).

For Māori youth it has been dislocation from family and social support networks, and the ethics of care (manaaki), compassion (aroha) and relational reciprocity (whanaungatanga) that form Te Ao Māori (Shilliam, 2013). Urbanisation of Māori caused distance from the marae (community meeting house) and whanau, where they gained a sense of belonging, the breakdown of traditions separating them from their culture, low wages, parental alcoholism, child neglect, and divorce (Kisby, 2019; Shilliam, 2013).

One theme, in a study done by Eggleston (2000) for the Department of Corrections into youth gangs, found that Māori and/or Pasifika youth see protecting women as part of their gang role. Although girls/women are not allowed to be involved in the gang, there is the view that being a man includes looking after their women, and being able to provide for them increases their masculinity[9]. However, women who tried to function in the gang space were seen as fair game, losing the support and becoming open to abuse, including sexual abuse from men (Eggleston, 2000). Considering the Māori and Pasifika world views on male/female roles, the protector role for these youth, also seen in corresponding adult gangs, is a natural progression between community and gang life.

Illegal activity is seen as fun, an easy way to make money and gain commodities, and the status of being rebellious against society and injustice, attached to a lack of responsibility. For Māori and/or Pasifika youth it is a way for them to get what they lack, in terms of money, cars, clothing, alcohol, and drugs, which they equate with success and the purview of rich

[9] NZ Mongrel Mob Waikato now has a women's only chapter (as of 2019), Mongrel Mob Wahine Toa https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/mongrel-mob-kingdom-announces-first-female-chapter/VXS6ND6MI4FD5JSDTUINCCTCGE/

people (Eggleston, 2000). This leads to association with the criminal justice system and for some, prison.

The Prison Conundrum

The causes of disproportionality within the criminal justice system are complex. Internationally, research has shown that Indigenous peoples are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and prisons (Perdacher et al., 2019). Indigenous Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders have high rates of prison numbers in Australia (Weatherburn & Holmes, 2010). In Canada, the same has been found with First Nations and Inuits, and the US with Native Americans (Perdacher et al., 2019). Although cultural practices differ for these populations, colonised nations disadvantage their native peoples. The Māori experience of colonisation is similar to that of Indigenous peoples in other settler states, who have been disadvantaged through state policies and practices (McIntosh & Coster, 2017).

Migration and the pressure to assimilate into another culture has also been shown to have negative effects similar to those of colonisation (Hill, 2010). Many Pacific Islands were colonised, and those who migrated to New Zealand have similar risk factors for offending as do Indigenous peoples. They can be vulnerable to adverse family and environmental factors which can contribute to offending behaviour (McIntosh & Workman, 2017). These factors have been linked to low socio-economic status, marginalisation, and institutional racism (Quince 2007; Webb 2011; Workman and McIntosh 2013).

Māori account for half of the total prison population and community-based offenders, while Pasifika are twice as likely to be arrested, prosecuted and convicted than Europeans, and Māori are 4-5 times (Latu and Lucas, 2008). Department of Correction (n.d.) statistics show the number of Māori men in prison is rising by 1% per year, from 51.3% in March 2019 to 53.4% in March 2022. Yet Māori represent only 16% of the population of NZ (Ministry of Justice, 2021). Pasifika men make up almost 12% of the NZ prison population- three times higher than NZ European men (Cowlishaw, 2014). Māori identity has been positively linked to crime in research by Marie, Fergusson, and Boden (2009). However, there is a dearth of research surrounding Māori and Pasifika men's offending from a cognitive masculinity viewpoint.

Gang membership and criminality go hand-in-hand. General population gang affiliation in NZ is small, yet their presence in the criminal justice system and prison is overrepresented. Prisons and youth justice reform institutions can also be places for gang

recruitment (McIntosh & Workman, 2017). According to the NGL[10], by April 2022, patched and prospect gang membership is currently 8,458. However, the number of people with any gang association is 36,461 (Bellamy, 2022). The majority of these are Māori. The NGL was formed by Police in 2016 as a tool to evaluate gang membership. According to Police it is "the most reliable indication of patched and prospect gang members in New Zealand" (Bellamy, 2022, p. 3). The Ministry of Justice census in 1991 put prison inmates' gang affiliation at 10%, with 20% having a gang history. In 2013 this had risen to 30% (Johnston, 2013). As of May 2022 there were 2,686 gang members in prison and 4,451 with community-based sentences. Of those, 77% were Maori, and 9% Pasifika (Bellamy, 2022).

Causes of prison over-representation are difficult to pin-point, and differ between Māori and Pasifika. Neither group can be treated homogeneously, however there are factors both have in common (and between different Pacific Island groups). These include low socio-economic status (SES), overcrowded housing, alcohol/drug abuse, antisocial peers, family instability and violence, unemployment, lack of vocational skills or employment prospects, poor self-management, aggressiveness, truancy, poor educational outcomes, and disconnection from cultural institutions (McIntosh & Workman, 2017). These are associated with criminal behaviours and are the driving force behind over-representation of Māori and Pasifika in the criminal justice system (Latu and Lucas, 2008). The problem with this is that while being predominant causes, they are unable to explain all the differences in criminal justice system association (McIntosh & Workman, 2017). For example, Māori and Pasifika are at higher risk of conviction than other groups with low SES (Latu and Lucas, 2008).

The institutional racial bias of the NZ criminal justice system has resulted in disproportionate imprisonment of Māori and Pasifika (Buttle, 2017). This has been found to mirror other settler countries and their criminal justice systems for Indigenous and minority populations (Snowball & Weatherburn, 2006; Weatherburn & Holmes, 2010). The NZ criminal justice system perpetuates bias, subjugation, and racism toward Māori, treating Māori ways such as tikanga (law, control, and proper practices) as inferior (Kisby, 2019). Police culture has been of concern in NZ, where securing a conviction is seen as the preferable outcome. Some longitudinal research has shown that Māori are 1.8 times more likely to be convicted for the same offences as non-Māori, lending itself to the argument of

[10] National Gang List put together by the New Zealand Police involving information from other agencies such as the Department of Corrections.

ethnic bias by police and the court system (Latu and Lucas, 2008). The effects of bias and discrimination by the NZ Police cannot be minimised or discarded when looking into Māori and Pasifika men's masculinity.

Broadly, every experience in life shapes a person and their identity. Therefore, masculinity and what it means to be a man are partially shaped by experiences with the criminal justice system, whether the end result is prison, home detention, or diversion for gang members.

The Retention/Desistance Hypotheses

While there is much literature internationally on gang joining risk factors, the areas of gang retention and desistance are relatively new (Flores & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013; Pyrooz et al., 2010; Pyrooz & Decker, 2011; Sweeten et al, 2013). To date there has been limited research on what factors are responsible for continued gang membership, or why and how men choose to leave a gang (Pyrooz et al., 2013; Tamatea, 2015). With the rise in gang membership in NZ, along with the high crime rates, criminal justice system involvement, and recidivism, it is important to have some insight into knowing why they choose to leave the gang, and methods of encouraging gang desistance (Tamatea, 2015).

Men choose to stay in a gang for some of the same reasons they join. These can include access to drugs, an outlet for aggression, hierarchical status, material rewards (Tamatea, 2015), social stability, protection from rivals and law enforcement, persistent gang ties, and living in a gang community (Pyrooz et al., 2010). Loyalty can also be a strong motivator for gang retention. Relational attachments within the gang, such as with those they grew up with, who protected them, and gave them food, money, and access to material possessions (Bolden, 2013) can be a strong motivator for staying in the gang. Embeddedness within the gang plays a large role in whether members choose to leave (Pyrooz et al., 2013). It is more difficult for core members to leave than for those on the periphery (Pyrooz et al., 2010). Violence can bind gang members closer, as can social and emotional ties that have formed (Pyrooz & Decker, 2011). Conversely, there is some research on gang retention while rejecting and desisting from gang violence and crime (Deane et al., 2007).

There is the perception that gang membership is for life (Pyrooz et al., 2010), and that once joined it is impossible to leave (Bolden, 2013). However, most gang members do eventually leave, and in gangs internationally- especially youth gangs- members are expected to transition out over time (Pyrooz & Decker, 2011; Rosen & Cruz, 2019). Desistance is a

dynamic process that happens over time and is not due to any one event or circumstance (Deane et al., 2007). Most past research on desistance has focused on life course theory, where criminal behaviour decreases naturally over time. Gang members either leave abruptly, known as ‘knifing off’, or gradually desist, starting with cutting down ties (Decker & Lauritsen, 2002; Pyrooz & Decker, 2011; Rosen & Cruz, 2019). Knifing off includes cutting ties to gang associates, eliminating criminal behaviours, and moving away from a gang area/community. Gradual desistance involves changing beliefs and developing commitments that are contrary to the gang ethos (Pyrooz & Decker, 2011).

Factors related to desistance include age (for youth gang members), changes in life circumstances such as marriage and children, involvement in a programme that supports gang desistance, counselling, educational/skills, and employment opportunities (Deane et al., 2007; Pyrooz & Decker, 2011). A primary motive has been found to be violence, victimisation, or the death of a close friend or family member (Bolden, 2013; Pyrooz & Decker, 2011, Pyrooz et al., 2013). Other motivations include being tired of the gang lifestyle, trouble with the law, prison time, gang violence, and rivalry (Sweeten et al., 2013).

Little is known about how deeply embedded masculine ideals, which are part of members persona, fit into gang desistance (Flores & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). What is known is that change comes through cognitive and identity changes, as gangs fill social and identity deficits (Sweeten et al., 2013). There is an interplay between thoughts and actions, and the environment (Deane et al., 2007). Inter-subjective processes that change concepts of masculinity help with the desistance of criminal behaviours intertwined with dysfunctional masculine identity (Deuchar & Weide, 2019).

Hinderances to gang desistance are the threat of violence and a lack of other social networks (Tamatea, 2015). There is a misconception that desistance includes violence, gang members being beaten, or blood for blood, in order to leave (Pyrooz & Decker, 2011). While there is some evidence of this, more often there can be verbal abuse or the threat of violence over actual violence when members choose to leave the gang (Decker & Lauritsen, 2002).

Disassociation with deviant peers and forming new social networks had been shown to be an important part of successful gang desistance (Sweeten et al., 2013). NZ gangs are a form of community, encompassing norms, values, and processes which make desistance difficult. Contextual issues should be taken into account, such as safety and costs involved in leaving the gang, when forming policies and programs to encourage gang desistance (Tamatea, 2015). Desistance is about relationships, and new social contexts are an important

part of helping gang members to replace the gang with increased participation and inclusion in society (Deuchar & Weide, 2019).

While service agencies have been found to be unreliable for desistance support, there is research showing that some programmes help with desistance (Deuchar & Weide, 2019). Programme participation may enable gang members to take steps to re-define their masculine identities, helping them respond to social pressures and problems they may encounter while engaged in gang desistance. Religion is also recognised as a successful way to complete gang desistance (Bolden, 2013; Rosen & Cruz, 2019). This is especially successful in negotiating gang exit in religious countries and/or with religious ethnicities. Reformed offenders can then become mentors, role models, and father figures for others who seek to exit the gang. This in turn serves to distance them from their past and reform their masculine ideals (Deuchar & Weide, 2019).

Summary, Hypothesis and Research Aims

Masculinity is a diverse subject with many different strands, from dominant Western discourses to Indigenous and minority positions. However, there is little written about masculinity within New Zealand, specifically surrounding gangs and the criminal justice system. There is even less involving Māori and/or Pasifika, despite their overrepresentation in these groups. International research on gangs and criminal behaviours gives some idea of how these men view themselves and their masculinity, and how this fits into their gang and criminal justice system involvement (Baird, 2010; Deuchar & Weide, 2019). It is clear from the literature that there is a gap here to be filled in the NZ setting.

This literature review gives an overview of different types of masculinity and how they came to be constructed. Masculinity studies are prevalent if fairly new to the research stage. However, these are predominantly focused on Western hegemonic masculinities, having moved from a singular masculinity toward a focus on multiple masculinities. Although toxic masculinity is a popular term and not an empirically backed psychological construct, it has permeated society to explain men's violent tendencies, and deviant behaviours, especially for ethnic minorities.

Nothing happens in isolation, or solely for one reason, so different masculinity paradigms in relation to Māori and Pasifika were looked into. With any research undertaken with Māori and/or Pasifika men, the impacts of colonisation and migration cannot be ignored or underestimated. 'Traditional' Māori masculinity was found to be a largely British colonial

construct, supposedly channelling natural Warrior tendencies into more appropriate outlets of military, sport, and manual labour.

There is a vast divide between traditional male/female roles in Māori and Pasifika cultures and those perpetuated in gang culture. However, especially in youth gangs, there is some cross-over with men protecting their women. This is seen side-by-side with the extreme violence women are subject to, both in gangs and in domestic situations.

Sporting prowess has been found to be linked to the Warrior narrative for Māori and/or Pasifika men. There is generational pressure to become successful in the worldwide sporting arena, specifically in rugby for NZ men. It is supposedly a way to channel their natural violent tendencies into a more productive outlet, and can provide mana in their families and communities, along with financial success.

Gang membership is on the rise in New Zealand, especially within youth gangs, which leads to adult gang associations. Research has found that failure to achieve ideal masculinity through legitimate means, such as sports, can lead to trying to fulfill it through illegitimate means such as joining a gang and becoming involved in criminal activity. Finally, Māori and/or Pasifika men are vastly over-represented in the criminal justice system and NZ prisons, yet there is little research on how their perceived masculine identity fits into this.

The hypothesis is that men's cognitions surrounding masculinity have played a part in their life choices of gang association and subsequent criminal justice system involvement. It was hypothesised that there are themes or similarities in how men from these cultural groups perceive masculinity, which leads to their joining gangs and becoming involved in criminal enterprises leading to association with the criminal justice system in New Zealand.

The aim of this research is to find out how Māori and/or Pasifika men who are or have been involved in gangs and the criminal justice system view themselves as men, and how they formed these views. What they believe it means to be a man, how they define masculinity, how and where they learned these ideas, and how it has impacted their lives will be looked into.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Objectives and Rationale

The key objectives of this current study are to gain understanding of how Māori and/or Pasifika men in New Zealand, who have been associated with gangs and the criminal justice system, view their own and others' masculinity, and how/where they learn what it means to be a man. This chapter discusses the methodological bases of this present study, the procedures used to investigate the topic, and the rationale for the methods used.

Research Design: The Road to Constructivist Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory Methodology

Grounded theory (GT) is one of the main methods for qualitative research and was developed as a qualitative methodology by Glasser and Strauss in 1967 (Charmaz, 2017, 2021; Ramalho et al., 2015). Qualitative research asks the how and what questions, using tools for studying processes and then constructing a theory by leading the researcher to the why (Charmaz, 2017). The premise of grounded theory methodology (GTM) was that a theory is constructed by systematically collecting and analysing data, as opposed to testing pre-conceived notions (Mills et al., 2006; Ramalho et al., 2015).

GT is a systematic method comprising several flexible strategies, focusing on data collection to develop an emerging analysis. Conjectures and hypotheses are constructed around categories, and then checked against the data, with processes studied at multiple levels (Charmaz, 2017). Specifics can then be linked to generalisations, and individuals within social contexts, bringing understanding to participants' meanings and actions.

The method's defining purpose is to construct a theory offering an understanding of core concerns in the studied world. It is not only used for forming new theories, but also for exploring new study areas, understanding processes, bringing insight into marginalised people groups denied a public voice, policy development, and professional practice (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). GTM brings out new concepts within psychology with real-world applications.

GTM can be used with many different ontologies and epistemologies, based on a researcher's own positions, giving flexibility to the research (Mills et al., 2006). GTM was chosen for this research because of the dearth of prior research in New Zealand looking into views on masculinity for men involved in gangs and the criminal justice system, specifically those of Māori and Pasifika ethnicities. Using GTM allowed the researcher to follow the

research, allowing the thoughts, views, and stories of real men to be told. The focus is primarily on the data being collected and the research is then guided by what is discovered. With no concrete theory about why these men think the way they do about masculinity, what it means for them and others to be men, or how and where they learned to be men, GTM allowed the researcher to follow the threads of the data collected, dig deeper into the studied phenomena, and develop new insights (Charmaz, 2017).

From its inception, GTM has branched off into three distinct categories. Glasser's original theory has become known as classical or traditional GTM, while Strauss, along with Corbin, went on to develop what Mills, Boner and Francis (2006) termed evolved GTM. In 2000 Kathy Charmaz diverged from the positivist/post-positivist beginnings of GTM and developed what she named constructivist grounded theory (Mills et al., 2006; Ramalho et al., 2015).

Constructivist Grounded Theory

Objectivism is based on a relativist ontological position, while constructivism denies the existence of an objective reality. In a constructivist epistemology, researcher and participant have a subjective relationship. It is acknowledged that researchers cannot be merely objective observers, but that they bring with them into research their own view of the world, co-constructing meaning within the research with participants (Mills et al., 2006).

Ontologically relativist, and epistemologically subjectivist, constructivist grounded theory is built on the premise of there being multiple truths and realities within subjectivism (Mills et al., 2006). With beginnings in sociology, constructivist GT is now used in research in the social sciences, education, nursing, psychology, Indigenous, and participatory action research, as well as many others (Charmaz, 2021; Mills et al., 2006). Constructivist GT repositioned the method within a new epistemology, moving away from positivist/objectivist GTM and into a GTM that acknowledges a researcher's subjectivity as part of the research process (Charmaz, 2021).

A major difference between constructivist GT and other GTM is that constructivist research requires researchers and participants to co-create realities of their experiences and meanings during interviews (Mills et al., 2006). There is an interactive relationship between participants and researcher. Charmaz adapted strategies from earlier GTM, but unlike objectivist GTM does not exclude the researcher's own views and participants' realities, or how researchers and participants affect each other and the research process, data, and outcomes (Charmaz, 2017).

Charmaz (2001) makes the following assumptions: “a) multiple realities exist, b) data reflect the researchers and the research participant's mutual constructions, and c) the researcher, however incompletely, enters and is affected by the participant's world” (p. 678). It is therefore not meant to be an exact picture, but rather an interpretive portrayal.

