A RESEARCH ETHIC FOR STUDYING MĀORI AND IWI PROVIDER SUCCESS

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Abstract

Kaupapa Māori is an emancipatory theory that has grown up alongside the theories of other groups who have sought a better deal from mainstream society; for example, feminist, African-American and worldwide indigenous theories. At a high level, these theories have commonalities and similar concerns, including the displacement of oppressive knowledges and a social change agenda. At a local level, Kaupapa Māori addresses Māori concerns in our own land. Kaupapa Māori research operates out of this philosophical base and is guided by practices that reflect a Māori "code of conduct". This paper explores how these practices were operationalised within the Māori and Iwi Provider Success research project. This project examined the practices of successful

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> Māori and iwi (tribal) providers of services and/or programmes across six
> sectors (housing, social services, education, employment and training,
> justice, health) and five regions in Aotearoa New Zealand (Taitokerau,
> Tamaki Makaurau, Taranaki, Tairawhiti and Te Waipounamu). The role
> of the researchers was to listen to and give voice to the kaupapa,
> aspirations and day-to-day realities of these providers. Critically
> reflecting on the Kaupapa Māori research practices for achieving this
> helps us to make the subconscious become conscious. The lessons we
> learn from doing so can then be added to the pool of knowledge about
> how research with Māori might be respectfully conducted.

INTRODUCTION

In his reflections on the tīkanga of research, Hirini Moko Mead writes that:

> Processes, procedures and consultation need to be correct so that in the end
> everyone who is connected with the research project is enriched, empowered,
> enlightened and glad to have been a part of it. (2003:318)

No distinctions are made about who experiences these impacts, with the inference that
if research is tika, or right, then all – the participants, their whānau (extended family),
the researchers, the community – will be left in a better place because of the research
project in which they have been involved.

The expression of this desire is not unique to Māori. Emancipatory approaches to research
(e.g., many feminist researchers, African-American researchers and action researchers)
have similar goals (Robson 2002). In addition, many disciplines and professional bodies
now have respectful research practices embedded in their codes of research conduct (Cram
1997, Te Awekotuku 1991). This extends to a commitment by many to find better and
more respectful ways of doing research with Māori (e.g., Health Research Council 1998).

These moves are also reflected at the international level with the production of
guidelines and protocols for non-indigenous researchers wanting to do research with
indigenous groups (e.g., ACUNS 1997, NAHO 2003). The development of these
guidelines and protocols has largely been prompted by a growing intolerance among
indigenous groups to being researched (Harry 2001). Now, more collaborative,
partnering relationships are being sought by all parties (e.g., Harmsworth 2001).

In Aotearoa New Zealand the past 30 years have also seen the growth of Māori
understanding and appreciation of research (Cram 2001). As in the international
context, this development was prefaced by Māori dissatisfaction with both the
processes and outcomes of much of the research conducted by non-Māori researchers

(Cram 1997, Smith 1999). The change itself has occurred for at least three reasons. The first is the Māori education movement that created pre-school Māori language nests, Te Kōhanga Reo, and Māori immersion schooling options (Smith 1999). This gathering together of Māori whānau was also an effective consciousness-raising exercise as adults became aware that their own educational "failure' was systemic rather than personal (Smith 1997). The second reason is the development of research capability among iwi, prompted by their desires to document their own histories in order to achieve redress before the Waitangi Tribunal (Cram 2001). Third is the general revitalisation of Māori culture that has occurred over the past 30 years (Bishop 1996).

Over this time some Māori and non-Māori academics, universities, wananga (institutions of learning) and funding agencies have also demonstrated a commitment, alongside whānau, hapū (subtribes) and iwi (tribes), to the development of Māori research capacity. This, in turn, has facilitated the fulfillment of both a Treaty-based right and a yearning by Māori to be able to tell and document our own stories and examine our own lives (Jackson 1996, Smith 1999). Much of the resulting research falls within the boundaries of emancipatory research in that it seeks a better deal from mainstream society, including the displacement of oppressive knowledges and a social change agenda (Pihama 1993). One approach for doing this research is encapsulated within Kaupapa Māori, and this is discussed next.

