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Seeking Solutions to Being Restricted

A Māori-Centred Grounded Theory of
Māori, Mental Illness and Health Services

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ABSTRACT

The status of Māori mental health in New Zealand has increasingly deteriorated, despite radical changes to mental health service delivery and modern improvements in treatment. The question posed in this doctoral research is: ***What is occurring amongst Māori with mental illness and mental health services?***

The research applied qualitative methods. Glaserian grounded theory, informed by a Māori centred approach, was utilised and further supported by the concepts of mana Māori (control), whakapiki tangata (enablement), whakatuia (integration), and Māori ethical principles. Thirty Māori participants between the ages of 20 and 65 years were interviewed; 24 were interviewed individually and the remaining participated in a focus group of six Māori women. Participants identified as Māori with lived experience of mental illness and mental health services. The cohort also included whānau members and Māori practitioners who were interviewed during the process of theoretical sampling. Thirty interviews were audio recorded and field notes were taken. A systematic process of data collection and data analyses occurred using a range of methods as part of the Glaserian grounded theory method. This included coding, memoing, the constant comparison of data and theoretical sampling, all of which helped to reach the saturation of data. The goal was to discover what the main problem was for Māori participating, and how they resolved it. The outcome from this research was the development of a middle range substantive theory titled *Seeking Solutions to Being Restricted*.

The core category, *Being Restricted*, is recognised as the main problem Māori, in this study, grappled with in regard to their mental health and wellbeing. This includes subcategories with a number of properties: *the turning point, being apprehended, physical compromise for mental stability and addressing wairua*. The basic social psychological process, *Seeking Solutions*, was influenced by Māori aspirations for hope and change. This process explains various behaviours where Māori are fighting for their goals and desires to be met or they are having to adapt to a mental health system in order to acquire their

goals. Together, the core category and the basic social psychological process represent the theoretical proposition that Māori with experience of mental illness and mental health services are *Seeking Solutions to Being Restricted*. From the findings of this study, recommendations are provided to address Māori being restricted. The implication of this study is that if mental health professionals and mental health services continue to contribute to an oppressive approach to Māori, there will be an increasing disadvantage to the mental health of Māori.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS	IV
TABLE OF FIGURES	VII
TABLE OF TABLES	VII
GLOSSARY	VIII
CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCING MY JOURNEY	1
1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE THESIS	1
1.2. CURRENT SITUATION	6
1.3. THESIS CHAPTERS	7
1.4. CONCLUDING COMMENTS	8
CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	9
2.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MENTAL HEALTH OF MĀORI	10
2.3 SUICIDE AND SELF HARM	16
2.3.1 <i>Rangatahi Suicide</i>	16
2.4 ANNUAL HEALTH SURVEY	17
2.5 DETERMINANTS OF MĀORI MENTAL HEALTH	18
2.6 MĀORI AND MAINSTREAM MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.....	21
2.6.1 <i>Restricted Practices in Mainstream Mental Health Services</i>	22
2.7 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	26
2.8 KAUPAPA MĀORI MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	29
2.8.1 <i>Māori Health Reforms</i>	32
2.9 CONCLUDING COMMENTS	37
CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY	38
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	38
3.2 MĀORI REPOSITIONING RESEARCH	38
3.3 DESIGN	41
3.4 MĀORI CENTRED RESEARCH.....	41
3.5 METHOD	43
3.5.1 <i>Grounded Theory</i>	43
3.5.2 <i>Background to Grounded Theory</i>	44
3.5.3 <i>Philosophical Influences Underpinning Grounded Theory</i>	45
3.6 CLASSIC GROUNDED THEORY	47
3.7 DATA.....	48
3.8 CODING.....	49
3.8.1 <i>Constant Comparison</i>	50
3.8.2 <i>Coding Families</i>	51