Data collection and analysis happen simultaneously, helping researchers focus on developing concepts about the data. This works to synthesise the data to go beyond describing it, constructing new concepts that interpret and explain what is happening (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). This was important with the current research as it is not based on a specific theory or prior research. Instead, it is focused on the participants' unique experiences and views, using them to gather new information. As each interview is completed, the data is coded to form themes. Each interview then adds to the data, and can change and/or form new themes.

Constructivist GT gives the researcher a voice. The position of researcher as author becomes central to the research (Mills et al., 2006). The researcher’s underlying assumptions are reflected on, and the position made clear within the research. Participants' stories are listened to and analysed with an open mind, while power imbalances are acknowledged and modified to reduce them (Mills et al., 2006). This is paramount with minority groups who may have been marginalised in the past and have a distrust of those in authority. It gives them a chance to be listened to and heard, building rapport through openness and honesty, leading to participants’ sharing more in interviews. This was extremely important for the current research as Māori and/or Pasifika men are part of minority ethnicities that can be marginalised, and also because gang members and those with a criminal justice system history could distrust authority and may have themselves been marginalised and misunderstood.

Constructivist GT was chosen for this research as the researcher believes bias cannot be taken out entirely, and that this guides the questions being asked and adds depth to conversations. Participants are not made to feel as if they are merely subjects being studied, but that their life experiences are valued.

Literature Review

When Glasser and Strauss first developed GTM they argued against performing a literature review prior to carrying out the research, especially prior to and during data collection. They believed it would contaminate the research, taking it away from the goal of assuring the emergence of new categories. By refraining from undertaking a literature review

the theory would emerge from the data, instead of being imposed on it from existing literature (Ramalho et al., 2015). This comes from a positivist/post-positivist stance that the researcher is objectively outside the research in all areas.

Constructivist GT sees a literature review prior to beginning the research as important, helping to form the research questions. Previous reading can guide the area to be researched and the methods used. However, the literature review does not have to influence the research directly, allowing the researcher to use their own ideas. All three GTMs agree that the emerging theory should be grounded in the data and not existing literature.

In this research the literature review was done prior to undertaking the interviews, data collection, and analysis, to form an idea of where the current research would fit. Although there is no current comparative research in NZ, the literature review helped to show the gaps, form the initial hypothesis, and inform the aims of this study.

Interviewing

Interviewing is one of the main methods of data collection in qualitative research methodologies, and an integral part of constructivist GT (Charmaz, 2001, 2021). Qualitative interviews are epistemologically more constructivist than positivist. In positivist methodology the goal is to formulate abstract and universal laws within the social universe, with an emphasis on research where variables can be controlled and manipulated (Park et al., 2020; Turner, 2001). Constructivism views participants as meaning makers, and where the intent is to understand participants' experiences and life worlds (Warren, 2001). Interviews are based on conversations with an emphasis on the researcher’s questioning and listening, providing an open-ended and in-depth exploration of certain aspects of life in which participants have experience and insight (Charmaz, 2001; Warren, 2001). Interviewing is a flexible technique, where interviewers can pursue leads that emerge from issues gathered from the interview. This fits well with GTM strategies which depend on flexibility and control to increase incisiveness in the data analysis (Charmaz, 2001).

How GT differs from in-depth qualitative interviews is that GT narrows the range of topics in order to gather specific data. Interviewers in GTM address individual experiences, and questions need to explore and define processes, fitting both the topic and participants' experiences. They need to be general enough to cover a large number of experiences along with being narrow enough to explain participants' specific experiences (Charmaz, 2001).

Gaining participants trust is important, opening the way for them to reflect and reconstruct their stories. For the interviewer, it can help to change perceptions and

assumptions. Interviews are a way for researchers to learn about their participants' lives and perspectives (Charmaz, 2021). Traditionally the researcher/participant relationship has been hierarchical, with participants seen as subordinate. In constructivist GT there is reciprocity between researcher and participant, which leads to co-construction of meaning, and a theory grounded in both the researcher's and participants' experiences (Mills et al., 2006).

Consciousness-raising is part of the constructivist GT interview process, where questions are asked to understand participants and become aware of power differentials. The goal is to foster participant-driven research, finding similarities and understanding differences. Researchers must have a willingness to understand participants' responses to questions to gain deeper meaning-making. This is developed through open interchanges, which bring about data generation, as opposed to just data collection (Mills et al., 2006).

Coding and Memo-Writing

Coding is used to learn about the data, define patterns within and encourage deeper thinking (Charmaz, 2021). Codes label and contain the data. Researchers ask which codes best account for the data and how they do so. Line-by-line coding is used to understand the data and develop an analysis, helping grounded theorists understand participants' perspectives and experiences (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020; Mills et al., 2006). Focused coding helps generate categories which are then pursued to see if they hold up. Line-by-line coding stops when the most important and focused codes have been discovered. More data is accounted for by these codes, subsuming related codes, and raising the analytic level of the research (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). Coding language is active in intent, keeping the participant's voice and meaning present in the categories that are formed, and theoretical outcomes. Charmaz advocates for more literary than scientific writing to gain a greater depth of understanding of participants' lived experiences (Mills et al., 2006).

Memo writing is a GT reflective tool that researchers use to record abstract thinking in relation to the data. While interviews are being coded, researchers write memo's about the codes and questions that arise in relation to them (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). Memo writing consists of adding a description of the situation, interaction, and participants' affect and perceptions of the interview (Mills et al., 2006). It is used to explore ideas and questions about the data and codes, encouraging deeper thinking. It is important as it leads researchers into asking further questions about the data, helping to specify relationships between categories (Charmaz, 2021).

Memos can include discussions of codes, analytic and methodological questions, and comparisons between codes. Researchers record where the code takes them, and how it is linked to other codes in the data (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). For consistency, memo writing needs to be written transparently and grounded in participants' lives as well as the researcher's (Mills et al., 2006). Reflexive memo writing takes account of all the influences involved in theory construction. The researcher contributes to the theory by being constantly aware of their own history, values, and beliefs while writing memos (Mills et al., 2006). Coding serves to prompt thinking, whereas memos preserve it (Charmaz, 2021).

Consideration of Other Methodologies

Kaupapa Maori

Kaupapa Māori Research (KPR) was developed to question the predominant Westernized ideas of knowledge, culture, and research design. It is part of a greater commitment in Aotearoa New Zealand to honour the intentions of the Treaty of Waitangi (Walker et al., 2006). Based on the ancient Polynesian epistemology and knowledge tradition of Matauranga Māori (Sadler, 2007) and the development of models of health such as Durie's Te Whare Tapa Wha, KMR is essentially research 'By Māori, for Māori, and with Māori' (Walker et al., 2006, p. 333). It is based on ownership of knowledge, and Māori ways of doing and being. It seeks positive outcomes for whanau, hapu, iwi, and the wider Māori community (Smith & Reed, 2000, cited in Mane, 2009). It takes a holistic view of Māori as individuals and part of a community, based on Indigenous Maori epistemologies such as mātauranga (Maori knowledge and ways of knowing), working toward collective wellbeing (Wilson et al., 2021). As such, Kaupapa Māori principles need to be in active relationship with practices (Mane, 2009).

In the past research has served to advance the interests, concerns, and methods of the researcher (Bishop, 2011). KMR acknowledges and accommodates Māori ways of being, while also maintaining academic credibility (Mahuika, 2008). Research needs to be done in a culturally appropriate way, yet does not preclude other cultural approaches and traditions (Thompson & Barnett, 2008).

KMR is a framework that empowers Māori to discover and determine new possibilities of finding their own ways and identities (Mahuika, 2008). The importance of Māori protocols needs to be taken into account, and the design, plan, data gathering, analysing, and write-up need to be Māori-focused and informed by Māori themselves (Walker et al., 2006).

Reasons this methodology was not used for this research was because the researcher is of New Zealand European heritage, and did not feel she could fully honour the Māori culture by using it, having limited academic understanding of Te Ao Māori. Participants are both Māori and/or Pasifika, and using this methodology may decrease the insights and value of their other cultural identities. The researcher also did not want to assume how much of each participant's identity is related to any culture.

However, constructivist GT meets many of the premises that KMR does and these have been incorporated within the research, especially during the interview stage. The ownership of knowledge for participants is highlighted by giving full access to transcripts and the finished research report. Māori protocols and oversight are provided by the researcher's Māori supervisor. By coproducing the research outcomes through interview methods, KMR is acknowledged through the active relationship between researcher and participants, helping them to better understand themselves and their views along the way. The aim of the research is to work towards greater well-being through understanding views on masculinity of gang members, for participants and their wider communities. It will empower Māori to discover and determine new possibilities for finding their own ways and identities, with the final research project being Māori and Pasifika focused.

Pasifika Methodologies

As Pasifika refers to not just one people group, there are many Pasifika research epistemologies and methodologies. Vanua is a Fijian research framework closely aligned with KMR, using Indigenous practices, ideologies, knowledge, and values (Naufahu, 2018). Research is carried out by Pasifika to benefit the community being researched using the Fijian language; includes Fijians in the research team; structures and protocols must be adhered to; and chiefs and elders must approve all research. The downside is that it is embedded solely in the Fijian culture and worldview (Naufahu, 2018).

Talanoa and Talaloto are two research methodologies which are similar in that they both use the oral tradition of data gathering. Talanoa is the construction of knowledge by two or more people, creating meaning through talking/sharing. Talaloto is based on traditional Tongan cultural practices, capturing personal testimony of lived experiences, generating authentic, rich data for Pasifika (Naufahu, 2018). These methods help decolonise dominant Western research methods (as does KMR). However, these models are predominately used by New Zealand and Island born Pasifika in their own research, to understand themselves and their participants in more depth (Amituanai-Toloa, 2009)

As with KMR above, the same reasons for not using a predominantly Pasifika research methodology by the researcher applies. Pasifika views and practices have been taken into account in this research, including the researcher's primary supervisor being Pasifika. Constructivist methodological approaches take into account sociocultural factors which influence the methods used. Knowledge is individually constructed, fitting well with KMR and Pasifika methodological models (Amituanai-Toloa, 2009).

Participants and Sampling

Participant Sample Size

The present study utilised sampling methods aligned with constructivist GT. The sample size was small due to the very specific nature of the research and the in-depth interview methods outlined in constructivist GTM. This small homogenous sample size does not utilise generalisation but instead provided the opportunity to analyse in detail the views on masculinity of a select group of men from specific ethnicities and groups. In order to maintain the homogeneity of the group, the screening process implemented purposive sampling (Smith et al., 2009). The result was that eight interviews were conducted.

Snowball Sampling

Due to the highly specific criteria for this study, participants were recruited using theoretic and through snowball sampling. Theoretic sampling is used in GTM to discern meaningful patterns with deep descriptions, and to seek respondents who epitomise the analytic criteria of the research (Warren, 2001). Snowball sampling is one of the most popular methods for qualitative research (Parker et al., 2019). It is a non-probability method where research participants help recruit other participants, who can then recruit more participants. Non-probability refers to participants being chosen specifically, as opposed to being randomly selected (Simkus, 2022). Researchers initially use their social networks to establish links, gaining momentum as more participants are recruited. Sampling is complete once a target sample size is complete or saturation has been reached (Parker et al., 2019).

Snowball sampling may be employed when there may be difficulty finding participants. For example, research on hidden populations such as sex workers, criminals, or drug dealers, as these tend to be more difficult for researchers to have access to (Simkus, 2022; Woodley & Lockard, 2016). Members of these types of populations are closely connected through group membership and current participants can inform others about the study benefits and reassure them of confidentiality. Snowball sampling has also been

effectively used with marginalised populations who may prefer a more holistic and natural recruitment approach (Woodley & Lockard, 2016). Snowball sampling was beneficial in this research as participants who share similar characteristics, such as group affiliations, know others with the same characteristics. Participants were initially recruited through contacts of the researcher, resulting in four interviews. These participants then recommended others who they thought may be interested in taking part in the research.

Table 1

Descriptive Information of Participants

Participant Number	Identified Culture	Age	Prison[11]	Current Gang Association[12]
1	Samoan	42	Y	N
2	Maori	42	N	N
3	Maori	39	Y	N
4	Maori	36	Y	N
5	Maori	36	Y	N
6	Samoan/Cook Island	30	Y	N
7	Maori	36	Y	N
8	Samoan	35	Y	N

Screening and Criteria

The researcher initially contacted the participants who had expressed interest through text/Facebook messenger. Facebook messenger included groups formed by the researcher's contacts to make initial introductions. More people were then added to these groups as participants recommended other people. Screening was carried out through questions to ensure that they met the criteria of the study. Once they met the criteria of having a past/present gang affiliation and criminal justice system involvement, the researcher explained the aims of the research, what it involves, time commitment, and ethical

[11] All participants have had criminal justice system association. 7 out of 8 have done time in prison, while 1 has been arrested multiple times and spent time in police custody (jail cells) resulting in charges laid.
[12] All participants must have had gang association to be involved in this research, but have self-declared they are no longer involved in gang life or any gang activities. This does not mean they do not still have personal associations with gang members.

considerations. A copy of the information sheet was emailed, outlining the research details (see Appendix A), along with the consent form (see Appendix B).

Limitations to the Sampling Strategy

Although frequently used in qualitative research, as a network-based form of sampling, snowball sampling receives criticism for not meeting criteria for random sampling that is favoured statistically (Parker et al., 2019). Sampling initially relies on researchers' personal resources and contacts, which risks research distortion early on, as participants come from a small pool. Another limitation is that research participants need to be aware of the research criteria, and may only recommend new participants based on their own perception of who they think are suitable (Parker et al., 2019). The topic of interview can be stigmatising or the population required is minimal (Warren, 2001). Finally, because participants recommended other participants they were more likely to be from the same gangs and the same geographic area of New Zealand, which increases the chance of identification. Initial social network contacts were also local to the area the researcher lives in.

Data Collection

The data collection involved in-person and online interviews that lasted between 25-45 minutes (depending on how much or how little the participant wanted to share). In-person interviews were conducted with five participants and online interviews involved three participants. In-person interviews were held in a neutral place at times agreed upon by the participants and researcher. In constructivist GT it is important to schedule interviews at a time and place that suits the participant (Mills et al., 2006).

The interview began with rapport building between the researcher and participant, allowing the participant to feel comfortable sharing their experiences openly, which is an integral part of constructivist GT, allowing the researcher and participant to become co-constructors in the research (Mills et al., 2006).

During this process, the researcher discussed the aim and outline of the interview. Basic demographic questions were asked, confidentiality was discussed, any questions the participant had were answered, and a consent form was signed (see Appendix B). Both in-person and online interviews were recorded, as per consent of the participants, using the researcher's iPhone 2020 SE and the app Otter Transcribe Voice 2022. This app audio-recorded the interviews, which directly transcribed them into written transcripts, which were

then kept in a secure, password-protected folder on the researcher's MacBook, and in the cloud using Onedrive.

Semi-Structured Interviews

In qualitative studies, a rigorous data collection procedure is the main factor that influences both quality and trustworthiness and critically influences the results. Interviews are the most commonly used data collection method and the semi-structured format is the most often used interview technique in qualitative research (Kallio et al., 2016). One reason semi-structured interviews are popular for data collection is that they have proven to be versatile and flexible. A main advantage is that this method has been found to be successful in enabling a mutual exchange between researcher and participant, which is a main tenet of constructivist GT research.

Semi-structured interviews allow interview leeway to ask for more detail and clarification of meaning, such as when terms from a specific culture or group are used. Open-ended questions were used to elicit participant exploration and framing of their own personal experiences and views. Questions were shaped to gain rich material with lots of depth (see Appendix C).

Constructivist grounded theorists start interviews from the central problem, which defined the participants that were recruited. The interviews centred around the researcher and participant shaping the interview together (Charmaz, 2001). As data is located in context, the key is to use interviews to unlock events, their contexts, and processes that shape those events. Charmaz (2001) proposes choosing questions carefully and asking them slowly.

As recommended by Charmaz (2001) questions were general to start with. The questions in this research were aimed at exploring the topic of masculinity as experienced by Māori and/or Pasifika gang members with criminal justice system association, allowing them to reflect on their own subjective experiences. GT studies of life disruptions or deviant behaviours of any kind risk being intrusive (Charmaz, 2001). As participants were telling stories that made them vulnerable, such as sharing things in the past they may be ashamed of, or childhood abuse, any distress was acknowledged, and recommendations for counselling given (in general, not a specific organisation or person). As it was important to conclude the interviews on a positive note, the pace of all interviews was brought back to normal conversation levels.

Although questions and interview style should shape the context, content, and frame of the interview, care was taken not to force interview data into pre-conceived categories

(Charmaz, 2001). The use of semi-structured interviews encouraged the free flow of information, while keeping it on track. This allowed the researcher to improvise follow-up questions based on participant responses (Kallio et al., 2016).

Data Analysis

Analysis

The interviews were audio-recorded using the Otter app (both in-person and on Zoom), which automatically transcribes. The researcher then moved the transcript into a Word document. The researcher read the initial transcript while listening to the audio recording and changed any misheard words and sentences. The transcripts were also cleaned up, removing double-ups on words, false starts, and some ‘umm’s’ and ‘oh yeah’s’ that did not add to what the participant was saying. Nothing important was removed, and swearing was left in, as that was seen as part of the participant's experiences and the way they portray themselves authentically. This is known as intelligent transcription, where every word is kept, but an interpretation is made to exclude pauses and filler words and can include cleaning up the grammar (Delve.com, n.d.). This was done individually after each interview to become immersed in the data and start to form an idea of what was emerging from the research.

Once the researcher familiarised herself with the transcript, they were then imported into NVivo for initial coding. This was also done individually as each interview was completed. Inductive Coding was used, to fit in with the exploratory nature of a Constructivist GTM of following the data to see where it leads, and then developing themes, and from there a theory. It is a ground-up approach where codes are derived directly from the data. The raw data is used to allow the theory to emerge, with no preconceived ideas of what the codes should be (Delve.com, n.d.)

Initial codes were made using Open Coding and In Vivo Coding which examined the text's contents and conceptual ideas. With Open Coding the data is broken down into discrete excerpts, which can represent a label, description, definition, or category name. The codes produced during Open Coding are loose, tentative, and subject to evolve and change as further coding is undertaken. In Vivo coding uses the participant's own words, and not the researcher’s interpretation (Delve.com, n.d.). It was necessary at this level of analysis to have an open mind of what it meant for the researcher and the participant, basing codes on the participant's answers to questions, adding to them, and adding in new codes, with each

interview undertaken. These included overarching codes such as Defining Masculinity, Violence as a Man, and Catalysts for Change.

