

Interpreting & Practicing Kaupapa Māori Research in a Community Setting: The In's and Out's

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Pou Tuia Rangahau is a unique community based research unit based within a kaupapa Māori organisation. Kaupapa Māori methodologies are utilised, with the importance of these methodologies being that Māori are defining the process, doing the research for and about Māori, with the eventual outcome being meaningful to Māori. This paper is placed within this wider context of Kaupapa Māori and how it applies to the practice of research in particular. We discuss how we interpret and practice Kaupapa Māori Research (KMR) within an urban community based organisation by highlighting a particular piece of research that was undertaken by Pou Tuia Rangahau, the Research Unit of Te Runanga O Kirikiriroa Trust Inc.

Kaupapa Māori Research (KMR)

The emergence of KMR was entwined with a broader movement by Māori, and indeed indigenous people the world over, who questioned western notions of knowledge, culture and research (Walker, Eketone & Gibbs, 2006). In addition, it derives from an overall greater commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as well as the introduction of kohanga reo and kura kaupapa schools which constituted part of this wider revitalisation movement among Maori.

The Kaupapa Māori approach is a recognised research framework that is both specific and unique to Aotearoa. The approach recognises that research needs to be conducted in a culturally appropriate way that does not exclude other cultural traditions and approaches (Smith, 1997). Although proponents of a KMR approach may differ in the specifics, Graham Smith summarises the points at which these proponents overlap in their philosophies and strategies (cited in Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Kaupapa Māori research:

- takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori, including the importance of Māori language and culture;
- is connected to Māori philosophy and principles;
- recognises the unique journey of each individual, whānau, iwi and hapū; and,
- is concerned with the struggle for Māori autonomy over Māori cultural wellbeing

KMR can be regarded as research which is by Māori, for Māori and with Māori (Smith, 1999). Many researchers agree that there are certain principles which constitute KMR, and some of these principles are discussed briefly here. A central principle of KMR is Tino Rangatiratanga (self determination) which fits well with the previous point about 'by Māori for Māori'. In challenging western notions of what constitutes research, KMR also becomes about social justice, in terms of redressing power imbalances and bringing real and tangible benefits to Māori (Walker et al., 2006). The use of te reo Māori (Māori language) at appropriate times in the research process can be crucial in terms of the overall revitalisation and survival of Māori as a people, and more practically perhaps, for creating pathways into the research process (Powick, 2003 as cited in Walker et al., 2006). Clearly, the recognition of a Māori worldview and its related concepts is extremely important within KMR. For example, an important concept is that of whakawhanaungatanga – the process of forming relationships. Identifying and connecting with those participating in the research process allows for detailed information and knowledge to be shared with Māori researchers, as well as to be entrusted into their care (Walsh-Tapiata, cited in Walker et al., 2006).

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Tuhiwai Smith (1999) also discusses culturally specific concepts that are part of Kaupapa Māori practices, which she identifies as being prescribed for Māori researchers in cultural terms, playing a role similar to those of research ethics. These concepts include: *aroha ki te tangata* - a respect for people; *kanohi ki te kanohi* - 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 people; and *kaua e mahaki* - don't flaunt your knowledge.

Kaupapa Māori Research at Te Runanga O Kirikiriroa Trust Inc

Te Runanga O Kirikiriroa Trust Inc (the Runanga) was established as a Charitable Trust and the Urban Māori Authority for Hamilton city under the guidance of the Māori Queen, Te Atairangikaahu, and the Hamilton City Council in 1987. The Runanga is mandated to focus on issues relating to Article III of the Treaty of Waitangi, and was developed to meet the multi-faceted needs of maataa waaka (including Pacific Island communities) within Kirikiriroa. The core values of the Runanga are Mana Rangatiratanga, Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, and Arohatanga. In recognition of the Runanga being a service for maataa waka, the Board of Trustees decided that they would not impose their understanding of what each of these core values meant for these different communities. The rationale for this is based on people interpreting the values differently, including staff of the Runanga who work in different departments and incorporate them into their work differently. Services range from crisis intervention for mental health services, off-site residential mental health services, public health and health promotion services, alcohol and drug counseling services, strategic planning and business solutions services, and research and development.

