An exploration of kaupapa Maori research, its principles, processes and applications

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Kaupapa Maori research developed as part of a broader movement by Maori to question westernized notions of knowledge, culture, and research. Kaupapa Maori research has been used as both a form of resistance and a methodological strategy, wherein research is conceived, developed, and carried out by Maori, and the end outcome is to benefit Maori. This piece reviews the development and main principles of kaupapa Maori research, and it also describes and critiques the main processes of kaupapa Maori research. Three exemplars of research carried out by Maori researchers are provided to illustrate these principles and processes. We conclude that kaupapa Maori research is a relevant approach for research involving Maori and that it can enhance the self-determination of Maori people. Kaupapa Maori research also has implications for research with indigenous people more generally.

Introduction: Development of Kaupapa Maori Research

Maori constitute roughly 14% of the New Zealand population and are regarded as the indigenous people of New Zealand or Aotearoa (meaning land of the long white cloud). The first Maori arrived more than 1000 years ago from Polynesian islands. The first Europeans arrived in the late 1700s. In 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi was signed by representatives of Queen Victoria and over 500 Maori leaders. While the intentions of the Treaty are still disputed, it allowed for the establishment of British government in New Zealand. While Maori expected to form a partnership in the life of the new colony, British expectations were that they were now in charge and would operate the new

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colony to benefit their people while at the same time paternalistically bringing 'civilization' to Maori. There followed over 130 years of colonization, exploitation, and oppression of Maori. Maori knowledge, language, culture and practices were eroded, negated, and discouraged. After World War II, when the rapid urbanization of Maori occurred, and there was an increased educational attainment of Maori, kaupapa Maori, or Maori philosophies and ways of doing re-emerged as a strong and legitimate project and began to influence education, politics and research.

Today, in spite of political and public policy rhetoric that Maori have equal political, cultural and linguistic rights, they have remained disproportionately poor, sick, and disadvantaged in all areas of New Zealand society. Te Reo (language or spoken) Maori and English are regarded as the national languages of the nation, but in reality te reo is taught superficially in schools, and there is still a great gap between policy and practice in areas of welfare, health, and opportunity.

Kaupapa Maori 'research' emerged from, and was influenced by, several developments: first, the worldwide move of indigenous people to increase their self-determination over land, culture and language (Glover 2002); second, a greater commitment to the intentions of the Treaty of Waitangi, which meant that there would be greater collaboration between Maori and non-Maori, sharing of research skills, and greater protection of Maori data and participants (Powick, 2003); third, the growth of initiatives which had emerged from the revitalization movement, for example, the introduction of kohanga reo (Maori language pre-schools) and kura kaupapa schools where Maori language and tikanga (culture and customs) were taught, as well as the emergence of specific health models for Maori like Te Whare Tapa Wha, also encouraged Maori to begin to create their own processes of research (Jahnke & Taiapa, 2003; Powick, 2003).

Importantly and significantly, the kaupapa Maori movement critiqued the dominant hegemony of westernized positivistic research (Cram, 2001; Smith, 1999a, 2003). Maori people were dissatisfied by their experiences of being researched by Pakeha (non-Maori), as well as by the methodologies used by them (Barnes, 2000; Powick, 2003). Said, cited in Smith (1999a, p. 1), refers to the 'Western discourse about the other' as the process by which knowledge regarding indigenous peoples was 'collected, classified and then represented in various ways back to the West, and then, through the eyes of the West, back to those who have been colonized' (Smith, 1999a, pp. 1–2).

Maori academics began to challenge the way that certain knowledge was established as legitimate and the way that other knowledge, like Maori knowledge, was not viewed as legitimate; they also challenged the exploitative nature of much research on Maori (McNicholas & Barrett, 2002; Teariki & Spoonley, 1992). Maori academics also challenged the way in which the research undertaken resulted in few positive outcomes for Maori, and had selectively and unfavourably compared Maori with non-Maori, thus resulting in deficit-based approaches to viewing Maori people (Bishop, 1996; Powick, 2003). Maori researchers had also been excluded from mainstream funding and initiatives, and therefore there was an increased desire to see them emerge as strong researchers, with their own approaches and methodologies.

