



NGĀ RINGA RANGAHAU RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM BOOK OF ABSTRACTS 2025

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Te Aho a Māui | EIT Hawke's Bay

From dark matter to Matariki mā Puanga, a journey of the cosmological, space and time



PAULINE HARRIS

From Matariki mā Puanga and the maramataka to Māori aims, aspirations, issues, opportunities, and concerns in Aerospace. This talk will highlight some of the areas of astronomy I have been involved in over the past 30 years, which have focused on understanding the celestial from both a Māori and Western perspective - and the space in between.

This journey began with a passion for science fiction, a fascination with Matariki, and a calling to better understand our cosmological origins. Over time, this path has taken me from exploring colliding black holes, supernova, gamma ray bursts and dark matter to working with Māori systems of time and space through our maramataka and tātai arorangi.

Whatever the research topic, the foundation has always been a deep fascination with the night sky, the celestial realm, and our world around us. This journey has taken me all over the world - from Peru, to China, Hawai'i, Rarotonga, and the United States. Whether it has been to learn about alignments of ancient ruins, to sailing on waka with our 'ohana, or to fostering collaborations with amazing Indigenous peoples at NASA - this journey has always been made possible by the support of whānau, friends, and colleagues.

I'm delighted to share this journey so far, which has been both a privilege and a challenge—navigating many uncertain times and spaces along the way. What I have learned, and truly believe, is that we are surrounded by a sea of potential and an expanse of infinite possibilities.

Changing Electricity Use Patterns on Dairy Farms to Reduce Peaks



JEFFERSON DEW

Reducing demand peaks and better utilising renewable energy resources requires consumers to be more flexible in their electricity use especially as more energy use is electrified and uses the same networks. Dairy farms are looking for opportunities to lower their costs and environmental impacts and offer a potential resource for greater reliability and lower emissions in the electricity system.

Through a case study of Wairarapa Moana farms we analysed 30-minute electricity use data and interviews with farm managers to find electricity usage patterns for milking and irrigation. From these usage patterns we determine the impacts of time-of-use pricing on the farms and further explore scenarios for farms to alter their electricity demand.

We found that typical milking times in the early morning and afternoon are well suited to avoid residential peak demand times, however energy use at the end of milking for refrigeration, effluent pumping, and water heating contribute disproportionately to energy costs once the peak tariff period begins.

Implications, future directions, or relevance to Ngāti Kahungunu
There are opportunities to mitigate the cost of usage during peak demand periods without changes to farm practices such as storing energy as ice, hot water, in batteries or pumped uphill. There are further opportunities and risks posed by farm practice changes such as Once A Day or 16-hour milking intervals which will require care that they do not inadvertently increase energy costs by using energy with higher cost or emissions intensity.

What's Your Wai? Rangahau on Applying Te Ao Māori for Freshwater Management



JAXSON TAUTALA-HANITA

Over the past 160 years, intensive agriculture, wai engineering, and resource diversions have adversely impacted wai māori in Aotearoa. These changes have disrupted rangatiratanga for Māori and awa. While recent policies, such as Te Mana o te Wai, aimed to restore balance by mandating councils to adhere to the National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management, Māori perspectives have historically been

marginalised in governance and monitoring of wai māori. Wai in its purest form has degraded, harming tangata whenua in the process.

Using a mixed-method approach, this study integrates qualitative interviews on wai management with quantitative analysis of collected and historical wai samples. By focusing on wai māori in the Manawatū headwaters, the research highlights the intersection of data and Māori perspectives.

Findings reveal that existing policies provide insufficient avenues for Māori to exercise rangatiratanga over their wai, underscoring the need for greater Indigenous integration in wai māori governance. Contributions from respondents, including those from a hui in the Manawatū, note severed whakapapa to awa and te taiao, causing generational conflict and severance from te ao Māori.

Implications from this rangahau that future directions of wai māori management needs to be inclusive and authentic between iwi/hapū and bodies of government, who have historically undermined the perspectives of Māori when it comes to the environment. Collaborative approaches with sufficient support is essential for improving elements of the environment, including awa and wai māori.