Pou Tuia Rangahau

Pou Tuia Rangahau, formerly known as the Research and Development Unit, was established as a specialist unit in December 2002. The unit was established to complete research and evaluation projects that have positive future outcomes for, and with Māori and Pacific communities within Hamilton and the greater Waikato region. The mission

statement of Pou Tuia Rangahau is: "To provide evidence that supports the advancement of tangata whenua at local and international levels." In order to meet this mission statement, the following are the aims of Pou Tuia Rangahau:

- To develop research proposals that have a strong collaborative approach when working with key individuals, organisations and communities;
- To conduct research projects with, wherever possible, an emphasis on direct practical outcomes to communities;
- To assist communities to increase their research capacity and facilitate options for funding regarding specific research projects;
- To conduct and complete all research projects based on Kaupapa Māori research methodologies and frameworks; and
- To produce clear evidence regarding best practice models for the services of the Runanga, with a view to increasing the efficacy of such services.

Māori researchers within Pou Tuia Rangahau come from a variety of research backgrounds including community health, community psychology, evaluation research, Māori public health and the alcohol and drug field. Completed projects include research in mental health, gambling, kaumātua services, alcohol and drug harm reduction, and a variety of service evaluations. Pou Tuia Rangahau utilise the services of an external academic supervisor, as well as seek guidance from both an internal cultural advisory group and external academic advisory group.

Since its establishment, Pou Tuia Rangahau have conducted and completed a number of research projects, which have now developed into a research programme that aligns with the aims of the Runanga. The aim of our research programme entitled, "*Whānau Ora: Arohatanga*" aims to develop and consolidate a body of research knowledge which supports Māori whānau to achieve maximum health, wellbeing and quality of life. The three themes which comprise the Whānau Ora: Arohatanga research programme are:

- 1: Whānau Ora - Whanaungatanga
- 2: Whānau Ora - Manaakitanga
- 3: Whānau Ora - Mana Rangatiratanga.

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Together, these three distinct themes combine to form a programme of research which prioritises innovative and distinctive research of benefit to Māori, and seeks outcomes which strengthen opportunities for whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities to determine their own health and wellbeing. This research programme contributes to the knowledge base of Māori and seeks to engage with whānau, hapu, iwi and Māori, both as research participants, researchers and knowledge transfer processes, in the process actively engaging in building the capacity and capability of Māori researchers, providers and communities.

Theme One – *Whanaungatanga*, focuses on intergenerational communication as a means of understanding unique Māori approaches to health and wellness, and how these are communicated among whānau. Explicitly built on the strengths and assets of whānau which encourage health and wellbeing, research in this theme contributes to increased knowledge in relation to effective methods of health promotion, education, interventions, and the effective dissemination of health messages within Māori communities.

Theme Two – *Manaakitanga*, focuses on the role health and disability services play in strengthening opportunities for whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities to determine their own health and wellbeing. Research in this theme contributes to understanding excellence and best practice in innovative and distinctive Māori health models and services; and how these contribute to Māori whānau achieving maximum health, wellbeing and quality of life.

Theme Three – *Mana Rangatiratanga* seeks knowledge which contributes to strengthening the capability of Māori communities to support whānau aspirations for Whānau Ora. Research in this theme contributes to understanding, at a population, community and individual level, the distinctive broader determinants, including cultural and environmental, that contribute to Māori whānau achieving maximum health, wellbeing and quality of life.

An Example of a KMR Project completed by Pou Tuia Rangahau

The Runanga has maintained a meaningful long term relationship and affiliation with the Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust (formerly known as the Frankton/Dinsdale Rauawaawa Charitable Trust). This relationship has nurtured a sense of trust between the two organisations that has enabled the research unit to undertake earlier research work with the kaumātua Rauawaawa. Hence, Pou Tuia Rangahau had been approached by Rauawaawa to undertake an outcome evaluation of Community Education Programme. This evaluation project was aligned within the third theme of Mana Rangatiratanga.