KAUPAPA MĀORI

Tuakana Nepe (1991:17) describes Kaupapa Māori as the "conceptualisation of Māori knowledge". Māori knowledge is not to be confused with Pākehā knowledge or general knowledge that has been translated into Māori. Māori knowledge has its origin in a metaphysical base that is distinctly Māori and, as Nepe states, this influences the way Māori people think, understand, interact and interpret the world. Other writers also remind us that traditionally certain knowledge was not universally available. Rather, it was entrusted to chosen individuals who then ensured its accurate transmission and appropriate use for the good of the people (Makareti 1986, Mead 2003, Smith 1999).

A key element in the discussion of Kaupapa Māori is the centrality of "te reo Māori me ōna tīkanga" (Māori language and philosophies). Graham Hingangaroa Smith (1996) writes that Kaupapa Māori presupposes:
• the legitimacy and validity of being Māori
• the importance of ensuring the survival and revival of Māori language and culture
• the centrality of self-determination to Māori cultural wellbeing.

To put it succinctly, at the core of Kaupapa Māori is the catch-cry, "To be Māori is normal". Kaupapa Māori is therefore about the creation of spaces for Māori realities

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within wider society. This also involves an analysis of existing power structures and social inequalities so that we can be astute about the difficulties and repercussions of attempting to create such spaces (cf. Pihama 1993).

Kaupapa Māori research operates out of this philosophical base (Smith and Cram 1997). As researchers we seek ways of operating that are tika, from the inception of a research project through to its completion (Cram 2001). In other words, the Māori world leads and the research world follows (Irwin 1994).

Linda Smith (1999:120) lists seven Kaupapa Māori practices that guide Māori researchers:
- aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people)
- kanohi kitea (the seen face; that is, present yourself to people face to face)
- titiro, whakarongo … korero (look, listen … speak)
- manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous)
- kia tupato (be cautious)
- kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the mana of the people)
- kaua e mahaki (do not flaunt your knowledge).

Smith (1999:120) writes that "these sayings reflect just some of the values that are placed on the way we behave".

These seven practices have been expanded upon by Cram (2001) in her discussion of the validity and legitimacy of Kaupapa Māori research. This discussion was informed by what Māori had been writing about research practices and issues. It is now timely that these practices also help us to reflect upon the Kaupapa Māori research we undertake. Such critical reflection will undoubtedly expand our understanding of the diverse ways in which tikanga operates within our research practices.

Within the present paper we examine the way in which we operationalised these practices within a research project on Māori and iwi provider success (Pipi et al. 2003). Before doing so, a brief overview of this research project is provided to set the context for the discussion of the practices.

MĀORI AND IWI PROVIDER SUCCESS (MIPS)

Over the past two decades there has been a growth in the number of Māori and iwi providers delivering services and programmes directly to whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities. In 2000, the International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education (IRI) was contracted by Te Puni Kōkiri to undertake research on the determinants of Māori provider success in the delivery of education, housing, health, justice, social services, employment and training services and programmes.

After an initial pilot study conducted by Kataraina Pipi and Fiona Cram (Cram and Pipi 2000), a larger study of community-identified providers was carried out with the help of regional research coordinators. Providers were interviewed about the development and current operation of their services (see Pipi et al. (2003) for the full report of the research findings).

A total of 57 successful providers from five regions (Taitokerau, Tamaki Makaurau, Taranaki, Tairawhiti, Te Waipounamu) were identified and interviewed. These providers offered services and programmes in one or more of the six sectors listed above. The providers varied in size, came from a variety of locations (e.g., rural/urban) and were distributed across iwi, Māori and Kaupapa Māori services. The length of time the providers had been operational ranged from two years to 20 years. All the provider organisations, except one, received government funding.

In the next part of this paper we discuss our research practices using the seven Kaupapa Māori practices identified by Smith (1999). As did Cram (2001), we acknowledge the overlaps that exist across these practices and use them here as a way to organise our discussion and reflections.