3.8.3	<i>Memoing</i>	51
3.8.4	<i>Rigour</i>	52
3.8.5	<i>Theory</i>	52
3.9	CONCLUDING COMMENTS	52
CHAPTER FOUR – RESEARCH METHODS & APPLICATION.....		53
4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	53
4.2	PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION.....	53
4.3	THE SETTING FOR THE STUDY	54
4.4	ETHICS.....	55
4.4.1	<i>Ethical Considerations</i>	57
4.5	RECRUITMENT.....	57
4.6	HE TANGATA HE TANGATA HE TANGATA.....	59
4.7	RECRUITMENT PROCESS AND WRITTEN CONSENT	60
4.8	KOHA	62
4.9	DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	63
4.10	THE POUTAMA MODEL.....	66
4.11	DATA ANALYSES	68
4.12	CONCLUDING COMMENTS	74
CHAPTER 5 – FINDINGS SECTION.....		75
5.1	INTRODUCTION.....	75
5.2	TURNING POINT	76
5.2.1	<i>Varying Explanatory Beliefs</i>	78
5.2.2	<i>Mental and Emotional Struggle</i>	78
5.2.3	<i>Internal Hell</i>	79
5.3	SUMMARY.....	80
5.4	BEING APPREHENDED.....	81
5.4.1	<i>Being Taken or Sent Away</i>	82
5.4.2	<i>Being Locked Up</i>	85
5.4.3	<i>Lack Control</i>	87
5.4.4	SUMMARY	88
5.5	PHYSICAL COMPROMISE FOR MENTAL STABILITY	89
5.5.1	<i>Being Drugged Up</i>	90
5.5.2	<i>Physically Compromised</i>	92
5.5.3	<i>Bargaining for Change</i>	93
5.5.4	<i>Whānau Watch</i>	99
5.5.5	CONCLUDING COMMENTS	102
5.6	ADDRESSING WAIRUA.....	103
5.6.1	SUMMARY	110
5.7	SEEKING SOLUTIONS	111
5.7.1	HOPE AND CHANGE.....	116
5.7.2	CONCLUDING COMMENTS	118
5.8 A MĀORI CENTRED GROUNDED SUBSTANTIVE GROUNDED THEORY.....		119

CHAPTER SIX DISCUSSION.....	122
6.1 INTRODUCTION.....	122
6.2 DISCUSSION.....	122
6.3 UNJUST LOSS OF SOCIAL CONTROL.....	124
6.4 TURNING POINT	126
6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	127
6.5.1 <i>Mental Health Professionals</i>	127
6.5.2 <i>Mental Health Services</i>	128
6.6 BEING APPREHENDED.....	129
6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	131
6.7.1 <i>Mental Health Professionals</i>	131
6.7.2 <i>Mental Health Services</i>	132
6.7.3 <i>Research</i>	132
6.7.4 <i>Policy Makers</i>	132
6.8 PHYSICAL COMPROMISE FOR MENTAL STABILITY	133
6.9 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	137
6.9.1 <i>Māori</i>	137
6.9.2 <i>Mental Health Professionals</i>	137
6.9.3 <i>Mental Health Services</i>	137
6.9.4 <i>Policy Makers</i>	137
6.9.5 <i>Research</i>	138
6.10 ADDRESSING WAIRUA	138
6.11 RECOMMENDATIONS	143
6.11.1 <i>Mental Health Professionals</i>	143
6.11.2 <i>Mental Health Services</i>	144
6.11.3 <i>Research</i>	144
6.12 WHĀNAU	144
6.13 RECOMMENDATIONS	151
6.13.1 <i>Mental Health Professionals</i>	151
6.13.2 <i>Mental Health Services</i>	151
6.14 SEEKING SOLUTIONS.....	151
6.14.1 <i>Hope and Change</i>	153
CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION	154
7.1 INTRODUCTION.....	154
7.2 DISCUSSION.....	154
7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH	157
APPENDICES.....	183
APPENDIX A: ETHICAL APPROVAL.....	183
APPENDIX B: NORTHLAND LOCALITY ASSESSMENT	185
APPENDIX C: PANUI	189
APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET	190
APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM.....	192
APPENDIX F: PERMISSION: TE POUTAMA.....	193