Each transcript was read several times after the initial coding to engage with the text and get a more comprehensive idea of participants' views on masculinity, where they learnt them, and how their experiences, especially within gangs and the criminal justice system, related to this. Memos were taken with each read-through, adding to the information gathered and constructing initial loose themes. New codes were formed, and those that did not fit in with the initial themes that emerged from the data were deleted. There was often an overlap in excerpts fitting into more than one code. Codes were then grouped together under superordinate codes. Themes that either did not fit well into the superordinate themes or did not add value to the analysis were excluded. Data was also coded into subthemes to fit within the superordinate themes. This was continued until the final themes were solidified and named appropriately.

Reflexivity

In constructivist epistemology, the subjective relationship between researcher and participants is acknowledged, as well as acknowledging that the researcher cannot be merely an objective observer but brings with them their own views of the world (Mills et al., 2006). Increasing awareness of research conditions is a fundamental part of constructivist grounded theory and it was critical that I was aware of my personal knowledge and biases during the analysis process, as the data and consequent theories were co-constructed with my participants (Charmaz, 2021; Mills et al., 2006).

I have not had any interactions in the past with gangs or the gang culture, so this research was out of my comfort zone. This also made recruitment more difficult, as I was relying on contacts from other people. However, I have been involved with ex-cons and ‘gangbangers’ in California, in the capacity of a guest speaker, with safety protocols in place. This gave me some understanding of them as individual people, not judging them by their past affiliations and crimes. It was these experiences that first formed my idea for this research project. It also helped me to write up a safety protocol for ethical approval.

For this research I used Walsh’s (2003, cited in Olmos-Vega et al., 2023) four overlapping and interacting reflexive processes of personal, interpersonal, methodological, and contextual. The reflexivity method I used was reflective writing, which included memoing (discussed in the previous section) and narrative autobiography (Olmos-Vega et al.,

2023). These are both part of the Constructivist GTM and worked well with this research in helping to form codes and define the final themes.

I used narrative autobiography to think about my background and motives for conducting the research, by recording specific life experiences that could influence my understanding of participants' accounts, and how insights could shape the results of my research. For example, before beginning the research process I thought and wrote reflexively on how watching Once Were Warriors as a thirteen-year-old NZ European girl shaped my view of the Māori culture, and men in particular, and the implications this had throughout my life. Being aware of this helped me not pre-judge the participants on their appearance or the way they talked.

Memoing was used throughout the coding process to document my feelings, thoughts, and ideas that came up, and to highlight gaps in my knowledge and thinking. I coded each interview as they were completed, changing them, and adding and subtracting different codes as more information came to light. For example, by writing about how the first interview went, and the information gathered while doing the initial coding, I decided to change the order of the questions, and add some probes, so they would flow better with subsequent interviews. This worked to bring out more depth, with less time spent jumping back and forth, and an overlap in answers.

Personal reflexivity requires researcher reflection and clarification on their own expectations, assumptions, and conscious/unconscious reactions to participants, the data, and context. It should include the impact of the research on the researcher, not just their background and training, but also how prior experiences influence research decisions (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023).

Issues that I was, or became aware of, included views I had on gang members and how these had been shaped (in my case predominantly by media, not personal experience), how negative past experiences, such as watching Once Were Warriors, and an abusive marriage (as well as several small experiences/interactions), shaped the filter I see Māori and Pasifika men through, more than positive experiences/relationships. I used autobiographical narrative, supervisor meetings, and my ethics application, to bring to light, refine, and understand these issues. While arranging interviews I engaged in thankfulness, and before each interview I made sure I had no preconceived ideas about each man, or how the interview would go. I listened impartially, with empathy and acknowledgement of their unique knowledge and perspectives. By doing this I found I could be objective and distance myself

when violence was mentioned in the interviews. I spent time afterwards reflecting on how I felt during each interview and if anything had triggered me.

Interpersonal reflexivity reflects how relationships in the research process influence the context, people involved, and results (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023). I became aware during an early interview that I was tempted to use leading questions to frame the answers in a narrative I wanted to see. I realised there was a distinct difference between asking for clarification and putting words into a participant's mouth to lead the research in a certain direction. Which until that point I had not thought I would do. From then on, I was far more careful in how I asked the questions and the wording I used.

Another way interpersonal reflection was helpful was with the power dynamics that are present in any research. This is more pronounced with marginalised groups, especially those who mistrust authority. During recruitment I used the snowball effect, thinking it would be easy to get more participants this way. I was quickly made aware that if future participants did not know me, especially those still involved in a gang, there was a distinct mistrust of my motives. These men declined to take part in the research. I had been aware prior to this that gang members distrust those in authority through past experiences (e.g., police, the criminal justice system), but this was in a purely academic way. The reality of it was frustrating and not something I had thought through the reality of with implications as to my own research.

Language was another barrier. Both with those whose first spoken language was not English, and from a position of understanding the wording of my questions. It was pointed out that with gang members I may have to word my questions differently so they would understand what I was asking them. I tailored my wording to the understanding of participants after being told by one that I needed to be ‘less PC’ when talking to gang members. Questions often had to be repeated, explained, and/or reframed, without changing the meaning. It also worked the other way around, as when reading through the transcripts, often the Otter App (automatic transcription) had misunderstood words and even whole sentences.

Having had a Christian upbringing, I brought with me into the research an understanding of similar spiritual values and beliefs many Pasifika people have, along with an understanding of the importance of spirituality for many Māori, and how these beliefs and values can shape identity and affect life choices. As some of the participants were recruited through a group run by a Church, they were made aware that I am a practicing Christian. This common ground and belief system seemed to help with overcoming any hesitation to do the interview, and the lack of trust I found with some of the participants, and those who declined

to participate. There was an understanding and ease in these interviews that superseded cultural differences.

Methodological reflexivity is a critical consideration of methodological decisions (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023). I chose constructivist GT because I believed it was the best method for the research I wanted to do. It fit in with my views, especially on subjectivity/objectivity, the desire to co-construct the research with my participants, and wanting to see where the research led without a preconceived theory. This was highlighted more through my early research and literature review, where there was limited research already done in this area.

I do not believe anyone doing research can be entirely objective, as thoughts/ideas/beliefs/biases are part of who every person is. We see things through the filter of our past experiences. Instead of trying to pretend that does not happen, I chose to use subjectivity to acknowledge and minimise the effects by critiquing my own thought processes throughout the research project. As a NZ European, I did not feel competent enough on my own to use either Kaupapa Māori or Pasifika research methodologies, although these methods work well with Indigenous and minority groups, either on their own or combined with another methodology.

There is an overlap between interpersonal and contextual reflexivity. For example, the mistrust of gang members for those in authority, and the past experiences of not being heard, or being misjudged. Contextual reflexivity is locating the research in the cultural and historical context (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023). Contextual reflexivity included looking into how colonialism and immigration affect Māori and Pasifika peoples, and research on gangs and how they fit together (discussed in the literature review). The interviews included a question on how their culture saw masculinity, how that fit in with their own learned views, and how masculinity is enacted within gangs. Another way contextual reflexivity was utilised during the interview was including a question about the influence of spirituality for those who identified as Christian, had been brought up in a religious household, and/or were recruited through a Church.

Ethical and Cultural Considerations

Ethical Approval was received from the Massey University Ethics Committee (Reference number: 4000026531). following a full ethics application. This research implemented ethical considerations in line with Massey University guidelines as it involved human participants Information sheets were emailed to participants before the interview,

providing them time to read, ask questions, and make a decision about participating. In the interview, the researcher verbally outlined the contents of the information sheet to ensure that the participants understood. Information about recording, transcribing, confidentiality, and anonymity were then outlined. It was reiterated that the participants could withdraw at any time and did not have to answer any questions they were not comfortable with. An informed consent sheet was provided and signed by participants before the interview was undertaken (see Appendix B).

Participants' privacy and confidentiality were sustained in data management as information was accessed solely by the researcher and her supervisors, using password-protected OneDrive files. The researcher also ensured that the app used for audio recording and transcriptions, Otter Voice Notes (2022), was suitable for keeping data private and secured through a password-protected account. Thesis data was stored in the researcher’s password-protected MacBook Air 2021. Once the research is complete, the data will be kept for five years. In the transcripts and report, the researcher ensured participants' confidentiality by removing any identifying information and replacing names with participant numbers, followed by M or P denoting their ethnicity.

Compensation was given to participants in appreciation of both their time and for sharing their stories, experiences, thoughts and feelings. Koha (reciprocal gifting) is important within the Māori culture, as is generosity within Pasifika cultures.

The Massey University Māori Research Ethics guidelines, Te Ara Tika (Massey University, 2017), and Pasifika Research Principles (Pacific Research and Policy Centre-PRPC, n.d.), were also followed, in conjunction with the MUHEC code. The Treaty of Waitangi principles of partnership, participation, and protection were taken into consideration. Māori and Pasifika research guidelines are similar in their principles of honouring their cultures throughout the research process.

Participation can be seen through the participants themselves being co-constructors of the research with the researcher. This is one reason a constructivist GTM was implemented. New categories and theories were formed in partnership with the participants. Participation means Māori being given an equal opportunity to take part in any research. Māori are underrepresented in a lot of research, even in NZ, and this research gave Māori men in minority groups a chance to share their views and be heard. When searching for participants, the researcher directed her contacts to ask any Māori men who fit the criteria to take part. Protection was implemented through the information given prior to consent, the

consent form, and the ability for participants to ask questions at any stage or not answer any questions they found uncomfortable.

The principles of Te Ara Tika include Tika, where the research itself is aimed at purposefulness in regard to Māori. The impact will benefit the individual participants, their families, communities, and groups they belong to. Manakitanga is seen through the research taking into account cultural aspects at every stage, and treating participants with sensitivity, dignity, and respect. This can be seen in the choice of methodology and the use of interviews. Mana is shown by the research itself having a justice component, where the participants are from ethnic minorities, and also gangs, and where they have been misunderstood and unheard.

Massey Pasifika Research Principles include Respect for Relationships where cultural protocols are respected, participants are treated with humility by the researcher, and confidentiality is ensured. Respect for Knowledge Holders was adhered to by ensuring Pacific knowledge, aspirations, and well-being were honoured throughout the research process. Participants were acknowledged as knowledge holders in the interviews. Reciprocity means participants and their communities must benefit from the research and gifts are given to honour time. Holism in Pasifika cultures includes the physical, social, environmental, cultural, and spiritual aspects, and it was important that these were all acknowledged, understood, and respected when interviewing participants.

It is essential to have an awareness of cultural heritage, ethnic-racial identity, spiritual beliefs, socio-political influences, family structures, and any oppression, prejudice, or discrimination participants may have suffered. Participants were treated as unique individuals with diverse backgrounds, life experiences and stories, respected for their own views, and listened to without judgement or pre-conceived bias.

The benefit of this research is that gang members are often misunderstood and not given a voice. This research will allow them to tell their unique stories and be listened to without judgement, having the chance to speak into an area that is currently overlooked in New Zealand research. Justice is an important part of ethical accountability and is in line with the goals of a constructivist GTM. As such, the researcher proposed that vulnerability and any emotions/thoughts brought up will be balanced by catharsis gained from being heard. This research will add to the understanding of a specific group of marginalised Māori and Pasifika in regard to men's masculinity in NZ.

Massey University ethics guidelines state that when working with Māori participants cultural consultation is required. All research participants identify with Māori and/or Pasifika

ethnicities. Therefore, it was important to have an understanding of their cultures and the ways they differ and are the same as the researcher. To this end, the researcher’s supervisors for this research project are of Māori and Pasifika (Samoan) descent. The researcher continued to be accountable, asking questions and checking with them through the research process to make sure she was being culturally considerate of her participants.

Chapter 4: Results

It was hypothesised that how Māori and/or Pasifika men see themselves and their masculinity, and how they learnt those beliefs, is likely to contribute to the decisions they make to become associated with gangs and the criminal justice system. This was done through interviews exploring the relationships between views on masculinity, gang association, and involvement in the criminal justice system, for Māori and/or Pasifika men. The key objectives of this current study were to gain an understanding of how Māori and/or Pasifika men in New Zealand, who have been associated with gangs and the criminal justice system, view their own and other's masculinity and how and where they learnt what it means to be a man. The researcher hypothesised that by looking into their views on masculinity it could shed some light on why so many Māori and/or Pasifika men are joining gangs and why they are so overrepresented in the New Zealand criminal justice system (Cowlishaw, 2014; Shepherd and Ilalio, 2016). This chapter discusses the results of this research.

Using Constructivist Grounded Theory coding (Charmaz, 2021) and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), eight themes emerged from the data. Six of these themes included subthemes, as seen in Table 2. The themes were prioritised and listed in line with the questions asked to tell the research as a narrative, i.e., from an overview of participants' views on masculinity, to how it was learnt, what brought about changes in views on masculinity, and finally what and how the participants would change about the way masculinity is taught to the next generation. The researcher's clarifying comments are denoted by square brackets in the extracts, while omitted participants' comments are indicated by empty square brackets, and joined sections of narrative are indicated by three full stops. The names of participants are replaced with numbers, along with their ethnicity denoted as either M for Māori or P for Pasifika, in curly brackets.

Table 2

Themes and Subthemes

Theme	Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2	Subtheme 3	Subtheme 4	Subtheme 5	Subtheme 6
Views on masculinity:						
Before and during gang involvement	Being hard/staunch	Not showing emotion/ weakness	Being a proud man	Being dominant & in change	Drinking & drug use	Male/female Dichotomy
The Present	Not needing to be hard/strong	Protecting & providing for family	Setting a good example	Communica-tion	Vulnerab-ility & showing emotions	Being responsible
Violence as a man	During childhood	Gangs & prison	Wives & children			
Learning to be a man: The influence of role models	Male role models	The influence of women	The role of friends	The positive influence of grandparents		
The lure of gangs: Reasons for joining	The need to belong: the search for community	Money, fame and power	Getting out of poverty			
Masculinity within gangs	No sub-themes found					
How ethnic culture fits into masculinity	Māori	Pasifika				

Criminal justice system influence: Help or hinderance	No sub-themes found		
Catalysts for change	Family	Prison	Spirituality
Toward a better future: Changing the narrative	Influencing the next generation	Teaching men to father	The role of schools

Views on Masculinity: Making Meaning of Being a Man

Views on masculinity varied for each participant, but there was a clear dichotomy between what they saw as being a man before and during their gang involvement, and how they view it in their lives currently. As all participants have left their gang involvement, their views on masculinity have changed (and are a large part of reasons for leaving the gang). Many of the participants are in legitimate jobs/own their own business, are volunteer/role models in the community, and have a focus on healthy family life. Violence as a man was a dominant theme for all of the participants in various ways. Despite framing masculinity and what it means to them to be a man differently, there were many similarities, which will be discussed in subthemes within the topics of masculinity before and during gang involvement, masculine views in the present, and violence as a man from childhood to now.

Before and During Gang Involvement

Views on masculinity were learned cognitions and behaviours during their childhood and early adolescence, and these masculine ideals were carried into participants' adult lives and relationships, including their gang associations and criminal justice system involvement. Subthemes that emerged from the data were related to being a hard/staunch man; not showing emotions or weakness, and not crying or complaining; being a proud man; being dominant and in charge; binge drinking and drug use; and male/female stereotypical roles.

Real Men Are Hard

Being proud, hard, staunch, strong, and not afraid were described by several participants as a strong masculine ideal and something they learnt in childhood. The need to have dominance in their family and gang life and be in charge was enacted through standing their ground and starting fights. Men were also seen as being the ones who make the decisions.

> *Being a strong man. Being staunch. Someone that's not afraid and a proud man. Personally that's how I see it…As being an ex-gang member being proud is being loyal to your boys or doing stand over tactics and robbing people. That to them is being proud…{4M}*

> *…having to try and be a he-man, try and be hard. Try and put on a front where people were scared and trying to make a name for myself. {3M}*

Real Men Don't Cry

Not crying or complaining was instilled and ingrained through childhood experiences, such as being yelled at, hit, or threatened with violence. In adolescence and adulthood, it was translated into not showing any emotions or weakness. This was especially important within gang culture.

> *You'd always have to work hard. Don't cry, don't complain. Do what you're fucking told, otherwise you can get the smash. That's pretty much how I grew up…You know, being around bushmen, hard men, you do not show weakness no matter what. {2M}*

> *I always have my guard up on me…Man never shows tears. {1P}*

> *You know, there was no sign of weakness in the gang culture, back then, if you say you're gonna do something you sort of had to do it…it was just no choice but to be hard, and just no sign of weakness. {8P}*

Drink Til You Drop

Drinking and drug use was a common factor in how participants believed men do and/or should behave. The ability to 'get on the piss' after work and then go to work the next day was seen as something men should be able to do.

> *New Zealand alone, especially in the brown community, has a history of binge drinking and they don't know when to stop. Even if it's turning ugly…you had to be a hard man…drink stupid amounts of alcohol and smoke stupid amounts of weed and still get up in the morning and go to work…being a man you could work a full day and get smashed and still go to work. {2M}*

> *Drinking hard, doing hard drugs. And showing that you can handle anything…My kids missing out on both of us because we choose to go and party or do other things. {4M}*

Men Vs Women

Masculinity was seen within the male/female gender roles as men going to work, earning the money, being in charge, and having the last say. Women stayed at home, cooked, cleaned, and did what they were told.

> *Growing up…I can remember that it's always been male goes to work, and wife cooks, cleans, looks after the house. Male does the lawns, does the outside work, go to work, make money, come home, drink...my dad would never let her [mother], she always had to stay home. {6P}*

> *My dad was always the one that's making calls for our family…he made all the plans for the family…we'll just continuing to go by what my dad says…it was his way or no way at all. {8P}*

The Present

All eight participants interviewed have changed their views on masculinity and what it means to them to be a man. Strong subthemes of masculinity for them now included: not needing to be hard or strong all the time; protecting and providing for family; setting a good

example; learning to communicate, being vulnerable and showing emotions; being responsible, owning up to past mistakes and repairing the damage. For one participant, there was a distinction made between being a proud man and what that entailed before and in gang life, and what it changed to after he left the gang. For another participant, this was seen through mana, of having a warrior spirit and heart.