Kaupapa Maori research has been defined as research by Maori, for Maori and with Maori (G. Smith in Smith, 1999b). As a research strategy it is related to Maori ownership of knowledge, and acknowledging the validity of a Maori way of doing. Some commentators suggest it is unwise to try and define kaupapa Maori research, because it is both more and less than a paradigm, a form of resistance and agency, and a methodological strategy (Barnes, 2000; Bishop, 1996; Gibbs, 2001; Smith, 1999a). However, it is clear that kaupapa Maori research has been considered in the following ways:

- kaupapa Maori research gives full recognition to Maori cultural values and systems;
- kaupapa Maori research is a strategic position that challenges dominant Pakeha (non-Maori) constructions of research;
- kaupapa Maori research determines the assumptions, values, key ideas, and priorities of research;
- kaupapa Maori research ensures that Maori maintain conceptual, methodological, and interpretive control over research;
- kaupapa Maori research is a philosophy that guides Maori research and ensures that Maori protocol will be followed during research processes (Bishop, 1996; Cram, 2001; Powick, 2003; Smith, 1999a, 1999b).

Linda Smith (1999a, 1999b) has also argued that kaupapa Maori research is localized critical theory because of its emancipatory and empowerment aims. Used in this way, kaupapa Maori research critiques dominant, racist, and westernized hegemonies, and advocates for Maori to become more self-determining.

Kaupapa Maori research should be distinguished from other kinds of research involving Maori. For example, culturally safe or sensitive research, which developed from the practice of Maori nurses, aims to respect and nurture the unique cultural identity of Maori and safely meet their needs (Polaschek, 1997). Culturally safe research may be practised by Maori or other indigenous groups or non-Maori. However, it does not lead to control over research by Maori; neither does it apply only to Maori participants; for example, it could apply to Pacific Island participants. Kaupapa Maori research is about Maori control and focuses on Maori participants. In this type of research, Maori design, plan, gather data, analyse, and write up the research.

Kaupapa Maori research developed from experiences of exploitation and a desire to have self-determination. In this respect, as a research movement, it has similarities with service-user led research and other international developments from groups wishing to reclaim control over their research experiences (Gibbs, 2005).

Principles of Kaupapa Maori Research

The main principle or standpoint of kaupapa Maori research is that of *tino rangatiratanga*, which translates to sovereignty, self-determination, governance, autonomy, and independence (Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002). It is about power and control resting within Maori cultural understandings and practices (Bishop, 1996), and it is about a Maori-centred agenda where the issues and needs of Maori are the focus and outcomes

of research (Glover, 2002; Kiro, 2000; Smith, 1999a, 2003; Walsh-Tapiata, 2003). Once the right to control the research agenda is established, then Maori world views and ways of doing become the accepted, legitimate norm (Barnes, 2002; G. Smith in Powick, 2003).

Kaupapa Maori research is often used to challenge prevailing and inappropriate ideologies of superiority, power relations and social practices that disadvantage Maori (Gibbs, 2001; Kiro, 2000). Thus, a principle of *social justice*, which seeks to redress power imbalances and bring concrete benefits to Maori, is considered by many to be important. Some researchers believe that if Maori are not to benefit from research, then there is little point in undertaking kaupapa Maori research. They believe that Kaupapa Maori research should enhance the quality of life for Maori, and establish Maori communities with their own research capabilities (Barnes, 2000; Kiro, 2000; Teariki & Spoonley, 1992), so that benefits from early research can be carried forward by a new generation of Maori researchers.

The recognition of a *Maori world view*, and way of doing, is another important principle of kaupapa Maori research. Kaupapa Maori research offers an epistemology that will help Maori researchers view the world and organize their research differently from a westernized approach (Bishop, 1999; Smith, 1999a). A special approach to knowledge is required. Maori view certain knowledge as highly valued, specialized and tapu (i.e. that it contains culturally based restrictions around its use), and therefore must be treated with respect and protected. Sometimes, specific knowledge will be entrusted to only a few people to ensure that knowledge is protected, for example whakapapa—genealogical information (Jahnke & Taiapa, 2003). Important Maori concepts need to be applied within kaupapa Maori research to ensure that Maori protocols are maintained. One of the more important concepts is that of *whakawhanaungatanga* (the process of identifying, maintaining, or forming past, present, and future relationships), which enables Maori to locate themselves with those present. The identification of these relationships then allows for in-depth information to be shared and entrusted to Maori researchers (Walsh-Tapiata, 2003).