Ngāti Kahungunu and Climate Change Adaptation: Weaving Indigenous Knowledge into Climate Resilience



ASHLEIGH KEENAN

As the effects of climate change (CC) continue to manifest across the globe, already disadvantaged Indigenous communities are suffering the biophysical and spiritual impacts. CC compounds many of the challenges faced by the world's Indigenous communities, including food and water insecurity, access to sustainable livelihoods, pressures on health and wellbeing, and the maintenance of responsibilities

within their ancestral territories. Traditional ecological knowledge, rooted in Indigenous methodologies and relational ontologies put Indigenous Peoples in a unique position when faced with changes to the climate. In common with other Indigenous communities across the globe, the Indigenous Māori people in Aotearoa demonstrate an interpersonal and interspecies approach to CC.

This research seeks to add to Indigenous narratives on the importance of utilising Indigenous approaches to CC and explores the significance of adaptation strategies employed in the Ngāti Kahungunu region. It explores the region's developed or proposed climate adaptation strategies and their incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge.

Through qualitative interviews, community engagement, and literature analysis, this research identifies the importance of climate adaptation strategies, and how the Ngāti Kahungunu, a coastal community susceptible to CC's negative effect, proposes to adapt to their evolving environment.

Māori Midwives Revitalising Mātauranga Wāhine Māori Birth Wisdoms in Ngāti Kahungunu



JEAN TE HUIA

My doctoral thesis critically examines the historical, cultural, and political influences that disrupted traditional Māori birthing practices and explores pathways for revitalisation within a contemporary Ngāti Kahungunu context.

This study uses a historical approach to investigate pre-colonial Māori birth knowledge, the impact of Pākehā arrival in

1769, and the subsequent erosion of Indigenous birthing wisdom through colonisation, land dispossession, and assimilation policies. The research argues that the imposition of Western maternity systems marginalised Māori birthing knowledge, replacing it with frameworks rooted in White Supremacy and Eugenics ideologies.

These colonial interventions suppressed tikanga Māori in birth and severed intergenerational transmission of knowledge. Despite this, Māori people have shown resilience by maintaining Mātauranga wāhine, ensuring traditional wisdom persists within whānau practices, narratives, waiata, and pūrākau.

Spiritual care in healthcare in Aotearoa New Zealand



**HUKARERE VALENTINE
& ELEANOR BRITTAIN**

Wairua is often described as the spiritual dimension of lived reality, the “source of existent being and life” (Marsden, 2003, p.47), and necessary for attaining wellbeing, however wairua has consistently been marginalised within the Aotearoa New Zealand health system.

This research is a part of a three-year Health Research Council funded project across institutions and disciplines. The rōpū Māori aims to address issues faced by Māori and transform health services, towards a system that recognises the importance of the wairua and the spiritual dimensions of wellbeing.

The project centres co-design and participatory action research and is comprised of three phases. Phase one (Mar 2024-Feb 2025): Through whanaungatanga we have built relationships with tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti communities to start a national conversation about wairua and spiritual care. Phase 2 (Mar 2025-ongoing): We are presently mapping the spiritual care environment to identify the wairua and spiritual needs and provisioning within community and healthcare settings nationwide. Phase 3: We will hold national hui to co-design recommendations and an action plan to transform spiritual care.

Findings from whanaungatanga and wānanga in Ngāti Kahungunu include an assertion of the breadth of wairua. However, whānau were clear that the health system is aversive to wairua and spiritual dimensions. Whānau also had ideas and practicable solutions that could be implemented within health care, whereby whānau are centred in healing. There are significant implications for the health system and current health strategies in Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly in the contemporary political context in which Māori rights are being actively confronted and undermined.

Kaupapa Māori Culturally Safe Staffing Ratios (Māori nursing leaders' perspectives)



KERRI NUKU

This research takes to the next level what we already know about the concept of culturally safe staffing ratios and the importance of growing the Māori nursing workforce.

In this research we amplify the karanga of Māori nurses no longer with us, who planted the seed of culturally safe staffing ratios.

We also talk with Māori nursing leaders doing the mahi on the ground today and we consider the waves of relevant research and data. We also draw on matauranga Māori (to decolonise time in the nursing sector) which will be needed if every Māori who accesses health services in Aotearoa, are to get both the culturally and clinically safe health care they need and deserve.