The Softer Side of Masculinity

Changing their views of masculinity from the need to always be hard and strong, not showing any weakness, vulnerability, or crying, to now being able to feel and show emotion and vulnerability, and effectively communicate this, especially to their families.

> *For me I just guess it's just being able to deal with your emotions…You're not hiding your softer side or you're not just always living on your harder side. It's being able to balance everything and own everything. That's masculinity to me. {2M}*

> *I think more along the lines of mana, the heart…the warrior spirit of a male. {3M}*

> *So masculinity for me now is being a faithful partner, learning to communicate, talking with others if I'm struggling, or if I need anything. Reaching out and showing a bit of weakness when it needs to be shown. Learning to cry when you want to cry. That's how I see masculinity now. {4M}*

Putting Family First

Protecting and providing for family was a change in behaviour for participants, stemming from changing their views on masculinity and how it should be lived out in their lives, families, and communities. Being a good role model and setting an example for their children, other men, and in the community, and standing strong in their beliefs is important to them in their lives now.

> *When I look at masculinity now, I'm like to uphold your family in the right way… being a family man now, I feel the power….by upholding my children in the right way, by being the right father and trying to hold some values and morals in the right sense of a family man. {3M}*

Now, masculinity has just been able to stand strong. Being able to provide support for my children, my wife…being mentally strong. Spiritually strong…Being supportive and giving guidance, and knowing what's going on in my house. Vulnerability for my children. {5M}

The ability to uphold your family, through hardships and struggles, all the pain. Being able to provide and just sticking through, following through, being the man of your word and stepping up to the task and getting the work done. {7M}

…now I see proud is being a role model, a good leader for my kids, being a good father and doing good things in the community. {4M}

It's All On Me Now

Participants talked about learning to take responsibility for their past and current actions, owning up to past mistakes, and repairing the damage done to themselves and their families.

I can use my masculinity to be glue to hold a relationship, to hold something broken. And that's what I want to use my masculinity for, is to keep something together, strong, powerful, for good, and not to try and be a big macho man. I don't have to punch somebody…just to show that I'm strong…Masculinity in a relationship should be holding the family together. Masculinity being single should be holding yourself responsible for your actions, for your mental health, your decisions, everything…when you're angry, being strong enough to walk away. {6P}

What masculinity looks like to me is actually repairing the psychological damage, the physical damage, the impact of my violence and behaviour that has transferred into my kids. {7M}

Violence as a Man

Violence was seen by all participants as part of being a man. Many saw this acted out in various ways in childhood and adolescence, and carried it into their own relationships. These learned behaviours were seen as normal and permissible, and solidified and encouraged through gang and criminal justice system involvement. Violence for participants

included psychological, domestic (both by male role models and themselves) against women and children, sexual assault and rape, and fighting to show dominance in gangs and in prison.

During Childhood

Participants grew up around violence, including against their mothers, abuse towards them and their siblings, and gang violence in the community. Some were told to behave in the same way or they would be beaten. Sometimes violence was equated to love.

I grew up my with dad beating my mum, and then on the other side of the fence, I have my grandfather treating my nan so beautifully. So I was caught right in the middle of how to treat a woman and how not to. {2M}

Back then, I grew up with a lot of domestic violence, a lot of control, so that was what I got taught. {5M}

It wasn't just violence in the home, it was violence outside in public. I saw this man [father] beating up my step mum and us siblings as well, but not knowing that beating us kids was wrong…because our culture…we have this thing that the parents say, 'we give you violence because we love you', so that's what we grew up in. So every time we've got a hiding we thought 'Yeah, nah, nah, it's because he's right', because he's my dad and he loves us. {8P}

Toward Their Own Families

Part of the reason many left the gang/prison life was the realisation that they were perpetuating violence against those they loved, the mindset of violence being okay was wrong, and that how they grew up wasn't the right way to behave as a man. Their children were afraid of them, and/or starting to emulate their violent behaviours.

I'm not gonna lie. I'm not perfect. I have hit a woman before. And I did get charged with it. {2M}

I've seen my dad be violent, and I wanted to be more violent than him…He taught me how to use violence to protect my family…you're not going to get taught how to treat your woman. You're only taught how to beat her up. So when she doesn't listen, you're

going to teach her control…to get your way through screaming at her, yelling at her. She doesn't want to do it, well then what's the next step? A hiding…I've always thought that if a woman hits you, you've got every right to hit her back. I thought that's being a man. {6P}

For me back then my taking care of family was just beating them up, beating my wife up, beating my kids up. Because at the time my mindset was stuck on being the man. Don't mess with me because I'm the man. But now my mindset it's actually, that's just thinking back, it's 'Oh that really wasn't a man, that was much a Monster. A Monster at the time'. {8P}

In Gangs and Prison

Violence in gangs and in prison was not optional, and dominance was often gained through violence. For some of the participants, it helped them realise that was not what they wanted for their lives. It became a tipping point for one participant, where violence by a gang member against his partner made him realise he was doing the same thing to her.

Say we've got a job to do. Someone wants a hit done. This fella deserves it, and I know it too. {1P}

I'm trying to be a father to them, being strong for them where it wasn't making them strong, it was actually having them fear me. That's probably the biggest thing that made me pull out of the clubs, is that one factor. My kids started getting scared. My wife started having to run away. Just because she didn't know who I was coming home with that night…She didn't know if we were gonna go out there driving around looking for trouble, playing with guns and standing over people. {5M}

My involvement in the gangs ended up affecting my ex-partner and my kids to the point where she was raped from my [gang] president and led us to leaving the gang… I'm doing it to my own partner, in my own home, me doing it to her was different. But from another man that I looked up to doing it to my partner was where the line drew, that was a no-no for me. I realized that actually this isn't a real man. A real man doesn't do that to a woman…I didn't see hitting her was a problem, or me forcing her

to do things she didn't want to do was a problem. But then, once I've seen that happen, that's when I realized hang on a minute, what I'm doing is just the same, just as bad. {4M}

Learning to be a Man: The Influence of Role Models

Every participant learnt his views on masculinity and how to be a man from role models during childhood. The greatest influence for all participants was through older males. These included participants' biological fathers, but also (due to fatherlessness) their mother's boyfriends/partners (many of whom were gang members), grandfathers, uncles, and older gang members in their family and community. Friends, mothers, and grandparents all had some influence as role models, but this was superseded by male role models in shaping masculinity in the participants' lives.

Male Role Models

Male role models were, for all participants, the most dominant influence in their formative years. As many grew up without their biological father, other men stepped in to fill the role of masculine role model, helping to shape their identity as a man. Most of these men had a negative influence, showing them how to be violent, and teaching them to emulate dysfunctional behaviours, such as drinking and drug abuse.

I got influenced a lot by my uncles and my dad, it was mostly down to the to the older men that I was around that really shaped masculinity to me. {2M}

I've watched men growing up. I watched my dad, I watched my dad drink. So as I was getting older, I wanted to drink more than him. I've seen my dad be violent, and I wanted to be more violent than him. But there's just so many things that I've missed out on that don't make me a man. Because I watched my dad do what he does. I picked up traits from him. {6P}

Because none of us had a father figure in our lives we sort of learnt from the gangs. Just other men, they were a role model to us or a father figure to us. {4M}

I grew up in a fatherless home. So I got more of my teachings from my friend's fathers, uncles and aunties and my granddad. I got taught from a very young age, five, six years old, different father figures being in and out of our home by my mother. Being brought up by my two younger brothers' dad, in his gang life. {5M}

The Influence of Women

Women's roles included modelling criminal behaviours and encouraging their children to copy them, abuse by themselves toward their children, allowing others to perpetuate abuse against themselves and their children, and the effects of participants seeing their mothers abused by men.

And you could tell that all she really wanted was a break. But she never really got one because she had to cook and clean and that was it, that's all she had to do…there was times where I feel like she was actually crying for help. Or wanted to have a good time…but my dad would never let her, she always had to stay home. {6P}

My father died at 7. Vaguely from what I remember as a child, it was good. As soon as he passed away it went all pear-shaped. I just went downhill. And my old lady, she went back to hanging around criminals and drug and alcohol infested environments….that became what I wanted to be because…she's the mum, she's supposedly making good choices. {7M}

The Role of Friends

Friends and peer groups were only found to be an influence in forming views on masculinity in adolescence, often influencing the decision for participants to join a gang. Friends in the gang often filled in the gap left by fatherlessness and/or abusive male role models, solidifying the participant's views on masculinity.

I was pretty much brought up with my uncles because they're around the same age as me…. I was about 10 to 11… my uncles were going into the gangs then. By the time I was 15 that's what I wanted to be. I wanted to be them. {4M}

Back then my friends were around me…I grew the awesome relationship with these boys. It just started from there. My friends became sort of my role models. Who were

> *older…so they became my sort of new father…And then I joined one of the biggest Polynesian gangs here in [ ]…I was pretty unsure whether to join or not so I sort of just stuck with them. {8P}*

> *Friends had a massive influence on it [masculinity]…I ran away from home at the age of 14… I went straight to the streets and I made a few friends… After I had made these friends, I gravitated to their philosophies, their ways of what family means, and that's what kind of incorporated me into what they're up to. And I became a part of our gang. {7M}*

Grandparents as Positive Influences

Grandparents were found to be a positive influence on two of the participants in helping them form views on masculinity. However, their views changed when those grandparents died, contributing to their joining a gang to find the value and love left by loss.

> *I was raised by my grandmother, didn't have mum and dad around. So I looked up to her as mum and dad in a way, but the moment she passed away, I felt lost. I didn't know where to go anymore. Because she was the woman that I turned to for any advice or any help and she was gone. Now I had nobody to turn to. {4M}*

> *I got brought up from my grandparents. I grew up in a broken family, separated parents. Never knew my father, so I really didn't have no idea of what a man should be. Other than my grandfather showing me his ways of being a great husband and father. So he was a huge role model in my life. But when he passed away, I think part of my masculinity left. {3M}*

The Lure of Gangs: Reasons for Joining

The most predominant reason for joining a gang was the need for community and family, due to abuse, abandonment, or the death of a loved one. Every participant talked about wanting to belong, to be part of something, and to find identity as a man. Fatherlessness was a motivator for several participants. They mentioned the desire to find new male role models to be father figures, and the gangs gave them that. Money, fame, power, respect, and wanting to get out of poverty, for themselves and their families, was also found to be a strong motivator.

The Need to Belong: The Search for Community/Family

The search for a new community/family who would accept, value and love them was paramount for all eight participants. Childhood abuse, abandonment, the loss of a loved one or relationship, depression and anxiety, all contributed to their need to find somewhere to belong. Some found acceptance of themselves and their ideas of masculinity for the first time, while for others it was to gain respect and loyalty.

> *…it was a huge thing in my life, especially with my ex-partner and our separation, and then going into just thinking I had nothing left, nothing to lose. So that's when I joined the King Cobras and went to more of, this is my lifestyle. I've got no family that look after me now. Except these guys. I was trying to actually find a family that loved me, but lost my grandfather and that was the love I was seeking…So what attracted me to gangs was family, loyalty, respect…I lost all that with my real family. So I was searching for something that I thought would cover these empty spaces in my life. {3M}*

> *…that was just for family. It was just to find…my own people I could relate to. People that would be there when I needed them. That's what gangs are. {1P}*

> *…there was a sense of acceptance, that was the key. Community. Being accepted after several years…of being dismissed, and not really fully understood. That's how I felt. That was the best acknowledgment I was looking for. {7M}*

Fatherlessness

Fatherlessness had a large detrimental effect on many of the participants' views of themselves as men. Lacking positive input from their biological fathers, along with feelings of rejection, the gangs filled in the gap for many of the participants. Gang members became father figures, helping to solidify and perpetuate their views on masculinity. Along with the negatives, the positives for the participants were acceptance, love and understanding.

> *…while I was running with gangs and stuff like that, they used to give me a sense of… I am somebody, I am someone. And that sort of just goes back on me having no father. {5M}*

I was going for fatherlessness. And then I recognized that…the reason why I committed is because I recognized that I didn't need a father to be accepted. I could have a brother instead…those were the gang members that I was associated with and surrounded by. {7M}

Money, Fame and Power

Growing up seeing gang members living great lives, with a lot of money, flash cars, meals out, women, and having respect in the community, many of the participants wanted it for themselves. They saw it as their due as men, and what real men had. To be seen as in control, dominant, respected, and feared. For some participants, abuse as a child translated into wanting what the gangs offered in the form of protection and the power to protect themselves.

I grew up around all types of gangs, so masculinity back then would have been money, power, fame, control, respect. {5M}

…it almost felt like a natural thing to look at them and be like, I want to be those guys…no one wants to hurt those guys…when I was younger, and I seen the way they held themselves, the way they walked, the way that people acknowledged them. {7M}

Seeing how they get their money was like, Oh, wow, they can make $10,000 in a day. I want that. I don't have to work hard in my life. {4M}

Living's not cheap. If I'm waiting at a bus stop and someone pulls up in a nice car with heaps of money and mean rings, and they say, 'What are you up to?' Of course, I'm gonna want to chase that. I'm gonna be like, 'that's what I want'...you're at a young age, I think it's a bit harder because you don't know what you want. {6P}

Getting Out of Poverty

Poverty is a vicious cycle, and for some participants, the gang was seen as the only way to get out of it. For children who have nothing, the lure of easy money is enticing. It came with the ability to provide a desirable lifestyle for themselves and their family. With the idea that men are the providers, there was pressure to be just that.

It comes from poverty, because a lot of our Pacific Islanders and Māori people are in that generational curse where we come from poverty, and then we end up in poverty, and we stay in poverty, and then our kids get it and it just carries on…gangs are the easiest way to escape that, because it comes back to wanting what everybody has, and the best way is to take it, and not work hard for it. It all leads from poverty, which is pretty sad because the percentage of Māori and Pacific Island culture that's in poverty is quite high. {4M}

So it wasn't hard for me to look and be like, I want what they have, that was kind of like, whoa, they got all the money. {7M}

Masculinity Within Gangs

Themes related to masculinity within gangs included: being hard; not showing weakness; having control and dominance, both within gang hierarchy and in relation to women and their treatment; violence, and criminal activity. There was an expectation within the gang that the gang's needs and wishes would come before everything else. If participants didn't live up to their expectations, or broke their rules, there were consequences, such as being beaten, kicked out, and, for one participant, the need to leave the country for safety.

I had to switch back to the hard me. Because they will just run you over. If you show any weakness, they'll just chew on you. You get the mowing lawns and kissing ass all day. You'd be emptying your account because they'd be needing alcohol, bread, whatever…they were always about take, take, take. Want, want, want. Violence in the house. Just drugs, alcohol. {2M}

There's a lot of hidden agendas that you don't see. The deeper you get into the gangs, more comes to light, and then you start understanding that actually I've got to commit either to that life or get out of it, cos it could lead to murders. Taking advantage of vulnerable people or less unfortunate people…I knew jail was part of being a gang member…Drinking hard, doing hard drugs. And showing that you can handle anything. {4M}

That is the number one rule. Gang before girl…100%. Gang over everything. If you want to be in it…it's gang over everything. And I mean, everything. {7M}

That’s [rape of his partner] what led us over to Australia, because if we didn't, if we hadn't of taken it to court, things could have been fine. But then because we took it to court it made our lives a bit harder. {4M}

How Culture Fits in with Views on Masculinity

For both Māori and Pasifika participants, there was a sense of being distant from their own ethnic cultures as they grew up. Reasons included the death of a role model, being sent away, and trying to distance themselves from the violence and gender roles they saw culturally growing up. Some participants noted that gangs strip away ethnic masculine identity and replace it with their own gang cultural identity. Some participants saw contemporary Māori and Pasifika culture itself as including violence and binge drinking that is perpetuated generationally, and accepted as part of their culture today.

But in today's society, especially Polynesians and Māori, protector means let's have a fight. If there are two Polynesians or Māori’s out at a pub with their family having a feed. If one guy bumped into the other guy after a few drinks…it can turn ugly. But that's normal, and then you're gonna obviously protect your family and be like, let’s have a fight. {6P}

Māori Culture and Masculinity

Participants saw abuse and violence perpetrated in their homes and wanted to distance themselves from it, because as children, to them that was what it meant to be part of their culture. Some participants talked about how the lack of their ethnic culture shaped their views on masculinity, and that having access to it may have changed the way they grew up. One participant was told by his grandmother that being Māori was an important part of his identity and something to be proud of, only to later have a gang leader tell him it was worthless. When he joined a gang, another lost his ability to speak te reo Māori that he had grown up with.

I love being Māori, but you know, I see most Māori in jail too. So that's a huge thing for me too…growing up Māori and learning those values was awesome, but that wasn't what I held close to my heart…my people haven't really been there for me. {3M}

Māori wasn't going to get me anywhere. And I kept getting told that, from the captain of the Black Power, 'that's not gonna get you anywhere bro.'… They [gang members] used to take their Māori side and be able to talk about it to their friends and family at home. But as soon as they walk out the door and they're with their gang members, we'll be the Māori battalions, we'll be the Warriors, and we'll go out there and beat every other gang up. That's how our people did it, but they forget that they're fighting their own. It's like a tribal war. {5M}

The masculinity in Māori culture, it's the same as what I do now. It's just showing courage when you need to show it, being the leader for your family, for your whanau. Showing your kids the right way to live…it's unfortunate that back when I was growing up our Māori culture wasn't as out there in the communities that it is now. {4M}

Pasifika Culture and Masculinity

For Pasifika, the gender roles of men and women were carried on from life in the Pacific Islands to life in New Zealand, even one or two generations removed. Violence is also intertwined with religion as part of their ethnic and cultural views.

And over in Sa [Samoa], even in Tokelau, the woman stay home and cook and clean, while the men just go fishing come back and drink. And you can tell that it's here as well. 100%, being a Polynesian and having that…it definitely carried on from the Islands. {6P}

A Samoan church that we've left, we were always getting hidings. Not from just our parents but from the men that we called uncles…that's still happening. Probably not as worse as back then, but it's still happening. Because that's what the culture has always been like. I still see it in our homes, in Pacific Island homes. Because I still got a lot of mates in those houses…most of them are my age [30's], and they still get hidings. It's just those hardcore Samoan families. {8P}

Criminal Justice System Influence: Help or Hinderance?