KAUPAPA MĀORI RESEARCH PRACTICES

Aroha ki te Tangata

Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people) is about allowing people to define their own space and to meet on their own terms.

Cram (2001) describes researchers as the mediators of both the space and power differentials that potentially exist between themselves and those with whom they are doing research. Within Kaupapa Māori research the mediation of these is invariably on the basis of whakapapa. For this reason Cram (2001) suggests that kaumātua (elders) be involved throughout the research process as they are able to make these connections. They are also the repositories of local knowledge and matauranga Māori.

Within the Māori and Iwi Provider Success (MIPS) project, support and guidance did not come from kaumātua directly, but from very strong, politically astute and well-respected local Māori women – the regional coordinators. Each examined the research project thoroughly, raised questions about process, integrity and ethics, before engaging with the researchers. They had to be sure that they were the right people to assist and support the researchers and they also had to be confident that this project would benefit their region. The engagement of regional coordinators also meant that the MIPS project was responsive to regional differences.

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In many ways, the identification of the best people to be regional coordinators mirrored the approach to identifying successful providers; that is, the project manager consulted within each region and then approached the person(s) who had been named. This process ensured that the researchers and the project had an endorsement from a respected local person from the initial stages of the research. In addition, the researchers, IRI and the project were open to scrutiny before any regional recruitment and interviewing began. In this way, the regional coordinators were pivotal in mediating the "distance" described above.

The essential qualities possessed by the regional coordinators were that they:
• were known to providers and the region
• had credibility with providers
• were able to be responsive to local needs
• had facilitation and co-ordination skills
• had good communication skills – within the region and with IRI.

The role of the regional coordinators was to:
• network among the providers involved in the project
• assist in the confirmation and further information gathering from the providers
• organise and co-ordinate hui as required by the project
• provide advice to IRI on how best to work within the region
• feedback to IRI on progress and any issues that might arise.

Regional coordinators were therefore engaged for their expertise and extensive experience with service provision to Māori in their region. Each had an established reputation, and people knew that they actively promoted and protected Kaupapa Māori. The success of this research and provider involvement was undoubtedly due to the involvement of these women.

He Kanohi Kitea

He kanohi kitea is about the importance of meeting with people face to face.

An important value in Māori society is that people meet face to face so that trust and the relationship can be further built upon. In the report on the pilot stage of the research, Cram and Pipi (2000:14) wrote:

> Kanohi ki te kanohi is regarded within Māori communities as critical when one has an important "take" or purpose. This form of consultation allows the people in the community to use all their senses as complementary sources of information for assessing and evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of becoming involved.

Within this project, kanohi ki te kanohi was implemented in a number of different ways.

- In the recruitment of regional coordinators, face-to-face contact was made between them and the project manager. All regional coordinators also met with the researchers over two days so that they could collectively consider the best approach to the research and discuss and debate any issues. This was another form of accountability for IRI as it enabled a collective voice to respond to the research being proposed.

- The majority of the interviews conducted by the regional coordinators with providers were face to face. In two instances the provider themselves chose to respond to the questionnaire via e-mail as time and other factors prevented their attending an interview.

- Regional hui provided an opportunity to feed back to the providers during and/or following the research. In many of the regions, these hui also proved to be excellent forums for providers to take time out, reflect on Māori and iwi provider success, and to network with other providers in a positive environment.

In these ways, building and maintaining relationships was an ongoing focus throughout the MIPS research. Our intention was to use this research to begin to form or further develop a research relationship with each of the regions: to keep contact and to be of further assistance to the providers we engaged with, as opposed to seeing the contact as a one-off event.

The recruitment of the regional coordinators to this project added another dimension to the practice of kanohi ki te kanohi; namely, that the face attached to the project was both known and seen within each of the regions involved. This perhaps captures most truly the practice of he kanohi kitea. This added dimension also meant that Kataraina Pipi and Fiona Cram had to be mindful of the fact that they, as Auckland-based researchers, could leave each region and return to their homes in Tamaki. Regional coordinators, however, worked and lived in the same place as the providers. The integrity of the regional coordinators was therefore of the utmost importance, as they were seen on a day-to-day basis, with their movements and work known within their region.