The principle of *te reo*, that of using Maori language where appropriate within kauapapa Maori research, can be vital. Te reo can provide a pathway to the histories, values, and beliefs of Maori people (Powick, 2003). The ideal therefore is to conduct research in the Maori language to gain some information and perspectives which otherwise would not be possible. The reality is that many Maori researchers are not fluent in te reo, and many Maori people who might be research participants have only a basic working knowledge of the language. Hence, a mix of English and Maori may be used, but kauapapa Maori research aims to encourage the revitalization of te reo.

Maori culture and protocols are underpinned by the concept of *whanau* (Bishop, 1996, 1999). Whanau refers to family but particularly includes the idea of extended family, and to the idea of establishing relationships, and connectedness between Maori (whakawhanaungatanga). The idea of the collective is central in an understanding of whanau; it enables knowledge to be defined and guarded by a group. This collective approach results in Maori placing greater value on research. Also, the accountability for the protection and care of data and research findings is very much a group thing. The

principle of whanau ensures that Maori have a shared vision of research (Smith, 2003), and can support family members undertaking research. As will be seen in the section on practice, whanau is an important organizing and structuring concept in kauapapa Maori research (Bishop, 1996). For example, an individual claiming ownership of research, when it reflects other people's information, might be viewed as selfish and bad mannered. For this reason, one of the hallmarks of kaupapa Maori research is that Maori researchers feel far more comfortable talking about 'our' research than about 'my' research. Also, the practices of generosity, cooperation, and reciprocity are linked to the concept of whanau (Jahnke & Taiapa, 2003).

These five principles, tino rangatiratanga, social justice, Maori world view, te reo and whanau form a framework for kaupapa Maori research. For all indigenous people, however, similar principles may underpin research which gives them self-determination, values their world view, and ensures their own cultural practices are respected and maintained.

Processes of Kaupapa Maori Research

One of the idiosyncrasies of kaupapa Maori research is that writers do not tell you *how to do* kaupapa Maori research; instead, they tend to focus on what it does and the effects that it has (Eketone, 2005, p. 67). Writers such as Linda Smith concentrate more on what she refers to as 'cultural terms', that is, the values, processes, and actions that allow access to the Maori world so that research can take place. Before any research can be undertaken, those wishing to do research with Maori must satisfy some basic requirements, and follow certain protocols. An important requirement, but one that is debated, is that the researcher be a Maori researcher. That is not just someone who is of Maori descent, but someone who is competent in things Maori, has some knowledge of te reo, and has the ability to conduct high-quality research with Maori (Glover, 2002; Jahnke & Taiapa, 2003). The debate about whether the researcher can only be Maori is important to consider. One of the problems is that there are few qualified Maori researchers, so that those who are available have too much to do already. Where there are gaps with no suitable Maori researchers, then training up new Maori researchers is needed as well as some non-Maori involvement. Bishop (1996) and others (G. Smith in Powick, 2003) argue that Pakeha (non-Maori) can participate in kaupapa Maori research, so long as they do not define, control, or dictate the research. Also, from a 'Treaty' perspective, Pakeha have obligations as Treaty partners to share their knowledge and skills in ways that benefit both Maori and Pakeha. However, in the end, researchers who are Maori are often able to bring a deeper and more comprehensive view because of their positions as insiders. In the past there was a belief that only an outsider could be objective (Russell, 2000, p. 4), but in indigenous settings, outsiders may try to operate from their own cultural perspective in a way that does not accurately reflect the views or reality of the researched. Kiro identifies that outsiders do not 'understand the true dynamics that exist within the community' (Kiro, 2000, p. 26). Often, only the insider understands the subtleties, nuances, and sometimes the significance of what takes place.

Would-be Maori researchers must also be aware of their duty to serve and have an attitude which demonstrates their respect for Maori tikanga, practices, and people (Cram, 2001). Researchers must be prepared to disclose personal information, their whakapapa, or links to the iwi (tribal), hapu (sub-tribal), or whanau with whom they want to conduct research. The idea of expert researcher, non-expert participant, is turned on its head in kaupapa Maori research, with the researcher being the non-expert and the one who has come to 'look, listen and learn' (Smith, 1999a). Hence, the people are the experts; they will best know what their needs and concerns are and can tell the researcher if they wish. Researchers will also have to identify their cultural, professional, and research backgrounds (Walsh-Tapiata, 2003), in a way that enables the people to assess whether or not the researcher is right for them.