All eight participants felt that the criminal justice system had let them down. This included some or all of the following: pre-judging them; not encouraging them to change; expecting the worst; allowing the cycle of violence and abuse to fester; being kept in a cell for 23 hours a day. Prison perpetuated and solidified their view of masculinity as needing to be hard, show dominance, and resort to violence. In some prisons, men were divided into gang colours which increased gang affiliation, and reoffending was expected. Prison was a place where new gang members could be recruited. Some of the participants felt judged and stereotyped; not given a chance to change or encouraged to do so.

> *I can't be this person in here [prison], to show these people that I'm weak. I had already made a name for myself. If I was going to be incarcerated I knew for a fact that I couldn't be weak...there was nothing in my head telling me that I needed to fix this to make me become a better man. So I stayed in that mindset of, I have to be hard, I have to stand my ground. {3M}*

> *My first couple of lags*[13] *I used to think it was cool, 'oh I got a charge'...you go in the yard, go and have some fights and try and earn position. There's no position in the jail. There's always going to be somebody that comes in tougher and stronger going to beat you up one day. So I used to take on a lot…we'll just have a fight. We'll bring that gang culture, that prison, that lockup mindset out into the open…I used to think it was me earning my position in the club…I'll recruit my boys from out of jail because they're tough. They know how to deal with being excluded by everyone, or being judged by everyone, because you've got that status of jail. {5M}*

Several participants stated that court and corrections programmes do not work; that those running them do not understand these men, only want the money they get from running them; and that there was a lack of ongoing support after they left prison. One participant cited participation in 35 different corrections programmes, both in and out of prison. Several participants talked about mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation, being made worse through the prison system. One participant had friends who took their own lives. Another participant had tried to commit suicide twice.

[13] Lag in this instance refers to a period spent in prison

I just got smarter at being mischief. I just knew how to bend the rules a bit more really, but it gets a bit long in the tooth dealing with them, the alcohol and drugs classes and all that bullshit…all that violence and all these fucking one on ones that's all shit that doesn't help nothing. And those boys that are running them they don't know shit. They haven't been through the hood. And they're trying to teach us how to deal with it. {2M}

You get told in court that you have to do certain programs to obviously get parole and to gain tools…but I just needed to get it on paper…to show the court system….After I had ticked all the boxes for the court system and the justice system, there was no ongoing support to make me accountable…it was that easy to fall back…that's where I think reoffending is so easy…you've got nobody to support you. {3M}

I reckon it just makes us more determined to reoffend, and that's exactly what I went through. They put all these stuff in place and telling you, this should better yourself. Go through this [program] and I guarantee you should better yourself. But then I just ended up right at the beginning of my dysfunctional cycle. Some of my brothers have died going around and round in circles just because of that. I've lost brothers to suicide. Just because they thought they couldn't escape it. {8P}

Catalysts for Change

As all eight participants have left the gang they were involved with, with one going to Australia to break ties and for the safety of himself and his family, this theme discusses and highlights their reasons for leaving. For some participants, it took several tries to leave, and one participant said that even if he wanted to go back he wouldn't be accepted as he was kicked out and beaten for not being all in. Three subthemes emerged from the data. These were family, prison, and spirituality. All eight participants said they left because they changed how they viewed themselves as men and what masculinity meant to them in their lives. They knew they could no longer be in a gang and live as the men they wanted to be.

Family

All eight participants stated that in some way family had had an impact and was integral to their wanting to leave the gang. This included wanting a better life for their

children and for them not to join a gang, not wanting their wives/partners and children to live in fear, and not wanting their children to be fatherless.

> *…other things happened in the gang which led us to move to Australia and for me to break ties with the gangs because I would have ended up six feet in the ground if I didn't. I had to think about what was best for me and my family…That's when I had to change...Otherwise my kids would have been without mum and dad. And I know what that feels like. So I didn't want that for my kids. {4M}*

> *For me to realize, I actually taught them that. I did that in front of them. I yell, I argue, I get abusive in front of them. I'm teaching them these habits without directly guiding them into the habit…that was quite heartbreaking. So masculinity for me had to be changed, I had to fix that. {7M}*

> *…she [wife] wants it better. I wanted to keep going where I was, but she wants to better and I couldn't live without her and my children. And just watching my kids fear me was a stepping stone. {5M}*

> *Having kids has definitely changed my view on being a man, especially having daughters…I've got three boys. I even got a little brother. I am actually trying to set a massive example for my boys. How to be a gentleman, how to treat women. Work hard, keep clean, be proud of yourself and your surroundings and your house…just don't get tied up with all the bullshit in the areas in the hood. You don't have to have a patch, you don't have to be a [gang] member. You can live mean on your own two feet and it's actually easier. {2M}*

Prison

The effects of being involved in the criminal justice system, which for most participants included time in prison, had a positive effect in changing how they wanted to see themselves and behave as men. As stated in the last theme, this was not due to any criminal justice system (CJS) intervention, but their own realisations about not wanting to go back to prison, be involved in a gang, or live a life of violence and crime any more. This included realising the effect it was having on themselves, and on their physical and mental health, family, and relationships.

The first thing when I went into jail was I hated seeing my name on the tag outside the cell door, because my grandfather was always against violence, gangs and all that type of stuff. He taught me the right way, so that was the big hitter for me. {3M}

And then as my lag went on and on and on, I started waking up, and then just started being respectful to the other prisoners…to prison officers…when I started getting the respect, that made me feel like a man. Completing my drug and alcohol course, that made me feel like a man. Getting told that I'm doing really well. {6P}

Spirituality

Five out of eight participants cited spirituality as a catalyst for change, which included finding a relationship with God, and replacing the community and acceptance they had found within the gang with a Church community; and the support and encouragement of other men who understood the impact and influence that gangs and prison have on masculinity. Being part of a programme that taught them different ways of thinking about themselves as men, and how that plays out in their lives and families, helped them to see their past views on masculinity as dysfunctional and destructive. This led to forming new views of what it means to be a man.

…[I] turned to Christianity and God because I've tried all these other programs, and they weren't getting to the root cause of my dysfunctions and where I had lost my purpose in life and being a man. So finding God…I've never been a godly person, so I thought, I'll give this a shot. I've tried everything else, and we'll see what this fella [Jesus] can do…stepping into this this walk of life has been nothing but a blessing. I've got a family now. I'm married now. I've had no call outs with the police or justice system in the last five years. I'm actually doing programs for the police and running a couple of conventions for them. So it's a full 360 for me, still holding the mana in my heart and realizing it was there all along. I just had to find the right connections to open that again. That's where the religious side of things came in for me, and just finding myself and upholding the values that my grandfather taught me once upon a time. {3M}

But now that I do Man Up[14] *and go to church and stuff, God showed me that you don't have to turn to gangs to learn how to be a man, you can reach out to other people on the good side of life. They can lead you in the right path or lead you to be a good man. {4M}*

I've only really just turned into the person that I am in the last two years. Being drug free, alcohol free…The biggest influence is probably just strong men around me. Knowing that these men have not just come from perfect lives, silver spoon fed, or anything like that, and know that they've had a background like myself, and parents that have been like my own, broken homes like my own and then walking into places like Man Up and [ ]church, has been a lot different. {5M}

Toward a Better Future: Changing the Narrative

Every participant stated the desire to teach the next generation a view of masculinity and what it means to be a man that was different from what they had been taught and had modelled to them. Subthemes derived from the research include: teaching boys to be men; teaching men to father and be better men; and the role that schools can play in helping shape masculinity for boys, especially when they are from at-risk homes.

Influencing The Next Generation

Helping the next generation learn a healthy, functional view of their own and others' masculinity, and not needing to resort to violence, join a gang, or do time in prison was strongly emphasised by all eight participants as being important to teach the next generation. Not only for their own sons, but their children's friends, and other at-risk children in their communities- especially those without fathers, or with negative role models. Two participants mentioned the program Big Brothers and Big Sisters[15] (see Discussion section) as a good community-based mentoring program for children without parents [both were unaware, as was this researcher, that it is still running, having remembered it from our youth in the 90s].

[14] Man Up is a 15 week mentoring program that gives men the tools and encouragement to change their lives and those of their families, by identifying, exposing and understanding the root issues of why men experience dysfunctions.

[15] The Big Brothers Big Sisters New Zealand program (https://www.bigbrothersbigsisters.org.nz/) is part of the largest mentoring program in the world, in partnership with the New Zealand Police.

One participant goes down to the local park with his children and gives their friends and neighbourhood kids rides on his motorbike.

> *I think moulding a child to the way you like is a huge thing if you're in the right sense of mind. You can't do it if you're in a gang…because all your children see is, I want to be a gangster, and the things that a child shouldn't see in those environments. So a huge thing for me is if you can show your children how to be a man and how to be loving and respectful. Those little values will mould their life. {3M}*

> *What I want to do now is go out there and show younger generations how to be a good man…Spending more time with the youth, or young ones, and having Christian groups or even community groups that can show other kids, or like our younger generation, that even if they don't have mum or dad around, there's people out here that can give them that role model…And just show them there's people out here outside the gangs, they can show you the right way. And I want to be one of those people that our youth…can reach out to for leadership. Because I believe without leadership, then they're not going to move from out of poverty. Because I know what it's like coming from poverty into a better life. {4M}*

Teaching Men To Be Fathers

Along with teaching children and youth how to be men, several participants also stated the need they saw for teaching and showing other men a better way to think and behave as men. Then they could raise their sons not to perpetuate the cycle of violence; to see gangs as the answer to the need for family/community, or to get out of poverty; for their daughters not to want to date gang members. There is the desire of some participants to go into prisons and facilitate programmes themselves, because they understand what masculinity is like in a gang and in prison, have come out the other side, and have broken the cycle for themselves and their families.

> *…just coming from a fatherless background, knowing that, it sort of goes back on our Man Up jerseys, 'raising fathers to save our children'. A father can't be a father, if he's just going to be there in and out. Healing a home is going to be more powerful than healing a man and having him just walk away from his family. So for me, something that I will be able to change is being able to get us some time inside that*

prison. Give us a little bit of time to deal with men inside the jails. So that their children don't have to see the jail cells. My children don't. {5M}

I think I had to make a stand for myself as a family man in my own community, because I used to be the drug dealer in the community…having to stand by that now with my family, it shows other men that they can do it too. In time if they see men that have been walking this walk, done the same as me, they get off on it, and they know that they can do it as well. So that's a huge thing for me. If I'm in the right place, and I'm talking the talk and doing what I say, it gives my men that I work with now, just a sense of hope that they can do it too. {3M}

It's more about setting an example now these days. A lot of people look up to me and know me for good shit. I just want to set an example that you can have a good life, and still pull through, run your own business, work hard, stay smiling. And stay fit and just live. I'm trying to push that on heaps of my bro's and each of the bro's in the hood they think they just got it so hard…So I'm just trying to push that message across in my area really. Work hard, stop complaining about it, if you've got a problem sort it out. That's what being a man's about. {2M}

The Role of Schools

One participant talked about the need for schools to teach children that it's okay to have emotions, and how to talk about those emotions in a healthy way. He believes that this would help decrease the youth suicide rate. Planting seeds for the next generation, and those that come after, for a better life, hope for the future, and a sense of identity and self-worth, was reiterated throughout the interviews. Teachers have an opportunity to step into the gap left by a dysfunctional home life.

Schools normalizing speaking freely about your emotions. Communicating, if you're not sure, because you don't know what you don't know. At school they want to teach us English, maths and whatnot. There has to be something there that can help the next generation in the real terms of becoming a man…I seriously believe that there would be less suicide rate if that was that was the key. You can sit there and know your maths and know your English, but you cannot sit there being depressed, and not knowing what to do. Like what do you do if you don't know what to do? So if you're

sitting there and you're about to kill yourself, oh, well what should I do? I don't know because I wasn't taught that in primary school…I wish that before I've got diagnosed with depression and anxiety, I had better tools to handle it…if schools could…plant seeds. If the world can start planting seeds for the next generation of what a true and meaningful man is, in not too much of masculinity with violence is the virtue, where violence is the key. {6P}

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The intention of this research was to explore links between the views Māori and/or Pasifika men who have been involved in a gang and the criminal justice system, had on their own and others' masculinity. The questions of how the participants define masculinity, what it means to them to be a man, and whether these views were likely to contribute to the decisions they made to become associated with gangs and the criminal justice system, were looked into. It was hypothesised that there were similarities in how men from these cultural groups define masculinity, what they believe it means to be a man, how and where they learned these ideas, and how it has impacted their lives and choices. This was done using constructivist grounded theory methodology and semi-structured interviews of eight participants to collect data (Charmaz, 2021). From the data analysis, several themes emerged, which were outlined along with excerpts from the participants in the results section of this research.

The key findings of this research were related to how participants viewed masculinity, leading to their gang and criminal justice system involvement; the role of role models in shaping these views; how they view masculinity in their lives now; and what they would teach the next generation that was different from how they were taught to be men.

Masculinity studies in general focus on hegemonic, metro-sexuality, and toxic masculinity from a Western psychology perspective, and do not include Indigenous or marginalised men (Harrington, 2021; Traister, 2000; Waling, 2019). While the current literature analyses Maori and/or Pasifika men in light of mental health, colonialism/immigration, the impacts of sport, and the idea of a natural warrior (Hokowhitu, 2004; 2007; 2008), there is a lack of research on masculinity in relation to Māori and/or Pasifika men who have been involved in gangs and the criminal justice system in New Zealand.

The results derived from the data in the form of themes and subthemes will be linked back to the literature review. The hypothesis and aims of the study will be reviewed in light of the data, and conclusions will be drawn as to their legitimacy. This will potentially be a contribution to the field of Indigenous and Pasifika masculinity in New Zealand, specifically those with gang and criminal justice system involvement.

The questions of how the participants in this research define masculinity and what it means to them to be men will be discussed, relating to the themes/subthemes found. These

are: *masculinity in real life*, including revisiting hegemony, toxic masculinity and violence, culture and colonisation, and the sportsman/warrior position; *how views on masculinity influence reasons for joining a gang*, including the need to belong, fatherlessness, and financial security; *the impacts of role models*, specifically in childhood, including the effects of violence and abuse; *the future generation*, including why participants left the gang life and how they see masculinity in their lives now, being a role model for boys, teaching men to father, and the role of schools. It will end with a section on limitations of the current study and recommendations for future directions.

Masculinity In Real Life

The permissibility and perpetuation of violence, the treatment of women and children, the need to be seen as hard, strong, staunch, not showing weakness or crying, being dominant and in charge, along with binge drinking and drug use, were all strong sub-themes of masculinity found in this research in the lives of all eight participants. Some of what was found through the interviews and discussed in the results section reflect the current literature. However, some of it differs and/or does not line up with past research. This will be discussed in the next section. The following sub-topics reflect those covered in the literature review, linking the results of this study back to the research.

Hegemonic Dispositions

Although hegemonic masculinity is traditionally seen as that of the dominant population of a country, usually of Western orientation, research has shown that minority populations can view their own as being dominant even though culturally they may be seen as subordinate (Coles, 2009). This was seen with the participants of this research, where they saw their own masculine views and behaviours as normal and enacted by all those in their social sphere. They used their own masculinities to show dominance over other men in their social/familial spheres, and also over women, which is consistent with the definition of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1997; Abacioglu, 2021).

The idea of multiple dominant masculinities posited by Coles (2009) fits with the findings of this study and the experiences of the men interviewed. While Western masculinity is seen by many as dominant in NZ, the participants viewed their masculine ideal as being dominant. This was especially true within gang and prison culture, showing that multiple dominant masculinities can co-exist in society, and groups of men may be unaware that any other form of masculinity exists. Literature is moving away from the concept of a single

masculine ideal and gender stereotypes of the past, instead taking into account culture, race, class differences, life experiences, and differing views on masculinity (Coles, 2009; Reecer, 2015). This is seen through the participants' talk of levels of hierarchy within gangs and in prisons, and the need to prove dominance over others. Even within these population groups, different understandings of masculinity are found, depending, as per Coles (2009), on resources, relationships and their concepts of what legitimate masculinity entails.

Violence and Toxic Masculinity Intertwining

The American Psychological Association classes violence in men as a toxic trait, part of an extreme form of traditional masculinity (Salter, 2019). When it comes to toxic masculinity, many of the traits ascribed to the recently formed term, such as misogyny, self-entitlement, aggression, and violence, were seen in the participants' views on masculinity. Masculinity to the participants involved violent behaviours, from domestic, to gang and prison dominance, gaining status through violent behaviours. Although toxic masculinity has not been shown to be the cause of violent behaviours, this research agrees with Kupers' (2005) research on men in prison, showing that prison brings out the toxic aspects of masculinity, but that it stems from the wider cultural context where it is already present (Salter, 2019).

For the participants of this study, childhood abuse/neglect, poverty, fatherlessness, and gang influence in their homes and communities contributed to their views on violence as part of what it means to be a man. This was then exacerbated through the prison environment where violence was used as self-protection and to prove dominance. Psychologists have found that a lack of fathering may lead men to prove themselves through toxic masculine traits such as violence, which can be seen within the discourses of the participants of this study (Biddulph, 1997; Pitman, 1993).

As discussed in the literature review, the term toxic masculinity is often used to refer to marginalised men and can be used to form individualising discourses for rehabilitative purposes (Harrington, 2021). This is reflected in the participants’ view of engaging in multiple programmes. Experiences from most participants in the study reported that programmes did not work for them, and they felt they were more about ticking boxes than a programme to support their desistance from further offending. The concept of toxic masculinity is appealing to explain gendered violence, especially within certain populations, such as marginalised and/or Indigenous cultural spheres. However, masculinity is not itself toxic. Understanding the root causes of how masculinity is played out in toxic forms, such as

aggression, sexism, violence, drug and alcohol use, or even emotional detachment and the need to be seen as tough and not showing weakness, as discussed by the participants in this research, is needed to enact change. These are traits that lead to gang membership, offending behaviour, and criminal justice system associations. Recognising the differences in learned behaviours and lived experiences for individual men is important to understand the roots of toxic masculine traits (Salter, 2019).