The Trust is based in Frankton and is a non-profit Charitable Trust that provides full wrap-around services for kaumātua in Hamilton city. The Trust has continued to evolve and expand its services by creating more opportunity for kaumātua to actively participate in their programmes and training and employment activities and services in a culturally safe environment. The Trust has a vision to support and advocate for Kaumātua. The mission statement of the Trust reinforces its commitment to kaumātua: “Hei manaaki ngā kaumātua”. This commitment can be considered in practice as enhancing the quality of life and wellbeing of kaumātua by providing wrap-around services that are responsive to their holistic needs. The Community Education Programme operates 11 classes, with the Trust operating in collaboration with the University of Waikato Centre for Continuing Education (the Centre).

The evaluative aims of the project were to:

- Determine the overall effectiveness of the Iwi and Māori Community Initiatives pilot project, facilitated through the Frankton/Dinsdale Rauawaawa Trust
- Obtain information relevant to the development and implementation of the pilot programme, that will identify strengths, successes and areas for improvement
- Examine the current milieu underpinning government policies and trends, to inform predictions about the future direction for the delivery of tertiary and adult education

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- Provide recommendations and policy advice regarding the future direction of, and implications for potential national roll out of the pilot programme.

Each project undertaken by Pou Tuia Rangahau is founded on the basis of a kaupapa Māori approach as the predominant method and is complimented by the use of a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Within the context of the KMR framework for this project, a kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face to face) approach to interacting and engaging with individuals throughout the evaluation was key to maintaining the integrity of the relationships formed between the Runanga and Rauawaawa. The kaumātua considered Rauawaawa to be their turangawaewae (place where one has rights) so all hui (meeting/s), interviews, and focus groups were conducted at Rauawaawa. The appropriate cultural practices were respectfully undertaken to ensure cultural safety for all parties involved in the research. Therefore, the use of pōwhiri (ritual of encounter), whakatau (formal welcome) and mihi (speech of greeting) as formal processes of engagement which preceded research processes ensured a safe pathway.

The researchers involved in the evaluation actively practiced culturally appropriate processes that promoted te reo Māori and involved karakia (prayer), mihi mihi, and the facilitation of whakawhanaungatanga (process of forming relationships) throughout all stages of the evaluation. Utilising these KMR practices within all hui fostered trust between the researcher and the researched and encouraged open dialogue (Metge, 1995; Health Research Council, 1998). The researchers brought kai for all hui/interviews facilitated. A common practice of the research unit is to provide koha to participants that is age, gender, and culturally suitable. Another significant factor is the use of protective mechanisms regarding cultural and intellectual property of participants. We reported on the evaluation according to a reporting template developed by Pou Tuia Rangahau, which is based upon the powhiri process (Elliott-Hohepa, 2005).

Qualitative methods such as a literature review, interviews with stakeholders and tutors of the programme, participant focus groups and thematic

analysis were also used. Finally, a quantitative method was also utilised to collate and analyse statistical data such as participant enrolment records. These methods led to some interesting findings. First, it is important to state that the Community Education Programme facilitated by the Trust was, and is, a success. In addition to meeting various Adult Community Education (ACE) priorities, the success of the programme was reiterated constantly throughout interviews with stakeholders and tutors, as well as participant focus groups.

Information provided by stakeholders from the Trust and Centre emphasized the importance of the unique development of the programme because of the successful collaborative relationship between the Trust and the Centre. This was despite the ongoing funding and resource issues that impacted on the programme. The tutors of classes also reiterated that the Trust provided a unique kaupapa Māori learning environment that was founded on the Rauawaawa mission statement. Ako Māori (Pere, 1989) was an important principle discussed by tutors, with this principle promoting the reciprocal relationships for tutors and participants.

All focus group participants discussed having their expectations for classes surpassed, and as a result of attending classes, having the desire to pass skills they had acquired onto family, friends, and the wider community. Five main themes emerged from our analysis of findings: a unique learning environment; social cohesiveness; gaining useable skills, cultural revitalization; and holistic wellbeing. Similar to what tutors highlighted, participants noted that the Trust was a unique environment because the programme was entrenched in a rich cultural history, and that classes operated from a Kaupapa Māori framework. The theme of social cohesiveness involved the discussion of topics such as whakawhanaungatanga and activities which facilitated this such as the kaumātua ball, and an inclusive environment for people from a range of backgrounds. In addition to the many social benefits of participant experiences, they also gained skills that could be utilised in a variety of contexts and passed onto others. Cultural revitalisation was an important theme to emerge from our analysis of findings. Some kaumātua were participating in the waiata class and learning to

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whaikōrero in te reo in order to fulfill kaumātua duties on their local marae. This knowledge could then be passed down to grandchildren, thus contributing to the intergenerational transfer of Māori culture. Within this environment, non-Maori were also able to learn about Te Ao Māori. Holistic wellbeing was enhanced by all participants we spoke to throughout the evaluation.