Glover (2002) believes that accessing a group of Maori participants is another area where following Maori customs is crucial. Often, a Maori researcher will seek out a kaumatua (elder) or community leader with mana (status). They will have face-to-face (kanohi ki te kanohi) meetings with the kaumatua to: (1) establish the relationship, (2) engage the kaumatua in sponsorship, i.e. they will support the researcher emotionally and spiritually, (3) clarify the purpose of the research and accountability issues, and (4) appoint a cultural supervisor or whanau support group, especially where the research might be part of completion of a higher degree. Involvement of kaumatua is central to the practice of kaupapa Maori research. Kaumatua provide guidance, protection, spiritual oversight and keep cultural practices in the forefront of research (Glover, 2002).

The methods of data collection in kaupapa Maori research are not particular to Maori. In other words, getting the process right is the first consideration, and then answering the research question is the next. Answering the question may well draw upon westernized research designs, for example surveys and experiments. However, certain kinds of qualitative research, for example oral histories, narratives, and case studies, and methods like interviews and focus groups, fit more comfortably within a Maori way of doing. Any data collected from kaupapa Maori research do not become the 'property' of the researcher; rather, the data remain under collective guardianship, and the whanau support group may decide where they remain and who has access to them. This can become problematic where funding has been provided by a funding agency, but also this can be negotiated between the different groups at the beginning of research. When it comes to publishing, the whanau support group and other Maori may decide what is published and what is held back for private use only.

Critique of Kaupapa Maori Research Processes

Most of the usual critiques of qualitative research more broadly can be applied to kaupapa Maori research (Gibbs, 2005). Hence, a question asked by mainly non-Maori researchers is: does kaupapa Maori research satisfy the rigours of research enough to produce reliable and valid data? The straightforward answer is yes, but of course it is more complex than that. Much depends on the researcher, whether they were clear

about the research and methodology, and whether the findings are consistent with the research objectives, and so forth. Kaupapa Maori research can be conducted poorly, as can any other kind of research. Kaupapa Maori research is first a philosophy, then a strategy, and when it is properly carried out, it will produce acceptable research. Kaupapa Maori research takes time, and much care is taken by researchers to be thorough and to maintain integrity and respect for people. As an empowerment-focused approach (Gibbs, 2001), kaupapa Maori research is likely to be acceptable to Maori—this is more important than its acceptability to the wider academic community.

For some, another concern is the apparent lack of researcher control which paves the way for participant-driven research (Wihongi, 2002). This has the potential for researchers to feel that they have 'lost' their research. But at a fundamental level, kaupapa Maori research is not about researcher control; it is about the collective care of knowledge, culture, and values. Hence, the group rightly claims guardianship of its knowledge, albeit being willing to share some of it with Maori researchers. There will inevitably be conflicts of representation and accountability where the researcher may wish to use material which the group does not wish to be used. There may also be conflicts regarding use of data for university qualifications. These potential problems need to be negotiated carefully between researcher and participant group. Researchers do have to work collaboratively and they cannot ever assume that the data, or the right to produce publications, is theirs.

Kaupapa Maori research can have a narrow focus, particularly when it has an emphasis on empowerment for Maori. As with other qualitative research methodologies, this may result in criticisms that kaupapa Maori research is biased and cannot be objective or neutral. At times, this may be true—the need to benefit Maori through research is a political activity like any other critical research strategy, and kaupapa Maori research is not alone in its aims to empower people (Gibbs, 2005; Glover, 2002). In fact, not all Maori benefit from kaupapa Maori research (Bishop, 1996); often it is just the immediate group of participants who gain, and we may be a long way from where kaupapa Maori research achieves many of its emancipatory goals for the wider Maori population. The focus on empowerment leads to another question: is kaupapa Maori research not just another empowerment-based strategy, rather than a unique approach? The answer here is no, because kaupapa Maori research has been developed by Maori, for Maori, and it incorporates Maori world views and practices which are uniquely Maori. Some elements of kaupapa Maori research are similar to participatory action research (PAR), and some elements do draw upon other research strategies. However, kaupapa Maori research is its own philosophy and strategy.