Culture and Colonisation

None of the Māori and/or Pasifika participants saw their ethnic culture as forming their views on masculinity, or of being a large part of their lives. When asked about masculinity in relation to their culture, ethnic culture was not referred to first. The participants understood culture to predominantly mean the gang, Church/spirituality, and/or a culture of violence. New Zealand culture in general was referred to as including binge drinking and violence.

While academic research refers to the concept of colonisation and/or migration as shaping masculine ideals through the suppression of culture in various ways (Hokowhitu, 2007; Rodriguez et al, 2015), this was not seen in the experiences of these men. As there were only eight participants in this study, not meaning to undermine in any way what is a reality for many Māori and/or Pasifika men, this research did not find that the participants' native masculine identity had been subjugated by the dominant culture through colonisation, as Hokowhitu (2007) posits.

It may be true that Māori and Pasifika men did originally form gangs in the past (1960s and ‘70s)[16] in part as a form of protest against their mistreatment and the quashing of their cultures (Newbold & Taonui, 2020), but it was not found in this research that any of the participants joined a gang or engaged in criminal activities as acting out against colonialism. However, this could be because they are unaware of how masculinity was portrayed in pre-colonial NZ. As Hokowhitu (2007) says, the suppression of Māori epistemologies (where mental, emotional, spiritual and physical traits were given equal importance), may have led to dysfunctional Māori masculinities being formed. The emphasis placed on them in a post-colonised NZ as hyper-masculine could have shaped masculinity to such an extent that it is now seen as normal (Hokowhitu, 2007). In light of this concept, the unawareness of the

[16] NZ Europeans also formed gangs at this time, including white supremacist such as the United Skinheads and White Power, and motorbike gangs such as Head Hunters and Highway 61. This was partly due to rising unemployment and a worsening economy (Newbold & Taonui, 2020).

internalisation over decades of what normal masculinity was for Māori and Pasifika could explain the participants in this research not thinking culture, or their understanding of it, had much to do with their views on masculinity. Future research in this area is needed and would be valuable in adding to how culture, or lack of it, influences men's concepts of masculinity.

The Warrior/Sportsman Revisited

Although the Warrior depiction described by Hokowhitu (2004) was not explicitly mentioned by participants, the ideas involved with this concept were. This is embodied through hypermasculinity, as either the sportsman or Warrior archetype. The Warrior identity is portrayed predominantly through violence, embodying traits of physical and sexual violence, physical intimidation, and being silent and staunch, often leading to criminal behaviours (Hokowhitu, 2004). Whether played out in sport, as much of the research suggests, or in more dysfunctional ways, as seen through research into gangs by Rodriguez et al. (2015), the main tenets were seen in this study.

For the Pasifika men this involved growing up with violence, with men as dominant and decision-makers, and women being subjugated (Rankine et al., 2015). For Māori, it was pride in being tough, staunch, or hard. All participants had a desire to be seen as strong men, without weakness, and in charge of their lives and families. This was played out in dysfunctional ways before and during gang life, such as perpetrating violence and the need to show dominance. It can be seen in their post-gang associations as being defenders of their women and children, setting a good example, and providing for them. Participants mentioned starting fights while in public for no reason other than to show dominance, or having an 'us and them' mentality, as if they were warriors enacting tribal wars in pre-colonial times.

Despite numerous studies on sport as being pushed on Māori and Pasifika youth and men as a masculine ideal (Hokowhitu, 2004; Jackson and Hokowhitu, 2002; Rodriguez et al, 2015), none of the participants mentioned sport as an alternative option, as part of natural warrior tendencies, or as an alternative to joining a gang. The idea that the Warrior moniker is played out either in sport or with the alternative being a gangbanger did not come up in this research. There is the possibility that research showing sport and spirituality are intertwined in Pasifika culture (Rodriguez, 2011) was not found in this research as none of the Pasifika participants had a religious upbringing. Sport was also not mentioned as a way to ensure financial security for their families, a way out of poverty, or a way to bring pride to their communities (Rodriguez et al., 2015). This was predominantly viewed as being achieved through gang association.

Why Join A Gang?

This research found that men join gangs for various reasons. The primary reason was the desire to find a place to belong within a new community and whānau. This was a unanimous finding with all eight participants. One reason this was the case was that they lacked identity as a man. As several participants stated, how they saw themselves as men and their concepts of masculinity were dysfunctional. Their ideas of dysfunctions included the need for dominance and control, lack of showing emotion and/or vulnerability, selfishness, and violence. This is consistent with the literature on negative masculine ideals around cognitions and behaviours in masculine identity (American Psychological Association, 2018; Harrington, 2021; Hokowhitu, 2007; Kupers, 2005; Salter, 2019). Other reasons for seeking out a gang community were a lack of positive role models in forming masculine identity, and to get out of poverty.

Despite current research in New Zealand finding that Māori and Pasifika join gangs for reasons to do predominantly with cultural dispossession, social exclusion, colonialism, racism, marginalisation, and abusive state policies (Newbold & Taonui, 2020; Rodriguez 2011), this research did not find these to be factors for why men joined gangs. When asked about culture in relation to masculinity, most participants talked about gang culture as opposed to their ethnic identity. Rodriguez (2011) found a dominant paradigm for ethnic gang affiliation, bringing cultural identity, security and a sense of belonging. It could be that participants were unaware that their dissociation from their ethnic culture was part of their choice to join a gang. This idea fits in with the need to belong to a community. If there is a lack of cultural cohesion, joining a gang fills that gap in Māori and Pasifika men's lives (Kisby, 2019).

Participants stated that gang culture superseded their ethnic cultural backgrounds. Some of the Māori participants talked about how their culture was not as prevalent in their communities as it is now, and in some places, they were told not to speak te reo. Although te reo Māori became an official language of New Zealand in 1989 (having been banned in 1867), a curriculum for being taught in school was not developed until 2009 (Ka'ai-Mahuta, 2011; Ministry of Education, n.d.), at which stage the participants of this research would have left school. Although some were taught by grandparents, they were later told it would not get them anywhere in life. For Pasifika, there was an intertwining of culture and Church, which included violence (Horton, 2012), and they talked about their culture as being back in the Islands and not part of their lives in New Zealand.

Despite research by Singh et al. (2011) positing that Western risk factors for men joining gangs are unlikely to translate to other cultures and/or Indigenous/minority populations, this research disagrees somewhat with their findings. Many of the same statistically proven risk factors and reasons for increased violence and criminal behaviours, leading to gang and criminal justice system involvement, pointed out in research by Shepherd and Ilalio (2016) with Māori and Pasifika men, were clearly seen in this research. These are generally categorised into five developmental domains: family, peer group, school, individual, and community (Bacchini et al., 2020; Howell & Egley Jr, 2005). Some of the main risk factors seen with the men in this study included historical: past violence/abuse, early exposure to crime, criminal caregivers; environmental factors: peer influences, lack of education, gang community influences; personal attitudes and behaviours: learned views surrounding violence and women, anger problems, willingness to commit crime, and substance use (Shepherd & Ilalio, 2016).

Although much of the research on risk factors and/or reasons men join gangs surrounds youth gang membership, research has also shown youth gang membership translates into adult gang membership (Daniels, 2022). As the participants of this study were associated with a gang from adolescence (and in some instances childhood through family and community associations), with many joining before they became adults, it becomes important to understand why youth initially join gangs. Risk factors found internationally, across multiple ethnicities and socio-economic populations in a number of studies and meta-analyses include: living in an area with gang activity, family gang involvement, exposure to violence in childhood, lack of positive role models, divorced parents, or to make money (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2017; Gilman et al., 2014; Higginson et al., 2018; Muller, 2013). Many of these were mentioned by multiple participants as reasons for joining a gang.

The Belongingness Deficit

"As a human species, we share one thing in common: our need to belong. When that need is not met, we can see a devastating effect on the human psyche" (Allen, 2021, p.xiii). According to Allen (2021), belonging begins at birth and informs every developmental milestone. A sense of belonging is especially important for adolescents. Not belonging, or rejection, as a pre-teen and adolescent, can have a detrimental effect on identity development and decision-making processes. Participants of this study cited childhood abuse, rejection/abandonment, and relational issues (familial and partner) as reasons for the need to

find a place to belong, turning to a gang family to fill that space. One participant felt that living on the street was more welcoming than his family of origin, having been ‘whanaued out’ and abused by other relatives, on top of rejection by his mother. This led directly to his joining a gang. Ethnographic research by Eggleston (2000) on NZ youth gangs confirms that Māori and Pasifika youth join gangs predominantly to belong when they do not find it within their whanau.

There is a proliferation of research worldwide that shows one of the main reasons boys and men join gangs is to belong (Curry, 2004; Eggleston, 2000; Muller, 2013; Regan, 1996). Finding a community and new family who will value and support them was found in this research to be the main reason all participants chose to become involved in a gang. Lack of family cohesion, childhood abuse, and abandonment all played a role. Newbold and Taonui (2020) have said that the core role of the gang is friendship, brotherhood, community life and meaning, which was described by several of the participants in this study. Unsure of their identity as men, they sought to define masculinity through finding a new community to be part of.

It has been proposed that young men join gangs to find a surrogate family and provide a sense of belonging, along with power, control and prestige, which were all lacking in their childhood and adolescence. A study in the US showed that men joined gangs so they wouldn’t be alone, to gain a sense of identity, and for protection, which they did not get from other relationships and life experiences (Muller, 2013). These are the same as reasons stated in the interviews with the men in this study. Maslow (1971) said that maladjustment in society could be traced back to the failure of humans to fulfil the basic need to belong. Gang culture can offer what men feel is lacking in their lives, offering a sense of belonging normally associated with family, especially in the absence of a patriarchal role model (Curry, 2004). The gang view of masculinity also aligned with the participants' learned cognitions surrounding what it means to be a man, which contributed to their sense of finding a community/surrogate family they could fit in with.

The Fatherlessness Factor

The negative impacts of absentee fathers in childhood cannot be ignored with all the research on the subject internationally, including NZ (Baskerville, 2004; Mitchell, 2022; Morgan, 2004; Parker, 2012.) Fatherlessness has been shown to be associated with poverty, material hardship, unemployment, abuse and neglect, substance use, worse physical and mental health outcomes including depression and suicidality, and criminal offending

(Mitchell, 2022; Parker, 2012). Twenty-five years ago the NZ government cited fatherlessness as the primary reason for declining child well-being (New Zealand Government, 1999). Although not all participants were lacking a father in their formative years, many were, and they reiterated the fact that it was partly responsible for their decision to join a gang, both to find a new family and for male role models. They mentioned deficits in their masculine ideals from lack of father input in their formative years, and the search to find what was missing in the wrong places.

This lines up with much of the research on the topic. Although abusive fathers and other male role models also cause a deficit in masculine identity, fatherlessness ranks higher than any other cause for increased criminal activity and violence, even when accounting for poverty and educational deficits (Baskerville, 2004; Parker, 2012), all of which resonated with the men in this research.

NZ has the highest rates of births outside of marriage in the developed world, with Māori children most likely to experience fatherlessness. Some research suggests grandfathers and uncles can step into the role of a father, especially for young Māori (Mitchell, 2022). This can have both positive and negative effects, as seen in this research where participants with close family members with gang association followed in their footsteps, and those raised by Grandfathers had a more positive upbringing and example of masculinity. Research has also shown that children are three times more likely to suffer abuse in a house where their mother has a boyfriend/partner who is not the children's biological father, which was also talked about by some participants, including these 'step-fathers' being gang members (Mitchell, 2022; Whelan, 1994).

Almost all major pathologies have been linked to fatherlessness for boys, including violent crime, drug and alcohol abuse, and gang involvement, more than any other factor, including poverty and race differences (Baskerville, 2004; Parker, 2012). The majority of prisoners, including juvenile detention centres, murderers and rapists, come from fatherless homes (Baskerville, 2004), and fatherless men are twice as likely to end up in prison (Parker, 2012). With such high rates of fatherlessness in NZ, especially among Māori, the effects on children need to be taken into account. They can be seen in this research through participants' stories of childhood abuse, the perpetuation of violence, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, depression and suicidality, and criminal activities ending in prison. This is congruent with NZ findings by Morgan (2004) on the consequences of family breakdown, and the more recent report by Mitchell (2022). Although covering all NZ children, both mentioned the detrimental effects for Māori and Pasifika as being pronounced.

Money, Money, Money

Money is a big motivator for most people in the world. Coming from a background of poverty makes the gaining of it even more desirable. Gang membership is seen as a way to get easy money, as the participants in this study said. Research internationally shows a strong correlation between poverty and gang membership, for both youth and adult men, and this most often includes criminal activity with the outcome of criminal justice system association and prison (Baskerville, 2004; Mitchell, 2022; Morgan, 2004; Parker, 2012). It can almost be equated to living out a fantasy, with the lure of a glamorous lifestyle portrayed by older gang members (Muller, 2013).

Lack of education resulting in no qualifications and a low skill base, combined with a fatalistic attitude toward work ethos prompts young men to become involved in a gang (Curry, 2004). Coming from a lower socio-economic background in a poorer area of New Zealand (both urban and rural) and seeing gang members in the neighbourhood with flash cars, gold jewellery, and money to burn, along with the masculine and cultural ideals that real men are providers, the natural progression for participants of this study was gang association to be like those men. This is seen to provide them with an opportunity to earn the money, cars, clothing, alcohol and drugs that they equate with success, and enable them to provide a better lifestyle for themselves and their families (Curry, 2004; Eggleston, 2000). However, the participants also said that although financial security was a strong motivator, they did not have aspirations toward the criminal aspects of gang life, but it was more that they were forced into it as part of being a member of the gang (Ebensen & Huizing, 1993; Hesketh and Robinson 2019; O'Brien et al., 2013).

Teaching Boys To Be Men

The influence of role models teaching concepts of masculinity in early childhood was found to be directly related to all eight participants joining a gang and becoming involved in the criminal justice system. Violence was normalised in early identity formation and is directly related to joining a gang and acting out violence within the gang and in prison. The largest influence in forming their views on masculinity were male role models, especially fathers and/or father figures, with mothers and friends playing a much lesser role.

The Role Model Effect

Lack of general, or dysfunctional, family support systems, for example, some of the participants having divorced parents, experiencing the death of a close family member, and/or being sent away from their nuclear family, has been shown by researchers to be a common trait of gang members (Bracki et al., 1997). According to Pleck (2010), fathers play an essential role in child development, especially for boys, as a male role model to establish their masculine identity. Divorce is a high indicator in multiple studies of adolescent prison populations who had gang membership. Many gang members have been abused by fathers or father figures while growing up, including physically and psychologically (Bracki et al., 1997). Most of the participants of this study mentioned the well-documented negative influences of role models and/or role model deficits, including parental divorce, abandonment and/or abuse by a father, abuse from father figures and/or older gang members, and abuse from one or both parents.

In two studies ten years apart by researchers Lowery and Kline from completely different gang populations (geographically, ethnically, and socio-economically), they found evidence that adult role models, particularly males, are lacking in the lives of those who join gangs. There is a clear connection in previous literature between negative male role models and/or the absence of positive male role models and the desire to join a gang (Bracki et al., 1997). This research concurs with the experiences of all eight participants surrounding the negative influence of role models in forming their masculine ideals and contributing to their decision to join a gang.

For several participants the roles of protector, provider, decision maker and disciplinarian were all masculine behaviours they saw modelled in childhood and carried through to their own adult lives and relationships, in line with research by Mataira (2008). This research found that being around other gang members in childhood and adolescence shaped views on masculinity and the desire to join a gang.

The Violence/Abuse Perpetration

Cognitions around masculinity and the outworking of them are manifested in childhood though psychological structures formed (Mataira, 2008). Violence is a modelled behaviour, and childhood violence and trauma are a cycle that is perpetuated generationally. One way this is seen is through gang members having been found to be highly aggressive due to the influence of authoritarian fathers (Bracki et al., 1997). Two of the Pasifika participants mentioned their violent behaviours were in part due to this, where what their father said was

law and violence was equated to parental love. All participants talked about seeing violence enacted in their early lives, and how this shaped their masculine ideals in their formative years.

In a multi-country literature review and targeted study on men and violence by the United Nations across Asia-Pacific, they found that children who witness abuse between their parents were more likely to perpetrate violence as adults (Fulu et al., 2017). Abuse includes emotional and neglect, physical and sexual, and seeing others being abused. Their study found that men who experience childhood emotional abuse and neglect have an increased risk of perpetration of rape, intimate partner violence, and sexual assault, as well as abusing their own children. Perpetrating intimate partner violence was found to be associated with men witnessing their own mothers being abused and their own childhood abuse. The same was found for violence/abuse being perpetrated against their own children (Fulu et al., 2017). Participants in the current research experienced abuse and neglect, and several witnessed their mothers being abused. In their adult lives they then perpetrated violence against their own partners, including intimate partner violence and rape, and against their children in the form of neglect, and both psychological and physical violence.

The Friendship Connection

Risk factors for joining a gang include the influence of peers, but in most research, this is a smaller factor than childhood abuse/neglect, parental divorce/fatherlessness, socio-economic factors, the need to belong, living in a gang community, and financial security (Glesmann et al., 2009; Hautala et al., 2016;). Risk factors have been found to compound, including involvement with delinquent peers (Gilman et al., 2014; Glesmann et al., 2009) This research did not agree with past research that peer influence on gang membership is a major risk factor for gang membership (Gilman et al., 2014; Hautala et al., 2016). It was found not to be a dominant reason the participants of this study joined a gang. The impact of friends on the decision to join a gang was peripheral for all participants. Most of the influence friends had was minor and solidified their decision of gang involvement.

Where the influence for participants was most impactful was if they had relatives their age who were also friends who joined a gang (e.g., Uncles their own age), they became friends with gang prospects and that tipped their decision to also join the gang (through the need to belong), or they made friends within the gang and that met their need for community and belonging. This is in line with research on peer relationships in the cases of abuse and

neglect in childhood, where relationships with their peers become critical to their sense of well-being.

Research shows that juvenile offending has been directly linked to deviant peer associations. A longitudinal study in NZ (Fergusson & Horwood, 1996) found that negative childhood issues were directly related to later delinquent peer relationships, which in turn encouraged offending behaviours. This was later backed up by another NZ longitudinal study (Fergusson & Horwood, 1999; Fergusson et al., 2002). Youth most at risk of forming deviant peer affiliations and committing juvenile offences were those with childhood experiences of low family SES, parental conflict, negative child/mother interactions, parental alcoholism, drug use, and criminal offending (Fergusson & Horwood, 1999). Abused and neglected children have problematic peer relations at disproportionately high rates, as seen with several of the participants forming friendships with gang (or future gang) members, influencing their decision to also join gangs in order to find community, stability, belonging, and gaining an identity, which they did not in find in childhood (Institute of Medicine, 2014).