TABLE OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: COPY OF ADVERTISEMENT ABOUT THE STUDY IN NORTHLAND NEWSPAPERS.....	58
FIGURE 2: EXCERPT FROM CODED INTERVIEW FROM A PERSON WITH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS IN SCRAPBOOK.....	64
FIGURE 3: EXCERPT FROM CODED INTERVIEW FROM A PERSON WITH WHĀNAU PERSPECTIVE IN SCRAPBOOK.....	64
FIGURE 4: TURNING POINT, EXAMPLE OF POSTER.....	66
FIGURE 5: POUTAMA MODEL.....	67
FIGURE 6: FOUR SUBCATEGORIES THAT MAKE UP BEING RESTRICTED	75
FIGURE 7: TURNING POINT	77
FIGURE 8: BEING APPREHENDED.....	81
FIGURE 9: PHYSICAL COMPROMISE FOR MENTAL STABILITY.....	89
FIGURE 10: ADDRESSING WAIRUA	103
FIGURE 11. SEEKING SOLUTIONS.....	111

TABLE OF TABLES

TABLE 1: SEVEN COMPONENTS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MĀORI IN ALL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.....	34
TABLE 2: PSEUDONYMS UTILISED TO REPRESENT KAIURU CONTRIBUTIONS	60
TABLE 3 : SELECTED CODES AND ONE WORKING MEMO.....	65
TABLE 4: SELECTION OF CODES REGARDING FIRST EXPERIENCE AND BEING LOCKED UP	68
TABLE 5: WORKING MEMO ABOUT 'WAIRUA NEEDS' OF KAIURU	70
TABLE 6: EXAMPLE OF ANALYSIS FOLLOWING AN INTERVIEW FROM A WHĀNAU PERSPECTIVE	72
TABLE 7: SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO BEING RESTRICTED.....	121
TABLE 8: RECOMMENDATIONS TO TURNING POINT	158
TABLE 9: RECOMMENDATIONS TO BEING APPREHENDED.....	159
TABLE 10: SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO PHYSICAL COMPROMISE FOR MENTAL STABILITY.....	160
TABLE 11: SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESSING WAIRUA.....	161
TABLE 12: SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO HELP WHĀNAU.....	161

GLOSSARY

Ahu	Tend or foster
Aroha	Compassion
Atawhai	Show kindness to
Awhi	Embrace
Hapū	Subtribe
Hinengāro	Emotional and mental state
Iwi	Māori tribe
Kaikarakia	Minister
Kaimahi	Worker
Kaitiaki	Guardian
Kaiuru	Participants
Kaumātua	Elder Māori male
Kaupapa	Method, purpose
Kuia	Elder Māori female
Mākutu	Curse
Mana	Pride, identity
Manaaki	Hospitality, care
Māori	Indigenous people of New Zealand
Marae	Māori meeting house
Mataurangā Māori	Māori knowledge
Pākehā	European people
Porangi	Lightness and darkness of day and night
Rongoa	Māori medicine
Tamariki	Children
Tangata	Person, people
Tangata Whaiora	People seeking wellness
Tangata Whenua	Traditional people of the land
Tapu	Sacred
Taurima	Treat with care
Tautoko	Support
Te Reo	Māori language
Tikangā	Māori customary practice
Tinana	Body, physical

Tino Rangātiratangā	Self determination
Tohungā	Māori healer
Tupuna	Ancestor
Turangāwaewae	Place of belonging
Wairangi	Turbulence spirituality
Wairua	Spirit, spirituality
Whakapapa	Genealogy
Whakapiki	Enhance, empower
Whakatuia	Integrate, interconnect
Whakawaatea	Cleanse
Whānau	Kin, extended family relationships
Whāngai	Nourish, bring up
Whenua	Traditional land