Kaupapa Maori research, as mentioned before, is time-consuming compared with other types of research, although it depends somewhat on the researcher, the people, the question, and so on. It certainly does take a great deal of preparation, and extra time is needed for substantial consultations with Maori people—these therefore need to be factored into any timescale for research. Taking into account these criticisms, a number of Maori researchers have carried out kaupapa Maori research projects, and some of these are summarized in the following section.

Kaupapa Maori Research Processes in Action

The next section provides three summaries of kaupapa Maori research carried out by Maori researchers. The summaries are inevitably incomplete and provide only a limited snapshot of some of the practices undertaken and issues involved in kaupapa Maori research. There is very little published material on kaupapa Maori research; most of what is available is from theses and Internet sources. Two of the three accounts are provided by Eketone (2005) and Walker (2002), who draw upon material from their Masters' theses. The other, by Helen Wihongi (2002), draws on material from her Ph.D. studies. Wihongi's work is written up by Anita Gibbs, and Walker and Eketone refer to their own thesis work.

Maatua Whangai O Otepoti/an Indigenous Form of Foster Care in Dunedin (Walker, 2002)

The design and conduct of this research collected discourses from individual caregivers within Maatua Whangai O Otepoti, roughly translated as an indigenous form of foster care in Dunedin. A detailed record of these discourses was obtained through individual (kanohi ki te kanohi) interviews and through collective means by way of hui (gatherings). These discourses explored five basic categories:

1. The induction into the Maatua Whangai Programme.
2. The meaning of Maatua Whangai for the participants.
3. The manipulation and use of the programme by the 'Department of Social Welfare' (statutory social welfare service with responsibility for oversight of Maatua Whangai).
4. The effects of Maatua Whangai.
5. The future implications.

Once participants had been interviewed, the above categories were summarized, analysed, and presented back to participants. Key findings were that:

- Caring for Maori young people was the most important part of the mahi (work).
- This mahi had its costs in terms of their own families, children, and finances.
- Support from the Department of Social Welfare generally was negligible.
- However, individual Departmental (DSW) Maatua Whangai workers were supportive.
- The participants were their own support whanau (family), and it was their personal networks which kept Maatua Whangai alive.
- The young people who were placed in their care were often really disturbed.
- Some of the relationships that developed have become long-term.

The analyses of the discourses lead to possible solutions to the concerns raised by the participants. These solutions were based upon tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) principles. This meant that, in practice, iwi, hapu, and whanau control was critical, as was returning fostercare to a pre-colonial concept of Maatua Whangai (literal translation: 'feeding parent').

In terms of this research project, it was important to ask the right questions to guarantee the emergence of kaupapa Maori research practice principles. The methodology utilized needed to place Maori with the locus of control over the research, and Bishop's (1996, p. 22) kaupapa Maori principles of initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation, and accountability were used (Walker, 2002). These principles and the subsequent questions generated provided a framework for researching within a Maori context.

Initiation

In a technical sense, the research was initiated by the researcher (Walker) as a result of his own personal involvement in Maatua Whangai in Dunedin. The work of formulating aims, writing of the research proposal, design, setting-up supervision, ethical approval, the initial interviews and questions, and initial writing were undertaken by the researcher. However, these tasks were reviewed and restated by the participants at the initial interviews, and subsequent hui (gatherings) held to discuss the major findings that emerged from the data.

Benefits

There are a number of groups and individuals who 'benefited' (Bishop, 1996) in a variety of ways from this research, including the researcher, the participants, Otakau Runanga (Local tribal Council), and Te Runanga o Nga Tahu (Corporate tribal Council). This study supported the cultural and language aspirations of Maori by providing evidence which gave voice to and validated Maori-lived experience. The use of whakawhanaungatanga extended and supported whakapapa, tikanga, and te reo. Finally, the University was given a unique piece of research to use as a resource. The Otakau Runanga and Te Runanga O Ngai Tahu have been provided with empirical data that will strengthen their social service research base, especially in terms of social service partnerships with the Crown. The researcher gained personal satisfaction, extended his research base and skills, and gained a master's qualification.