The Criminal Justice System (CJS) Let-Down

Recidivism of both reoffending and prison time are high internationally, and New Zealand is no exception, with one of the highest recidivism rates (Ministry of Justice, 2023). Statistics from 21 countries assessed reported re-arrest rates of 26%-60%, reconviction of 20%-63%, and reimprisonment between 14%-45% (Yukhnenko et al., 2020). NZ recidivism rates at 2 years are 70%, with a 49% re-imprisonment rate (Ministry of Justice, 2023). All participants had had multiple CJS associations, from arrests to short-term jail stays, remand, and multiple prison sentences.

With such high rates of recidivism in NZ, helping offenders to find their identity in relation to how they see themselves as men, and the outworking of their masculine ideals, could be a key to changing their cognitions and behaviours (Andrews et al., 1990). Several meta-analyses have shown some programmes do work, specifically those targeting cognitions such as cognitive behavioural therapy, and those aiming to reduce risk factors associated with reoffending (Allen et al., 2001; Andrews et al., 1990; Lipsey et al., 2007).

However, a meta-analysis by Beaudry and colleagues (2021) found that despite some smaller limited studies showing some success with prison-based programs, when larger studies were included they were overall found to be ineffective in helping prisoners. The study was primarily based on psychological interventions to reduce recidivism. What was found, and what the participants of this study also said, was that for men’s lives to change in

any real, meaningful way there needs to be continuation of care in community settings, and new treatments developed should focus on addressing modifiable risk factors for offending (Beaudry et al., 2021). On their website, Ara Poutama Aotearoa (Department of Corrections, claim these programs do work, specifically Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). However, they go on to say that 38% of those treated in prison and 38% in community-based programmes are reconvicted and that "treating them has been an inefficient use of resources" (Department of Corrections, n.d., para. 8).

Depression and suicidal ideation were also talked about by the men in this study as worsening through CJS experiences, especially through the prison system. Mental health problems in prison are a risk factor for a range of negative outcomes, including self-harm. Not much is known about which psychological treatments work, as they may not be generalisable to a prison population given the individual characteristics of prisoners, and there are difficulties that arise from treatment delivery in this setting (Yoon et al., 2017). In a meta-analysis of psychological prison treatments, focusing specifically on depression and anxiety, medium effect sizes were found, with mindfulness training and CBT having the largest effect. However, at 3-6 month follow-up they were not sustained. One recommendation is for more specialised and targeted treatments that take individuals into account (Yoon et al., 2017).

What participants in this study found was that the CJS, and especially time in prison, actually solidified their views of masculinity learned from role models and exacerbated through gang involvement. The views of masculinity within a gang, that of violence, domination, being hard and showing no weakness, were perpetuated and solidified through CJS experiences. One participant said he cried every night of his first time in prison, but hid it for fear of being seen as weak. As more than one participant said, if you don't want to be beaten up, you have to beat people up. Research generally agrees that prison is a place that promotes hypermasculinity, especially violence (Symkovych, 2023). Dr Armon Tamatea of Waikato University is leading a research team to reduce violence in NZ prisons, which has dramatically increased over the last decade, in line with gang recruitment (The University of Waikato, 2021). He states that there are around 9,000 violent incidents and approximately 130 serious assaults a year, which is a serious problem in our CJS that needs to change.

Change and the Future

How the participants see themselves as men now and their concepts of masculinity are completely different from what they were taught by male role models, the views they formed in childhood and adolescence, and how it was enacted within gang culture and in a prison setting. This study has shown that participants want to change their perceptions and behaviours related to understanding masculinity so that it deters them from gang association and criminal activity. Although only one participant explicitly mentioned schools having a responsibility to teach children the right ways to think and behave, research backs this up as a strategic key to fill in gaps left by family dysfunction/neglect and/or lack of positive role models (Gass & Laughter, 2015; Sharkey et al., 2011).

Changing Circumstances

All eight participants in the research came to view their concepts of masculinity learned in childhood and played out as violence against their families, within a gang, and in prison, as dysfunctional. For most of them, this was during or after getting out of prison. Reasons they decided to make changes in their lives and leave the gang were primarily to benefit, or not to lose, their wives/partners and children. Other reasons included not wanting to go back to prison or commit crime, and finding spirituality.

There is not much literature currently on why men leave gangs, but what there is suggests there is no one reason, but multiple (Pyrooz & Decker, 2011; Tamatea, 2015; Tonks & Stephenson, 2019). Reasons for leaving a gang have been found to be complex and not due to one pivotal moment in the gang member's life. A meta-analysis of current literature using a multi-database search by Tonks and Stephenson (2019) found that the main reasons for gang desistance included members maturing out of the gang, dying, going to prison, gaining employment, or leaving as a result of the gang disbanding. None of these reasons were found in this research, although one participant did say that his family tried to tell him that he had 'just gotten older' but he disagreed with that reasoning. Employment for some participants was a by-product of leaving, but not the reason for leaving. Conversely, the opposite of going to prison as a reason to disengage from the gang was that some participants used prison to solidify gang loyalty and recruit other gang members. The disconnect between this research and prior literature could be that there is a lack of research on gang desistance in the New Zealand setting, and Indigenous and minority populations tend to be more collectivist, and therefore family-focused, than Western/European populations, who are individualistic.

Research that does line up with the participants in this study's reasons for leaving the gang includes an association between disengaging and external circumstances (Berger et al., 2016), such as having a positive family role model (Carson et al., 2013; Decker et al., 2014), marriage (Sampson & Laub, 1993), parenthood (Fleisher & Krienert, 2004), renewed faith (Giordano, 2010) and a general change in life circumstances (MacRae-Krisa, 2013). Two participants left partly due to victimisation, which is a well-researched reason for gang desistance (Berger, et al., 2017; Pyrooz et al., 2010) One participant had to move to Australia due to death threats, and another was beaten for not being able to completely commit to the gang ethos. Growing weary of violence was also a reason the participants in this study cited for leaving (Leverso & Matsueda, 2019).

As with the participants in this study, who felt that the compulsory and voluntary courses of the criminal justice system had no impact on them, Decker and Lauritsen (2002) found that criminal justice system involvement does not have an influence on gang exit reasoning. Goodwill's (2009) study on Aboriginal Canadian gang members reasons for leaving the gang is closely related to those of the Māori and Pasifika men in this research[17]. They include accepting responsibility for family and acknowledging consequences of gang involvement; the desire to stay out of jail; avoiding alcohol; opportunities to help others in the same situation; and accepting support from partner/family.

As well as external factors, internal thought processes are needed along with the opportunity to affect change (Tonks & Stephenson, 2019). Cognitive transformation, where shifts in cognition change gang members perspectives, are crucial to gang disengagement. External factors, which are often a catalyst, bring about the cognitive changes necessary to successfully leave the gang (MacRae-Krisa, 2013). Changing their cognitive views on what masculinity meant to them and how it should be enacted was also found for all participants, and was a key to leaving the gang life and staying out.

Although spirituality is not high on the list internationally for why men leave the gang life behind, religion has been recognised as a successful way to complete gang desistance (Bolden, 2013; Rosen & Cruz, 2019). This is especially successful in negotiating gang exit in religious countries and/or with religious ethnicities. This makes sense in the context of Māori and Pasifika and in a New Zealand setting. Firstly, NZ is still predominantly a Christian Western nation, founded by missionaries (post-whalers) and our national anthem is a

[17] The effects of colonisation of Canada by the English and French with First Nations Indigenous peoples closely mirrors that of New Zealand Māori and Pacific Island nations.

testament to this (Scroppe, 2023). There has been a recent increase in the use of *karakia* (Māori prayer) or similar Pacific Island prayers at the beginning and end of meetings. Taking that fact, along with high religious freedom (Scroppe, 2023) and Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pasifika world views that incorporate spirituality into overall well-being as part of their cultures (both in New Zealand and for Pasifika in the Islands) (Mark & Lyons, 2010; Kingi-Ulu'ave et al., 2016; Williams & Cleland, 2016), it is not surprising that five out of eight participants cited spirituality as a major catalyst for leaving behind their gang associations. Just as gangs filled in the need for belonging that family did not for these men, Church communities have been shown to do the same (Tonks & Stephenson, 2019).

Flipping the Role Model Deficit

In early childhood, the central nervous system is developing rapidly and this is when attitudes and habits are formed (Spatz Widom, 1998). Lack of positive role models is detrimental to children in general, but for those in violent and/or abusive homes, living in houses and/or communities with gang involvement, they often have trouble relating to adults and desperately need responsible adult role models (Mullis, 1997). It becomes a cycle where they see joining a gang as their only future, a way to fill the need to belong and an easy way to get the material possessions they want. This was talked about by several of the participants, where the gang became the family they did not have growing up; a substitute father for some; and a way to provide for themselves, and later on their partner and children.

In 2014, 6,000 to 7,000 NZ children had a gang member as a parent, not counting those whose other family members were, or their mothers' partners (RNZ, 2016). This normalises being part of a gang for boys. Some will grow up to see it as the natural, or even only, option for their lives, as happened with several of the participants of this research.

Interventions, even those that work, tend to be reactive and focused on treatment services, as opposed to more proactive preventative measures aimed at reducing the risk factors that lead to gang membership and violence (Spatz Widom, 1998). These need to be applied early, when children are more open to change, and before their cognitions and behaviours have solidified (Mullis, 1997; Spatz Widom, 1998). Much of the sentiment expressed in the literature over the last few decades does agree that there is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to childhood interventions to prevent children joining gangs, but that risk factors need to be evaluated and minimised individually (Spatz Widom, 1998). However, none of these intervention programs specifically change the way these boys think about themselves as future men, and how this will play out in their lives. Given the results of this

research, it is an extremely important area that needs to be taken note of when forming future intervention strategies.

Participants talked about showing boys they don't need to be part of a gang, that they can be successful and financially stable, by setting an example through their own lives. Teaching boys how to be loving and respectful, and how to treat women was a strong sentiment expressed. If a boy is physically abused and thinks it is love, then he will perpetuate that behaviour, as seen with several of the participants in their adult lives with their own families.

In an ideal world, we would see an end to fatherlessness, and all children living in healthy environments where their parents give them everything they need to thrive. Until then, mentoring programs have been shown to be successful internationally (Aere, 2022; Mullis, 1997). Two participants mentioned them as a successful way to show children that even if they don't have a mum and/or dad, they can still have a good role model, that there are people outside the gangs that can support and encourage them, and teach them to be men with a healthy view of their own and others masculinity. The Big Brothers Big Sisters New Zealand program (https://www.bigbrothersbigsisters.org.nz/) is part of the largest mentoring program in the world, in partnership with the NZ Police, has been running since the 1990s and is successful in mentoring at-risk 6 to 12-year-olds.

Part of the problem in New Zealand is the disconnect between agencies, and the lack of communication, where at-risk children are falling through the cracks (Oranga Tamariki, 2022; Pullon et al., 2015). But as it starts in the home, home life is also where it needs to change. And that comes down to attitudes and beliefs before it becomes action. As the participants said, they learnt masculinity and violent behaviours through their early childhood role models, who had the most influence, and it is up to them to teach boys how to be men. One participant said he was trying to not only teach his sons a better way to live than to join a gang, but also his younger brothers. Another talked about teaching communication to his partner's son, including how to respect his mother. It was reiterated by more than one participant that they did not want their own sons to emulate them and join a gang, or end up in prison, so their own behaviours needed to change first to set an example. Given the research question of whether views on masculinity lead to gang and CJS involvement, what the participants said in relation to the importance of teaching healthy masculinity to the younger generation is valid.

You Can Be a Better Man

Teaching children value for themselves and others, and that there is a better way of life for them than joining a gang, is integral in changing the current landscape of New Zealand gang culture. But what about those men who are involved in a gang, whose wives/partners are being negatively impacted by violence, and whose children are learning to emulate their masculine views and behaviours? These are the men teaching the next generation. As Mataira (2008) says, a new approach to masculinity is needed. Māori and Pasifika supporting their own men in meaningful re-education and mentoring group work, "incorporating freedom, openness of expression, reflection and introspection" (pp. 36). Change comes through buidling self-confidence and self-respect, and changing the current masculine paradigm within the culture of violence and abuse.

Ngo (2010) suggests the importance of family support and self-determination in men leaving the gang life behind. There are many benefits shown in research for men to leave the gang. Some were mentioned by the participants of this study. Several talked about the need to be accountable, especially to their wives and children (Goodwill, 2009). This helped change their ideas of masculinity, specifically surrounding violence. They found freedom from a life of violence, crime, and substance abuse. Several men mentioned that they never wanted these things in their lives, but that they were part of the gang ethos. Gaining independence, including financially, mentally, emotionally and spiritually is an important benefit of life after the gang. Two participants have started their own businesses, bringing a sense of pride and achievement to themselves. Finally, living a new life on their own terms and getting healing mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically were all talked about by the participants as what they want to see for other men (Goodwill, 2009).

Suggestions by the participants of this research about the need for mentoring programmes that really work line up with other research in this area. Ngo (2010) states the importance of community mentoring programmes and investment in religion as an answer to helping men leave the gang life and stay out. Five out of eight participants found this to work for them. They got support, encouragement, and accountability from a community programme (where prison/corrections programs had failed them), and essentially replaced the gang community with one through Man Up, meeting the need for belonging. There is research to back up the idea of peer mentoring being effective for offenders, both within prison and in community settings (Buck, 2017; Delaney & Milne, 2002; Hucklesby & Wincup, 2014). Having similar experiences or backgrounds, transmitting norms and behaviours along with help, support and guidance, ex-offender mentors can be successful role

models (Buck, 2017). As several participants said, they wanted to talk to someone who understood where they had come from, not those who had no idea what it was like in ‘the hood’, gang life, and prison. Ex-offender peer mentors provide hope, inspiration, and proof that it is possible to turn their lives around (Buck, 2017; Deuchar & Weide, 2019), which is exactly what several of the participants of this research said worked for them.

Counsellors and religious leaders who invest time and energy have been shown to help gang members to feel important, acknowledged and valued. Talking through violence and their lifestyle without being judged can show them that people are not giving up on them, which can prompt the desire to hope for a better future (Tonks & Stephenson, 2019). Religious leaders have been shown in research as instrumental in men leaving gangs by helping them become interested in faith (Bubolz, 2014). This can help them realise their gang lifestyle is detrimental. Religion can be a form of emotional support for men, which helps to promote cognitive dissonance between their faith and their gang lifestyle of crime, violence, and substance abuse (Deuchar & Weide, 2019; Tonks & Stephenson, 2019).

Finally, as already discussed, fatherlessness has a large influence on child development. The lack of a father can be detrimental to identity, and is a risk factor for gang involvement (Bracki et al., 1997). Participants talked about the need not only for men to be taught how to be men in a healthy, functional way, but that they also needed to understand and be taught how to father their own children, breaking the cycle of violence, abuse, and the effects of absentee fathers, so that their children find a better life than joining a gang.

School Responsibility

Research relating to risk factors of children joining a gang has mostly neglected the influence of schools on gang membership. Much focus has been primarily on individuals, their familial interactions, and their own community context. Although gang membership is most likely to start in mid-adolescence, influential risk factors are present since birth and could be viewed as stepping stones in the likelihood of joining a gang (Sharkey et al., 2011). With gangs recruiting in New Zealand at primary school age, and the prevalence of family and community gang influence on children, especially in specific areas (most notably lower socio-economic, or among certain ethnicities), schools have an opportunity to step in and make a difference. Many teachers have children in their classrooms who are potential and/or already associated with gang members (Gass & Laughter, 2015). Risk factors can be targeted and there is a chance to guide children towards more prosocial development (Sharkey et al.,

2011). Teachers have control over school factors and can promote high behavioural and learning among their students. Instructional strategies that teach interpersonal skills and develop a child's confidence and self-esteem should be developed by schools. Extra-curricular activities have also been shown to be highly important (Mullis, 1997).

As one participant said, schools can plant seeds for the future, teaching children valuable life skills alongside academics. Schools can provide mental health input, teaching that emotions are normal, and that there are options other than violence for expressing them. Schools can also work to mitigate risk factors such as a lack of education, skills, and hope for the future, for children at risk of later gang association (Sharkey et al., 2011). Teachers who care have been shown to be a positive influence on children (Mullis, 1997). They can be positive role models, filling in the gap left by dysfunctional and/or abusive families, showing children value and helping them form a positive self-identity (Gass & Laughter, 2015).

Conclusion

Although there is some research into New Zealand gangs and the criminal justice system's impact on men, there is no specific research on how views of Māori and/or Pasifika men on their masculinity contribute to their gang and the criminal justice system involvement. Some of the research discussed in the literature review was found to line up with the findings of this study; however, some of it did not. For example, the impacts of colonialism/migration, the Warrior disposition, and the sportsman alternative to gang life. As this research was looking into an area that no previous research specifically had, this was to be expected, and makes it more worthwhile and valuable as it starts to fill in a clear gap in the current research.

This research found that childhood learning and experiences directed shaped masculine identity and views of what it means to be a man for the participants of this research. This in turn led to gang affiliation and criminal justice system involvement for all participants. Role models, especially other males, taught the participants of this research when they were children their own dysfunctional ideals of what a man should be to, and this was then perpetuated later on by participants in their own lives and families.

Participants saw their own masculinity as being dominant, which agrees with some research into hegemonic masculinity, where subordinate groups can resist hegemonic masculinity, forming their own dominant masculinity within their social group or culture (Reecer, 2015). The men in this study saw their own masculinity as being normal, or the only masculinity, as it was formed in childhood.

The toxic masculine traits in relation to misogyny, self-entitlement, aggression, and violence (Salter, 2019) were seen in the lives of the participants, especially in relation to the way they treated women, and the outworking of violence in the gang and prison, concurring with research that prison brings out those toxic traits in men. They also agreed with research into the term toxic masculinity being used by the criminal justice system to individualise discourses on reforming marginalised men (Harrington, 2021), and that this is one reason why reformation/recidivism reduction programmes do not work.