Māori face the most severe health inequities of all peoples in Aotearoa. This research highlights that culturally safe staffing ratios, led by Māori nurses, can create better health outcomes for Māori and therefore, should be taken seriously – to be legislated and funded.

That call comes at a time when the who is who of the health system are talking about 'safe staffing ratios.' This research is a reminder to them not to leave behind, or leave out, the cultural element of such ratios.

"My view of being safe is being able to walk into a building and no one is going to stare at me for being brown or having a moko kauae... Cultural safety is where you can be who you are, who you are born to be, just being you, your authentic self and not being judged for it."

(Quote from a Māori patient whose experience is shared in the report)

First Law and the Constitutional Foundations of Aotearoa



CARWYN JONES

Ani Mikaere has stated that tikanga is the first law of Aotearoa. This has also been recognised by judgments of the Supreme Court of New Zealand. But what are the implications of recognising tikanga as the first law of Aotearoa? In particular, what does it mean for our understanding of the constitutional foundations of Aotearoa and, consequently, for future constitutional change?

If we take seriously the statement that tikanga is the first law of Aotearoa, then we ought to consider how to ground our constitution in tikanga and organise our institutions of government accordingly. Matike Mai Aotearoa (the Independent Working Group on Constitutional Transformation) initiated important conversations about those matters, which have continued to develop, including through the series of hui-ā-motu last year.

My research builds on those conversations and examines key developments in the history of Māori constitutional thought and practice, identifying ways in which tikanga operates as a legal and constitutional system. This enables us to build a picture of Māori constitutionalism. Better understanding Māori constitutionalism helps us to develop potential constitutional models for organising governance, public decision-making, law-making, and dispute resolution as between hapū and iwi, such as Ngāti Kahungunu, and the Crown.

He Waiata Tangi nā Te Rangitotohu



BRIAN MORRIS

One important means our tīpuna used during the nineteenth century to ensure the survival of oral traditions or kōrero tuku iho was to commit them to writing. These literary forms such as waiata were written either from memory or as they were dictated. Many of these texts in Māori are still unpublished. They often found in hand-written manuscript books, personal papers or collections.

This project analyses the Te Waiata a Rangitotohu manuscript of the Henare Matua Collection. I have analysed this waiata using a Ngā Mōteatea like methodology which looks carefully at the phrases, language features and literary devices of the waiata and then interprets further meaning from within the historical context of the tīpuna mentioned in the text.

Further more, I have worked to create a rangi for the waiata to be learned and sung again on our own marae, Te Rākauātahi in Takapau.

I will present the translation, the historical context and the likely meaning around the creation of the waiata alongside the rangi developed by descendants of Te Rangitotohu himself.

These manuscripts and their written texts are an invaluable record of our kōrero tuku iho. The texts themselves are a tribute to the style, art and beauty of tradition and to the vivid portrait they give of our tīpuna and their world. Our reclamation of those waiata is to be celebrated.

Kai hea ngā kura o mua? Te Ūranga Waka degree & honours graduates' feedback on the impact of these tohu on their lives



**PAREPUTIPUTI NUKU &
PAREKURA ROHE-BELMONT**

For 37 years, Te Ūranga Waka has been delivering te reo me ōna tikanga programmes and its degree and honours programmes for 25 of those. These programmes have significantly contributed to the revitalisation of te reo Māori in Ngāti Kahungunu, increasing the number of fluent speakers.

In 2010, a study was undertaken to assess the impact of graduates on their marae and communities to understand the graduates' contributions to the cultural and linguistic well-being of Ngāti Kahungunu.

15 years later, a follow-up study is planned which will include qualitative interviews to collect a sample of the overall graduates' feedback on how these programmes have impacted on their lives.

We aim to utilise a multi-method approach in this study. Firstly, an online survey and then an in-depth kanohi ki te kanohi interview with 10-20 graduates.

Feedback from attendees - Both the degree and honours are being reviewed this year, to establish whether the courses are still relevant. The degree will be delivered more flexibly, and the honours programme is to be redeveloped as two post-graduate qualifications.