Titiro, Whakarongo… Kōrero

Titiro, whakarongo… kōrero is about the importance of looking and listening so that you develop understandings and find a place from which to speak.

Titiro, whakarongo… kōrero symbolises the process whereby the researcher's role is one of watching, listening, learning and waiting until it is appropriate to speak. Again,

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this helps to show respect and develop trust in the growing relationship between researcher and participant(s). The question may also be asked, "For what purpose are we looking, listening… speaking?" Within the current project the answer includes looking and listening:

- to see the stories unfold, to hear the voice, the things that are said and unsaid, to feel the joy and pain, to make meaning
- for successful outcomes to the research
- for integrity and quality research

and speaking:

- to affirm, to acknowledge, to support, to validate, to question, to challenge, to clarify.

The project manager, Kataraina Pipi, related to the regional coordinators in different ways. For some, she is a whānaunga (family member), which means that the level of sharing comes from a place of whakapapa (genealogy); for others, she is a friend who has walked many roads with the person over a number of years and therefore shares a friendship based on trust, respect, loyalty and love. For others, she is a peer who shares similar aspirations, has a knowledge of their field and the context in which they operate, one whom they can challenge and question, and vice versa. For others, she is a researcher who works for a Kaupapa Māori institute, with credibility as such. These are not mutually exclusive categories, and they may overlap and coincide in different combinations within any particular relationship.

The regional coordinators often had existing relationships with the providers they interviewed, and this undoubtedly had a bearing on the quality of information shared. Generally speaking, for those with deep relationships, the information shared tended to come from a "deeper place", due to the trust and shared values that came from these relationships.

Manaaki ki te Tangata

Manaaki ki te tangata is about taking a collaborative approach to research, research training, and reciprocity.

Manaaki ki te tangata reinforces the view that research must be a collaborative and reciprocal process. It acknowledges that learning and expertise exist in both parties. In addition, the researchers' obligations may extend beyond the immediate project and may also revisit the researcher at any time. This is highly appropriate for the present research.

In addition, the researchers (cf. Fullilove and Fullilove 1993):
• shared research knowledge with the community
• shared the results and facilitated the use of the results by the community
• involved regional coordinators as co-authors so that their contribution was acknowledged.

We have placed high value on the principle of manaaki tangata, as it relates to "looking after people". In our interactions with regional coordinators, we ensured that they were well cared for and looked after, not only while doing their research, but at times when we brought them all together. As a research team, we valued opportunities to share our collective knowledge and wisdom.

The regional coordinators, in carrying out the interviews, gave of themselves by providing feedback, probing and sharing information that was helpful to providers. We coined the term "critical friend" to capture the role the regional coordinators fulfilled for the providers, in addition to the researcher role (Smith et al. 2001). Regional coordinators also received training in a strategic development tool and were also able to offer providers this type of assistance by way of reciprocity.

The providers gave to the research their stories, their honest opinions, their time and their commitment to participating in a process that they were hopeful would make a difference.

The collaborative approach that was unique to this project was the fact that the research team were entirely Māori women who are mothers, grandmothers, and whānau of participants, and who all had a vision for whānau, hapū and iwi development. In addition, the regional coordinators lived in the communities researched.

Kia Tupato

Kia tupato is about being politically astute, culturally safe and reflexive about our insider/outsider status.

Kia tupato is a caution to researchers that we need to be aware of our own processes and have a political astuteness when working with Māori. As this research involved both iwi and Māori providers, there were some kawa and tikanga (protocols) that needed to be observed in order for the research to be accepted and for participants to be willing to engage.

For some areas, it was important that mana whenua (iwi groups specific to the region) were acknowledged, informed and invited to participate. For others, it was important that the participating providers were spread across the region in order to reflect the

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diversity within the region (rural, urban). For some regions, there were providers who, in the opinion of the regional coordinators, had to be involved for political reasons. It was also important for some providers that IRI, as a research institute based on Kaupapa Māori, shared their philosophies, background and approach, so that these providers felt comfortable to participate in the MIPS research.