Based on these findings, we concluded that the Trust has risen to the challenge of meeting the needs of their community, and have done so successfully. This has been achieved by empowering kaumātua and acknowledging their participation across all levels of operation. By involving kaumātua across these levels, the Trust dispels the myth that older people cannot make valuable contributions once they reach a certain age. The Trust's philosophy provides positive ageing strategies that reaffirm Māori beliefs about the integral role that kaumātua play within society. The Trust is a living example of a place that puts into practice through a Kaupapa Māori approach, the notion that kaumātua have valuable contributions to make to society, thus claiming their own unique space.

The findings from this evaluation enabled us to develop various recommendations, including a template which outlines the issues involved in a potential national roll-out of a community education programme for kaumātua. Points highlighted within the template may also have relevance at a national level, as well as for other education and community providers. Key recommendations included that the Centre and Adult Community Education (ACE) continue to fund the community programme and that the Ministry of Education review the funding formula that ACE use for education for older people to better reflect aged learning styles and needs. A key recommendation for the Centre and the Trust was to ensure open communication regarding all aspects of programme development, including record keeping and updating contracts and to review the way in which stakeholders collate and store participant records and information. Finally, a key recommendation to the Trust was that they identify the specific needs for men, with the view to establishing classes that meet such needs.

In summary, advocates of a KM approach cite it as an extremely influential and sound philosophical base and practice for Māori, which advances Māori cultural and educational outcomes within all levels of education (Pihama et al, 2004). Hence, the Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust community education kaumātua programme introduces people into a kaupapa Maori environment that is welcoming, warm and non-threatening. It has brought together a range of people of varying ages, ethnicities and circumstances, who may not have had prior opportunity to meet. An important point here is that the Trust's kaupapa Maori service delivery is not only working extremely well for those participants who are Māori, but it is also meeting needs of non-Māori. Thus, Māori and non-Māori are successfully working and learning alongside one another within this environment. An implication of this is that ethnic barriers which may exist within wider society are effectively being reduced, and in their place, acknowledgement and appreciation of difference is being fostered.

Claiming Space for the Future

The uniqueness of Pou Tuia Rangahau

A key strength of Pou Tuia Rangahau is that we develop research proposals that have a strong collaborative approach when working with key individuals, organisations and communities. Our kaupapa is to work with our communities, not research 'on' or 'about' them. Our work throughout the Rauawaawa evaluation provides a clear example of how we consult with our communities and research participants, from the conceptualisation phase, through to the development of proposals, throughout the research process, to the dissemination and knowledge transfer phase.

Many Māori communities are suspicious, and almost fearful when it comes to research because too often Māori have experiences of being 'researched on', having their knowledge taken from them, with nothing given in return (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Our research process is respectful of those we are working with, is guided and underpinned by tikanga Māori throughout all phases, and we always strive to give back to our communities by providing drafts and summaries of findings for feedback and comment,

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and then by disseminating the findings at the completion of the project.

Ensuring Space for Future Generations of Māori Researchers

So how does Pou Tuia Rangahau claim space for the future? One thing we attempt to do is to initiate, foster, and maintain relationships across sectors in the community, both private and public. We are able to collaborate with different groups, including academic institutions, because we work in a Kaupapa Māori organisation that values collective co-operation. We also focus on capacity building within the communities in which we work in order to contribute to increasing the number of Māori

researchers claiming their space in whatever setting that may be.

Finally, the communities with whom we work own the research findings. The findings are based on their understandings, perspectives, realities and korero. We see our role as being to assist with getting their korero known to those at higher levels, as it is through this process we can contribute to influencing meaningful change. By the communities owning their knowledge and deciding what the findings mean for their communities, they are reinforcing their self determination, their Tino Rangatiratanga and claiming their own space

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