Kei tua o te kupu tā he kura whenua, he kura reo, he kura tangata



HONE MORRIS

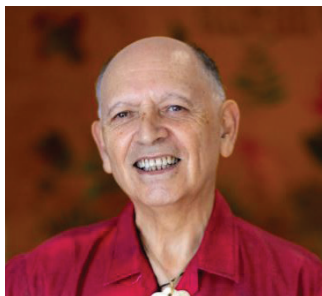
This research will explore the relationships over time between the land, (he kura whenua) the language (he kura reo) and the people (he kura tāngata) within the narratives pertaining to the lands and waterways, the language on the land and the ancestors connected to the land blocks, Rākoutātahi, Ōtāwhao, Whenuahou and Waikōpiro, in the Tamatea (Central Hawke's Bay) tribal district, incorporating the township of Takapau and surrounding areas.

This research dives into these narratives expressed during times of peace and times of conflict, quintessentially revealing a mindset that once walked side by side with the Gods and communicated to all living things as a brother or a sister. This is the story of the hapū of Tamatea- Heretaunga district and their lived experiences with the land. As this research embodies the adage that, “kei te whenua te reo, kei te reo te whenua”, a phrase borne out of initial discussions about my research which can be articulated as ‘the land is in the language and the language is in the land’, and the phrase, ‘the land remembers’(Logan, 1975).

This thesis answers the following question, “What was the relationship over time between the land, the language and the people within the specific land blocks bordering Te Awa Pokere a Tamakuku and its tributaries?”

To empower hapū of Tamatea to recognise their whakapapa and land connections through the words of tūpuna who knew clearly their whakapapa and connection to land.

“Kia areare ki ngā reo o ngā tīpuna” - multiple outputs arising from a longitudinal oral archives research project which began at EIT and Radio Kahungunu



**DR JOSEPH SELWYN
TE RITO**

This is a longitudinal research project which began some 20 years ago at EIT based on recordings of on-air conversations in the Māori language between two elderly Māori women speaking on Radio Kahungunu which started there as the culmination of the fulltime Te Toa Takitini Multimedia Studies course in 1988. The study is part of a broader movement to revitalise the Māori language in the wide HB region.

With funding from Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, the researcher gathered a team of staff from EIT and Radio Kahungunu to assist him. The long-term process involved – transcribing, translating, and a linguistic analysis of the recordings, other tangential projects, and a several outputs. Technological developments by Hohepa Spooner have seen the evolution from Word documents with CD recordings; to a single hard copy book with CD-ROM; to the recently launched updated version of the App which now contains three audio books, and advanced features and touchscreen operation on multiple devices.

The App, ‘Pukapuka Kōrero’, will enable Māori language learners to gain easy access to this online resource which focusses on the language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. Learners will be able to download the App to their own devices. The App models conversational language. Additionally, lists of vocabulary and metaphorical sayings have been identified – something highly sought after by language learners. The conversations also contain a wealth of mātauranga Māori.

This study is of high significance and direct relevance to Ngāti Kahungunu in its efforts to revitalise local dialects.

Development of Rauemi for Precision Health in Māori based on tikanga and mātauranga Māori



PHILLIP WILCOX

Precision health refers to medical interventions tailored to individuals based on their genetic makeup. In mainstream medical contexts, this typically involves DNA (genomic) information, as clinically collected family health data is limited. However, DNA-based predictions often rely on overseas datasets, primarily involving people of European descent, which have proven inadequate when applied to other populations. Bespoke rauemi (resources) must be developed for Māori if precision health is to be effective in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We have developed two key resources and conducted pilot studies to support the application of precision health for Māori. The first, He Kākano Māori Variome, is a restricted-access DNA variation database developed using a tikanga-based study design, with data from over 1,000 individuals of Māori descent. Participants retain ownership of their DNA. The second is a bespoke computational platform, informed by tikanga Māori, enabling researchers to access and analyse genomic and health data under Māori governance at all levels.

Implementing precision health in Aotearoa requires Māori-led approaches and resources that reflect Māori realities. Our internationally recognised research highlights the need for continued investment and stronger engagement from hāpori and Māori health providers to realise the full potential of personalised medicine.

Tāne – Tika Tonu: Rebuilding the Pā Tūwatawata for Tāne Wellbeing in Ngāti Kahungunu



ZACK MAKOARE

Cyclone Gabrielle deeply impacted Ngāti Kahungunu, intensifying isolation, economic hardship, and suicide-related trauma among tāne Māori. In response, the haka “Tika Tonu” has been a cultural anchor—affirming strength, renewal, and the value of Ngāti Kahungunu approaches to tāne Hauora.