Representation

In terms of 'representation' (Bishop, 1996), it was the participants and the researcher together who decided what constituted an adequate depiction of their social reality concerning the Maatua Whangai Programme. The written text (Walker, 2002) represented their interests, needs, and concerns. Much of the work of the thesis was done by the researcher, but it would not have been possible without the foundation of hard work by the participants. Regarding agency, the participants were able to operate independently of the determining constraints of social structure, i.e. the University. However, in other ways, their agency was undermined by the structural impositions of a university setting. The transcribing and coding of the transcripts raised issues of representation and control. Te Henepe, cited in Bishop (1995), states that: 'only

collaborative coding would be legitimately representational' (p. 218). The researcher interpreted the research initially himself, but because their agency was important, interpretation of the data was also done by the participants. The voice that came through in the research was that of the participants, and the narrative was created by them, in conjunction with the researcher. The findings of the research represented shared meanings.

Legitimacy

In terms of 'legitimation' (Bishop, 1996), the thesis had the authority of the participants and the University of Otago, even though all the data were processed by the researcher. The results of the processing were considered by the participants at two hui to decide what was accurate, true, and complete in the thesis. The results were all stored by the researcher. The findings were theorized by the researcher with feedback from the respondents.

Accountability

With regard to 'accountability' (Bishop, 1996), the researcher was accountable to both the participants and his supervisors through a variety of processes. The research findings will be accessible to anyone through the University Library but will also be distributed by the researcher, to the participants, Otakau Runanaga, Te Runanga o Nga Tahu, the University of Otago, and the general Maori population, in a variety of ways. This process was decided by the respondents, the researcher, and the University of Otago.

The researcher has also generalized the use of this framework (and taught it to students) as an evaluation tool. It is a straightforward and practical way to check if a programme, research method, policy, or institutional arrangement is useful to Maori.

Tapuwae: Waka[1] as a Vehicle for Community Action (Eketone, 2005)

Anaru Eketone did an evaluation of Tapuwae, a drink-driving prevention programme incorporating Polynesian outrigger canoes and traditional Maori safety concepts. Tapuwae was developed from another programme called Waka Taua that the Ngati Raukawa people of the Waikato region had first devised. Tapuwae was a holistic Maori programme aimed at Maori, run by Maori in a Maori context, and utilizing Maori concepts.

The research on Tapuwae had to meet three requirements. First, it had to be rigorous enough to fulfil the requirements of a master's degree thesis. Second, as the research was 'owned' and mandated by those involved in Tapuwae, it had to fulfil their needs, which included an evaluation for their funding agency. Third, the research sought to provide supporting documentary evidence to other Maori projects using a holistic approach.

Often, health promotion and education programmes are funded and targeted at specific problems, based on 'Western' values, with little recognition of the wider

benefits and outcomes of programmes that operate from a Maori cultural base. An evaluation was therefore undertaken, to evaluate both the direct outcomes of the programme (meaning those derived from the contracted outputs of the project), and the wider benefits of a kaupapa Maori strategy and the processes within that strategy for Maori.

The research employed techniques widely used in other qualitative research, namely a case-study approach using PAR and a data-analysis strategy using the 'Achieving Better Community Development' framework (Barr & Hashagen, 2000). These approaches analysed the Inputs (resources), Outputs (those things delivered by the organization), Processes (those things that took place to turn inputs into outputs and outcomes), and Outcomes (those things that are the effects of the project). Data-gathering techniques included:

- document analysis of meeting minutes, correspondence, reflective journals, and reports;
- face-to-face interviews with those involved;
- before-and-after questionnaires with every participant of the programme;
- focus groups with key stakeholders;
- reflections from the presentation of findings to stakeholders.

The evaluation showed a marked change in attitude to 'drink driving' among those involved while also identifying a number of other positive outcomes. Some of these were practical, such as an increase in physical activity, the redevelopment of a Maori community centre in a rural community, and an identified increase in local, regional, and national networks. Others were more social and spiritual, such as an identified increase in self-esteem, a strengthening of Maori cultural expression and identity, and an increased social capital in the Maori community.

As stated, what was also of interest were kaupapa Maori processes that needed to take place to achieve these outcomes. Significant communication needed to take place: 'kanohi ki te kanohi' (face to face); this was particularly so for the men involved, and included allowing time for whakawhanaungatanga.[2] One of the significant enabling factors (which was also a unifying factor) was that all the people who implemented and oversaw the programme were from the same iwi (tribal) group. The project involved waka (canoes) which were seen as a strength of that tribal group and so meant a greater commitment to the project as tribal pride was on the line. The project was also supported by other Maori in the community because it followed Maori processes, it had a focus on strengthening 'tikanga Maori' (Maori culture, custom, and behaviour), and it was recognized as a 'by Maori, for Maori' project.