The combination of regional coordinators working alongside the IRI research team meant that there was a mix within the MIPS project of "insiders" and "outsiders". For some providers, it was important that a research institute such as IRI was an "outsider", in the geographical sense. Other providers considered IRI to be an "insider". These providers presupposed that IRI, as a Kaupapa Māori research institute, would adopt a "Māori approach" and welcomed this.

Kaua e Takahia te Mana o te Tangata

Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata means "Do not trample the mana of the people". This is about sounding out ideas with people, about disseminating research findings, and about community feedback that keeps people informed about the research process and the findings.

The way in which we have carried out this practice was primarily in our relationship with the regional coordinators. We learned very early in the research process that their ongoing involvement was necessary in order to maintain their credibility, first and foremost within their communities. Many of the regional coordinators had been endorsed by the participating providers within the region to take on the role of researcher, and with this came an expectation that they would keep the providers informed about the process and the findings. The regional coordinators, in turn, ensured that providers within their regions who needed to be kept informed, were.

Kia Ngakau Māhaki

Kia ngakau māhaki means be humble in your approach; do not flaunt your knowledge. This is also about sharing knowledge and using our qualifications to benefit our community.

Luckily, when we are of the community, we do not often get a chance to show off, as we get told in no uncertain terms where to get off!

As an IRI research team we were mindful that our approach was one of respecting the knowledge and wisdom that both the regional coordinators and the providers contributed to the research project, and therefore there was no need to show off. As our relationships with one another were based on respect and trust, if there was any

showing off, it was done as a mutual celebration of our collective wisdom and brilliance in terms of our knowing of ourselves and our collective pathways to further learning.

DISCUSSION

Māori researchers carry the responsibility to ensure that they help lift the mana of Māori (Bishop 1997, Cram 2001). The seven Kaupapa Māori practices are essentially a code of conduct that can guide our research, ensuring that we are on the right track to meeting our responsibilities (Smith 1999). In this paper we have used these practices to reflect upon our experiences in the MIPS project. Within these reflections there have been some important learnings.

The MIPS research project has mainly taught us the importance of connecting locally with those we are hoping to engage in research. The regional coordinators provided insight into their regions, which facilitated IRI's understanding of the Māori and iwi providers delivering services and programmes there. In addition, as the immediate face of the project, the regional coordinators were an important reason why providers chose to be part of the research.

Perhaps more important for the MIPS research, however, were the synergies experienced throughout the project because we had decided to bring together this diverse research team. These synergies meant that decisions made (e.g., about the questions asked, the providers selected, the reporting style) reflected a collective wisdom. And at the heart of this project, this collective wisdom was essential because of the knowledge and expertise that we were asking providers to share with us.

It is important to remember that in Māori society knowledge and learning are associated with being tapu (sacred). In discussing learning and tapu, Te Uira Manihera (1992:9) of Tainui describes the sacredness of learning and the struggle elders have in "the handing down of knowledge". The fear is that "by giving things out they could be commercialised. If this happens they lose their sacredness, their fertility. They just become common. And knowledge that is profane has lost its life, lost its tapu. " Ngoi Pewhairangi (1992:11) of Ngati Porou also reflects that "only certain people, certain families, inherit these different aspects of our Māoritanga and are entitled to pass them on". Thus gathering information as a Māori researcher involves mutual respect, and trust and often occurs "a te wa", when the time is right.

As a Māori researcher, one walks alongside the community that is being researched with the responsibility to ensure that Māori research by, with and for Māori is about regaining control over our knowledge and our resources. We are thus enacting our tino rangatiratanga over research that investigates Māori issues (Cram 2001). The practices of Kaupapa Māori research are one approach to critically reflecting on the things we

do just because they are often the "right" things to do. In this way, we make the subconscious become conscious, and the lessons we learn from doing so can add to the pool of knowledge about how research with Māori might be respectfully conducted.

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