As digital tools such as AI become more prominent in suicide prevention, this research emphasises the critical importance of upholding Ngāti Kahungunu tikanga and Māori data sovereignty to protect Kaupapa Māori approaches to hauora (Kukutai & Taylor, 2016).

A kaupapa Māori methodology guided this research (Pihama et al., 2002), with insights drawn from wānanga, pūrākau, and kanohi ki te kanohi kōrero with tāne, kaumātua, and hapū leaders. Te Pā Tūwatawata model—a traditional metaphor of protection—framed both the engagement process and thematic analysis, ensuring the integrity of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and whakapapa (Walker et al., 2006).

Participants identified a pressing need for safe, tikanga-based spaces for healing, storytelling, and restoring purpose. Three protective layers emerged: Tuku iho (ancestral identity), Tū āianeī (present support), and Whakatipuranga (future hope). These fostered improved wellbeing and stronger community connection.

Tāne – Tika Tonu reclaims traditional metaphors to meet modern mental health challenges. It affirms the necessity of iwi-led, culturally governed responses and cautions against impersonal, unsafe uses of AI in suicide prevention. Upholding tikanga and data sovereignty is vital to ensure meaningful, whānau-centred care within Ngāti Kahungunu contexts.

Collectively reclaiming ngā taonga tuku iho a hākuī, a hākorō, and authentically disseminating this knowledge through a localised early learning curriculum within Aotearoa



DIANA CRUSE

This research explores relationships between early childhood education settings and how Tangata Whenuatanga, specifically Kahungunutanga, and the matapono of Te Marautanga o Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa can impact localised curricula and early learning practice.

This Kaupapa Māori research used the pūrākau method to conduct semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with kaumātua across Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, complemented by two group hui with kaiako. The principles of taonga tuku iho (Smith, 1997) and manaakitanga underpinned community engagement, data collection, analysis, and dissemination of the findings.

Curricula grounded in Kahungunutanga foster early learning environments where tamariki experience being nurtured, whānau feel welcome, and kaiako feel valued. Applying the matapono of Wairuatanga enabled one centre to adopt a whānau approach to caregiving policy. The matapono of Kaitiakitanga led to the elimination of the use of disposable nappies at another centre. The matapono of Whakapapa saw an early learning centre commission a local kairaranga to weave wahakura for tamariki. The findings also underscored the influence of centre ownership and governance on the strategic direction of early learning settings.

The research establishes that a localised curriculum can support the wellbeing of tamariki and whānau, highlighting the importance of early learning environments built on responsive, reciprocal, and culturally responsible relationships. The matapono of Te Marautanga were demonstrated to have a transformative impact, and the value of cultural alignment and partnership in early childhood education was affirmed. Ownership and leadership of early learning settings clearly play a critical role in shaping strategic planning within these contexts.

A Kaupapa Māori Response to COVID-19: Heretaunga Marae and Hauora Māori Partnership for Pandemic Preparedness



RENEE LOVE

This research documents and evaluates the COVID-19 response delivered by six Heretaunga marae under the mantle of their own collective, Ngā Kairauhii, in partnership with Kahungunu Health Services, a trusted Hauora Māori provider. It aimed (1) to understand Māori community perceptions of health service accessibility during the COVID-19 pandemic; (2) to document the clinical and cultural pandemic response led by marae and Kahungunu Health Services;

and (3) to identify the essential features of an effective, culturally grounded infectious disease response for Māori.

The project is a kaupapa Māori, community-led study which engages over 250 Māori participants through wānanga and interviews investigating lived experience, cultural practices, and clinical innovation. The kaupapa Māori methodology weaves together tikanga, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and hauora frameworks.

Ongoing community hui, active involvement of Māori clinicians, and a shared governance model ensure cultural authenticity and clinical integrity. The study culminates in the co-development of a practical 'tool kit'—a resource to strengthen future Māori-led pandemic responses across marae, hapū and iwi.

This study exemplifies Indigenous leadership and self-determination in public health. It affirms that Indigenous knowledge, community-led governance, and equitable clinical partnerships are essential for building resilient, culturally safe, and effective public health systems in Aotearoa and beyond.