Maori Women's Experience of Cervical Screening (Wihongi, 2002)

Helen Wihongi (2002) drew upon Bishop's (1995, 1996) methodology and discussion of Kaupapa Maori research when she began her Ph.D. project on Maori women's experience of cervical screening. Wihongi described how she took 2.5 years exploring her research question with whanau, hapu, and iwi, as well as with academic advisors, before

even undertaking any data collection. She highlighted how the key principle of whakawhanaungatanga was essential in underpinning the process of research and that at an early stage, she established what she called a research whanau of interest. For her, this group included: Maori who were knowledgeable about tikanga (protocols), academics who were knowledgeable about research, representatives from Maori organizations, other Maori who could help, and non-Maori who were knowledgeable about her topic. It was therefore a large group. She used to have regular meetings with some of the group and less regular meetings with others in the group.

Wihongi said her motivation for researching the topic of Maori women's experience of cervical screening was that her research would benefit women from her own iwi. The research topic had not originated from her but from her own people. This was critical to the success of the overall project on such a sensitive topic. Without the support of her own iwi, hapu, and whanau, she would never have gained access to participants.

Wihongi was required to follow Maori protocol when consulting Maori, and she had a Maori cultural advisor who assisted and supported her whenever necessary. One issue that was clarified with her advisor early on was that of tino rangatiratanga—Wihongi had to assure her Maori whanau that self-determination and governance would be respected. She described at one point how there were tensions between her own academic background and expectations, and that of her whanau, hapu, and iwi. Wihongi said that she had to let go of control of the research process, and allow her whanau to take it on; in other words, they became her co-researchers. The whanau helped considerably with recruiting participants. One particular community leader with many networks and contacts was able to recruit 30 potential participants. Wihongi chose to conduct four hui discussions (like focus groups) and use a questionnaire to prompt discussion. Wihongi originally had not planned to use a questionnaire, but her participants wanted one and helped devise the questions. In the end, Wihongi found using the questionnaire very helpful, especially for extra data collection from the various hui.

Wihongi described how key concepts like whakapapa and reciprocity were critical because they facilitated the sharing of information, the provision of services, and participation in the benefits of research. At the end of data collection when Wihongi wrote up the research findings, she involved her whanau in developing the conclusions, until they were satisfied with the overall picture of the research. The whanau also made the decision about dissemination of findings, to whom they would share findings and their format.

Conclusions

At the heart of kaupapa Maori research is the desire for research to be by Maori, for Maori, using Maori cultural perspectives. It is also a strategy for the empowerment and self-determination of Maori. Kaupapa Maori research can redress some of the past imbalances and is a perspective ensuring new ways of asking, seeing, and doing. Kaupapa Maori research has begun to restore the faith of Maori people in research. The Maori have started to trust researchers (Maori researchers), and they hope that such research can produce beneficial outcomes for Maori.

Kaupapa Maori research has shown itself as a radical, emancipatory, empowerment-oriented strategy and collaborative-based process, and when it is used systematically it can produce excellent research which can lead to improved policy, practice, and individual outcomes for Maori people. It may be that kaupapa Maori research is not suitable for all research involving Maori; however, it does guarantee participants that they have substantial control over key tasks, for example the interpretation and dissemination of findings, in a similar fashion to the way that service-user-controlled research has increased the voice of service users (Gibbs, 2005).

Kaupapa Maori research is a flexible research strategy, and many data-gathering methods could be applied within it; however, it does have clear philosophies, principles, and practices, which must always be respected. Lessons from kaupapa Maori research can be applied to research more generally, and by clarifying the main principles and processes of kaupapa Maori research and illustrating these with reference to recent research, it is hoped that some of the main ideas will be transferable to indigenous research in a global context. Nevertheless, the main beneficiaries are Maori, and kaupapa Maori research will always be focused on enhancing the quality of life for Maori.

Notes

[1]   Waka is often translated as 'canoe' but includes all forms of traditional water craft.
[2]   The process of identifying, maintaining or forming past, present, and future relationships (Bishop, 1996).

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