Despite prolific research into both colonisation and culture in relation to masculinity, neither of these had a large effect in shaping concepts of masculinity for the men in this study. They identified more with gang culture in their masculine ideals than they did with their native ethnic culture. Much blame has been placed on colonisation for men's dysfunctional view of masculinity for Māori and Pasifika men, but this was not specifically found in this research. One reason to explain this could be that they were lacking a cultural identity to begin with, which could make connecting with their culture later in life difficult.

The ideas surrounding the Warrior archetype, embodying traits of violence, physical intimidation, and being silent and staunch, often leading to deviant behaviours (Hokowhitu, 2007), were seen with the participants, although it was not described by them as specifically being attributes of a warrior in their cultures, and they did not see themselves as warriors. There was no correlation made between sport being an alternative to gang membership as a way to channel their aggression. Nor was it found that they were pushed into sport to provide financially for their families, as opposed to criminal ventures, or for community pride (Rodriguez, 2015). Conversely, there was a sense of pride in being part of a gang.

Reasons for joining a gang included the need to belong, fatherlessness, and financial security. Not found to be reasons for these men which were seen in prior research were cultural dispossession, social exclusion, colonialism, racism, and marginalisation (Newbold & Taonui, 2020; Rodriguez 2011). For these men, gang culture was more dominant in forming their masculine ideas than ethnic culture. The need to belong was found by all eight participants as the predominant reason for joining a gang. Lack of family cohesion, childhood abuse, and abandonment all played a role. Consequently, they sought a new community and family who would accept them and which fit with their views on masculinity. Several of the participants lacked a father in their formative years, and research shows that fatherlessness causes a deficit in masculine identity, which directly contributed to some of the participants joining a gang. Research internationally shows a strong correlation between poverty and gang

membership and this most often includes criminal activity with the outcome of criminal justice system association and prison (Baskerville, 2004; Mitchell, 2022; Parker, 2012). The participants in this study agreed that gang membership is seen as a way to get easy money.

Role models play a large part in early childhood identity formation and masculine ideals. Fathers especially play an essential role in child development, especially for boys, as a male role model to establish their masculine identity (Pleck, 2010). All participants in this research said they learnt their concepts of masculinity from role models in early childhood, contributing to their joining a gang and becoming involved in the criminal justice system. Early emotional attachments form character structures which can be partly responsible for future violent and criminal behaviours (Mataira, 2008). Violence for the participants was normalised in early identity formation and was directly related to joining a gang and acting out violence within the gang and in prison. Although much research has shown that peers have a large influence on gang membership, this was not found in this research. Participants said friends played a minor role both in shaping their views of masculinity and in their decision to join a gang.

It is no surprise considering the amount of research into programs/counselling run by criminal justice systems/corrections/prisons worldwide, most of which concurs with the findings in this research, that they do not work effectively in either reducing recidivism or encouraging men to exit gangs. NZ has high rates of recidivism, especially with Māori and/or Pasifika offenders (World Population Review, 2023).

All participants in this study said they felt let down by the CJS, and that their programmes did not work. Research has shown that prison is a place that promotes hypermasculinity, especially violence (Symkovych, 2023). CJS association solidified and perpetuated the participants' dysfunctional views of masculinity, violence is rife in prison, and gangs use prison to recruit new members. Participants realised that to end the cycle of violence and provide a better life for themselves and their families they needed to change their cognitions around masculinity which then changed their behaviours. This included support, encouragement, accountability, community, and practical skills gained from a programme that worked, which helped them become better men, staying away from their former gang and gang associates, and out of prison.

None of the participants in this research want to see the next generation, or the ones after, following in their footsteps into a gang life and/or prison. How the participants see themselves as men now and their concepts of masculinity and how it should look, is completely different from what they were taught, the views they formed, and how it was

enacted within gang culture and in a prison setting, and they all stated that they wanted this for their sons, their son's friends, and all Māori and/or Pasifika boys in New Zealand. The way they said this should be enacted is through teaching/showing boys healthy masculinity, and teaching men to be fathers and good role models to boys and to other men. Change needs to be seen in both directions to be effective.

Interventions for children need to start early, and childhood risk factors need to be minimised (Mullis, 1997; Spatz Widom, 1998), but where past research falls short is what the men in this study talked about. That of changing boys' cognitions surrounding their own and others' masculinity. Participants talked about showing boys- by setting an example through their own lives- that they don't need to be part of a gang, and that they can be successful and financially stable. Teaching boys how to be loving and respectful and how to treat women was a strong sentiment expressed by participants.

Change comes through building self-confidence and self-respect, changing the current masculine paradigm within the culture of violence and abuse. The participants in this research talked about the importance of teaching men to be effective fathers so that they could, in turn, teach their own children there is a better life than the gang one, and being role models for healthy masculinity. Counsellors and religious leaders who invest time and energy have been shown to help gang members to feel important, acknowledged and valued (Tonks & Stephenson, 2019).

Lastly, schools, and specifically teachers, have a responsibility to help mould boys into men with a healthy, functioning view of masculinity. Many teachers have children in their classrooms who are potential and/or already associated with gang members, and should employ strategies that teach interpersonal skills, develop a child's confidence and self-esteem, along with encouraging and providing extra-curricular activities (Gass & Laughter, 2015; Mullis, 1997).

In conclusion, this research has shown that the hypothesis that Māori and/or Pasifika men's views on masculinity, and how they learnt those beliefs, contribute directly to the decision to become associated with gangs and involved with the criminal justice system. When compared to other research, there is an alignment with Indigenous men (those from collectivist cultures) offending for group-oriented reasons, whereas those from individualistic cultures offend for individual reasons (Seidler, 2010). Internationally, other research similar to this study found that Indigenous men join gangs and the criminal justice system due largely to colonisation forming masculine identities (Henry, 2015; Sky, 2014). Where other research does intersect with this study, is how masculinity is formed by role models, and that

the role of masculinity was integral to joining a gang and becoming involved in the criminal justice system. The main aim of the study was to explore the cognitive relationships between concepts of masculinity in relation to gangs and the criminal justice system. Based on the findings of this study, Māori and/or Pasifika men are joining gangs and are overrepresented in the criminal justice system in New Zealand because of the way they view masculinity and how they think men should behave.

Limitations

Key findings from this research offer insight into Māori and/or Pasifika men's unique views on masculinity, and how and where they learnt it. It could be argued that the small size of the study could be a limitation, due to the question of generalisability to a wider population (Boddy, 2016). The population in this instance being other Māori and/or Pasifika men who have been involved in a gang and the criminal justice system, not men in New Zealand in general, or even other Māori and/or Pasifika men who have not been involved in a gang. This has been questioned in the past as to the validity of qualitative research (Vasileiou et al., 2018). However, the information gathered from the eight participants using purposive sampling is rich in relation to the hypothesis and aims of the research. Qualitative research by nature generally employs small cohorts for this reason (Vasileiou et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2015.)

Not necessarily a limitation, but all participants had left the gang, which was not the original idea (or hope). The researcher could not find any current gang members who wanted to take part in the research, even with recommendations from other participants. This lack of trust is common in this population, and gang members have been known to have hostile relationships with authority, such as police and Corrections (Eidson et al., 2017; Tamatea, 2018). As such it is difficult to establish trust, and can be challenging to find current gang members willing to participate in research. Therefore recruiting eight participants for this study is an achievement. Having current gang members as well as those who have left the gang would have added another facet to the research, and it could have included looking into the differences in views on masculinity in relation to why they chose to stay in a gang. Although gang retention is under-researched, literature cites reasons such as embeddedness within the gang, social and emotional ties, and levels of victimisation as reasons men stay within the gang (Melde et al., 2012; Pyrooz et al, 2010; Pyrooz et al., 2013;). There is also the issue of the negative effects of gang membership being accumulated over a member's

lifetime, such as elevated levels of crime, violence, increased family problems and arrest (Melde et al., 2012).

In any research where the researcher and participants are co-producing the data, and the themes are derived subjectively by the researcher, there is room for interpretation. Another researcher may look at the data and find different codes, and therefore other themes. The discussion focused on many ideas from both the literature review and the research results, but there were other areas that could have been expanded upon in relation to the participants' views on masculinity and how these were formed. For example, three participants mentioned the influence of social/media, specifically in relation to forming masculine ideals (such as violent behaviours) in childhood, and current gang recruitment practices, but this was not seen as strong enough to be a theme.

Despite some perceived limitations, such as small sample size, no participants being current gang members, and the subjectivism of qualitative interviews surrounding researcher/participants co-producing the data and researcher bias, this research has laid the groundwork for future research into views on masculinity for Māori and/or Pasifika men in relation to their association with gang membership and the criminal justice system. More research in this specific area will add depth to this research and fit in with research already undertaken into general views on masculinity of Māori and/or Pasifika men in New Zealand.

Future Directions

There has been much discussion recently by the NZ government and news media regarding the sudden sharp rise in crime amongst youth[18]. The words ‘root cause’ have been bandied about by NZ police and politicians alike, but exactly what this is remains unclear. There seems to be an emphasis put on the actions of these young people (in some cases children as young as seven), and in many cases their affiliations with the less desirable members of society (e.g., gang influence), as the problem. But since when is an action or behaviour done in isolation? In light of this research and the findings that negative childhood role models, abuse, violence, fatherlessness, and poverty all contribute to views on masculinity leading to gang membership and criminal justice system association- and that

[18] 1News https://www.1news.co.nz/2023/03/20/auckland-business-advocate-says-retail-crime-off-the-scale/
Stuff https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/opinion/300588247/we-deserve-a-justice-system-that-addresses-the-root-causes-of-crime
RNZ https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/business/482194/retail-crime-is-skyrocketing-but-what-s-behind-it

youth who commit crimes and join youth gangs are likely to go on to belong to an adult gang- more research needs to be done; specifically to inform government and police policy on ways to help these children and youth from the ground up.

A bottom-up approach is necessary, focusing on parenting and child development to equip children with positive life skills to break the cycle. A comprehensive report was released in 2022 by Ian Lambie, as Chief Science Advisor for the Justice Sector, addressing child offending. It covers how and why it is happening in NZ, how the system is letting children down, lack of resources and inter-agency cooperation, and recommendations (Reil et al., 2022).

All participants in this study wanted to see changes made for the next generation; the one which is currently the focus of the NZ media, politicians, and police. None of these men want that for their children or future generations of men in New Zealand. Getting to the root causes and teaching boys healthy masculinity and how to deal with their emotions and trauma in a bottom-up approach was a strong theme found through this research. The importance of teaching men how to be good role models to the younger generation as well as their peers, especially those who are fathers, was talked about by several participants.

The ideas of truancy punishment for parents and accountability for schools to keep these children and youth in school may seem like a good idea (Neilson, 2022), but it would only serve to alienate those who need the most help, even more than they already have been. One political party has thrown out the idea of ankle monitors for youth offenders where they are only allowed to attend school and home (Manch, 2022). These ideas may have merit. But those in power seem to be missing the point. Encouragement works better than punishment. This research has also clearly shown that changing cognitions surrounding masculinity is a key to changing behaviours.

Follow up interviews with the participants of this study, and with a wider range of Māori and/or Pasifika men, looking into other factors alongside views on masculinity that contribute to gang and criminal justice system involvement, would be beneficial. Other areas of interest that this research touched on, but was outside the purview of, included: the ongoing impact of colonisation and migration; the cultural disconnect; poverty; lack of education; childhood abuse and exposure to violence; and fatherlessness.

Due to the amount of influence role models had in shaping the identity and future cognitions and behaviours of the participants in this study, the impact of role models and the part they play, especially those without fathers who look to others to shape their identity, along with gang members, warrants further research. Nothing happens in isolation, and the

diverse factors that all accumulate to impact and influence boys and young men to pull them towards a gang association, are extremely important to study in light of the problems we face in NZ with rising gang numbers, especially among our Māori and Pasifika populations. The police National Gang Registry says membership had risen from 4,361 in 2016 to over 8,000 in 2022, with the majority being Māori. Gang members in prison have also increased from over 1,200 in 2010 to almost 3,000 in 2022, with 4,500 on community-based sentences. Over three-quarters are Māori and 8% are Pasifika (Maher, 2022; New Zealand Parliament, 2022).

Media and social media were not looked into in this current research, but questions surrounding their influence on men's views on masculinity, specifically their decision to join a gang, are an area of interest. Two participants mentioned social media being used to glamourise gangs, with platforms like Facebook being used for recruitment. One participant also said he learnt his views on masculinity from TV growing up, specifically in relation to violence. With the increase in the last twenty years of media and the rise in social media platforms for gang recruitment, this is a topic that cannot be overlooked in the big picture and merits further research.

Lastly, real change needs to be enacted in New Zealand. Due to all eight participants having left their former gang life and making positive changes for their families and themselves, more research into the reasons for this is necessary. Every participant felt let down by the criminal justice system, specifically with programs that are supposed to help them and reduce recidivism. Five out of eight participants had found real, practical help, support, encouragement, and accountability through the Man-Up programme.

Real change needs to be enacted at a governmental policy level and a grass-roots level, such as developing programmes that work. That requires asking those who have real experiences in the area of gang and criminal justice system involvement, but who have left a gang and forged a healthier, more productive life for themselves, their families, and their communities, such as the participants in this research have done. Therefore, more research through in-depth interviews into all the reasons men have for joining gangs and how they fit together, what enabled them to leave that life, and what they feel genuinely worked for them, such as programs and ongoing support outside of prison, is vital in enacting any sustainable changes in New Zealand. There is a clear need to see a reduction in gang membership and prison populations with Māori and/or Pasifika men. As this research has theorised, how Māori and Pasifika men think about masculinity directly impacts their gang membership and criminal justice system involvement, and changing how they view themselves as men is integral in leaving that life behind.

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Appendix A

Views of Māori and Pasifika Men Who Have Been Involved in Gangs/Criminal Justice System on Masculinity

INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher Introduction

My name is Elishevah Monrad, a Masters student at Massey University. This research is being conducted for fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Psychology. The academic supervisors involved are Associate Professors Julia Ioane and Matthew Shepherd.

Project Description and Invitation

This project aims to look into how Māori and Pasifika men who have been involved in gangs and the criminal justice system in New Zealand see themselves as men. I would like to understand your views on masculinity, and whether that may be a reason for why some Māori and Pasifika men are joining gangs and why they are so overrepresented in the New Zealand criminal justice system.

Masculinity is defined as: pertaining to or characteristic of a man or men; having qualities traditionally ascribed to men, the quality or nature of the male sex: the quality, state, or degree of being masculine or manly.

I would like to invite you to be part of this study if you meet the following criteria.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

I am seeking up to 10-12 participants to be part of this study.

You may be eligible if you are:

- *A male of Māori and/or Pasifika ethnicity*
- *Are or have been a member of, or associated with a gang*
- *Have had involvement with the NZ criminal justice system.*
- *Currently residing in New Zealand*

- *Available for an interview in person, though if an online interview is preferred, this can be provided.*
- *Competency in the English language*

Project Procedures

Should you choose to participate an interview will be scheduled according to your availability. Interviews will be conducted in either Hope Centre or Destiny Church offices. If you wish to meet online then I can arrange this with you.

At the beginning of the interview you will be asked to complete a consent form and broad demographic information. The content of the interview and the participant information sheet will be outlined to you, including relevant contacts. Your information will be anonymous as part of the research, but there is a chance that people who know you will recognize you from this information. The research may also be shared with local community and cultural groups and in scientific journals through you.

Disclosure of Information

You will be asked for your views in relation to masculinity and what it means to you to be a man.

If you offer any information relating to past, present, or future criminal activity the researcher will have to disclose this information to the Police and/or any other relevant agencies. If violence against women or children is mentioned or any information you provide that shows risk to any other person(s), the researcher will, in discussion with supervisors, disclose this information to Police and/or any other relevant agencies.

Please ensure you are not under the influence of any substances during your interview as it is important that you are views and comments are accurately recorded..

If you agree, the interview will be recorded through an audio-recording app on a secure iPhone. If video-conferencing is used instead of an in person interview, this will be both video and audio recorded in an embedded file, but only the audio will be used for this research. This procedure will take approximately 60 minutes, and no more than 90 minutes. Koha will include an online $40 voucher as a thank you for your time and sharing your story.

Data Management

All electronic data will be password protected and uploaded to a secure online platform, i.e. the cloud. All identifying information will not be reported in the research findings. Participant detail information will be kept anonymous. All data collected will only be used in relation to this research project and disposed of after a five year period. Only myself and my supervisor will have access to this data.

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 within two weeks of the interview being held. If this happens all information will be immediately deleted*
- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation*
- *provide information on the understanding that you remain anonymous*
- *be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded*
- *ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview*

Project Contacts

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Researcher:

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Matthew Shepherd m.shepherd1@massey.ac.nz

Ethics Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 22/63.

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.

Phone: 09 414 0800, x 43347 Email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz

Appendix B

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Views of Māori and Pasifika Men Who Have Been Involved in Gangs/Criminal Justice System on Masculinity

I have read, or have had this read to me, and I understand the Information sheet. I have had the details of the study explained to me, including any questions I may have had. I also understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

1. I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.
2. I agree/do not agree to the interview being image recorded (applicable for zoom only. Note the video will not be used, only the sound recording).
3. I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.
4. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Declaration by Participant:

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

Signature: ________________________ Date: _______________

Ethics Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 22/63. 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.

Phone: 09 414 0800, x 43347

Email: humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix C

Interview Questions

1. How would you define masculinity?
2. What does being a man mean to you?
3. Where/how did you learn what it means to be a man?

Probe Questions:

Parenting (mother/father present)

Influence of friends

At what age did you learn your views

How have your views changed, i.e. marriage, children, break-ups

4. How has how you see yourself as a man altered or changed during and/or after your involvement in a gang?

Probe questions:

What impact has it had on your life, family, relationships?

5. How has how you see yourself as a man altered or changed during and/or after your involvement in the criminal justice system?
6. What does masculinity mean in your life now and in the communities you are part of?

Probe questions:

How does it play out in your life?

How does it affect your relationships-partner, children, friends?

If spirituality/religion is involved, has this changed your perception of what it means to be a man? How so?

7. What would you change in learning how to be a man, or defining masculinity, for the next generation?