Te Whakataurite i te Mātauranga me te Marau ā-Kura. Rebalancing Mātauranga and School Curriculum



DR PIATA ALLEN

“Kei hopu tōu ringa ki te aka tāepa, engari kia mau ki te aka matua.” Drawn from the Tāwhaki narratives, this whakataukī appears in Pāngarau i roto i te Marautanga o Aotearoa (Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1996), embedding mātauranga Māori within the national curriculum. This presentation asks: Has curriculum development supported the illumination of mātauranga in compulsory schooling?

It summarises findings from my PhD, which examined the opportunities and challenges of repositioning mātauranga in schooling policy, curriculum, and pāngarau/mathematics classrooms. The research explored macro (policy and curriculum) and micro (school and classroom) affordances and constraints. Four data sources were used: a Bourdieusian literature analysis, interviews with pāngarau curriculum experts, and classroom observations in wharekura with ākonga in Years 7–10.

The analysis drew on Indigenisation (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018) and Cultural Symmetry (Meaney et al., 2021). The study identified wayfinding narratives, particularly uruuru whenua, as powerful opportunities to rebalance mātauranga and mathematics. These narratives link creative storytelling (te aka tāepa) and wayfinding instructions (te aka matua), producing pedagogies and learning experiences that are memorable and culturally grounded.

The research highlights specific opportunities for embedding Ngāti Kahungunu narratives into local curriculum, allowing students and teachers to explore mātauranga through multiple curriculum lenses. The Cultural Symmetry framework offers a way to draw on the resources of compulsory schooling to regenerate mātauranga Māori without causing further cultural harm.

How things need to work, for it to work for Māori – A kaumātua voice – aged care in Kahungunu



TUAKANA AUGUST

This research will enable the voice of kaumātua and their whānau, telling their stories about ageing, identifying their current state of health and wellbeing and recording their needs and aspirations for aging and for aged care. We identify priorities around aged care for kaumātua in Wairoa and the development of kaupapa Māori models of aged care.

A comprehensive literature review was followed up with community wānanga, focus group hui, engagement with health and social service providers, Iwi agencies and individual participant interviews with kaumātua. Consented recordings and transcriptions were undertaken, with thematic analysis and coding using NVivo.

The need for aged care solutions designed by Wairoa, for Wairoa, in Wairoa came through strongly with local solutions that meet the aspirations of kaumātua and their whānau with care needs. There is a need for an aged care facility in Wairoa and a 'caring for the carers' support service for those whānau caring for their pākeke and kaumātua at home.

Wairoa, with its socio-economic challenges, geographical isolation and extreme adverse weather events has no residential aged care facility. But there is a shared vision for Wairoa aged care where a facility can work alongside individuals and whānau who manage care at present. There is also a need for culturally safe care options led by Māori for Māori. Our findings, with Wairoa providers, kaumātua and whānau can enable solutions to drive the aspirations of establishing aged care services for Wairoa, grounded in kaupapa Māori, mobilising whānau as the leaders.

Building whanaungatanga to effectively communicate, lead and inspire others



SARAH NGAWATI

Communication and leadership should be synonymous with each other. Effective leadership strongly relies on how impactful one communicates with their followers, to lead, inspire and motivate toward achieving shared objectives.

The purpose of the presentation and research discussion is to introduce whanaungatanga as a model to support leaders, particularly in the middle-management arena, to create

a foundation for meaningful and effective communication streams with staff. I will introduce a whanaungatanga model that I have implemented as a people leader to induct new staff which will not only support Māori leaders but will also benefit Māori staff who are managed by non-Māori.

I will be using thematic analysis to ascertain how middle management leaders engage with staff and implement whanaungatanga. Secondary analysis will be conducted with staff to analyse how effective whanaungatanga has been to open lines of communication. I will analyse different communication strengths in Māori and non-Māori leaders and evaluate if these differences impact staff motivation or engagement.

While this research is not completed, the findings will determine if building whanaungatanga with staff contributes to effective communication and leadership. The analysis will also produce solutions for change for middle managers who do not have confidence communicating, whether it be between colleagues, their up-line management or staff. Discussion will provide insights for effective leadership and create an environment for invitational discourse. People leaders and employees alike will benefit by establishing meaningful relationships that contribute to more effective workplaces.

Racism, marginalism and tokenism: the experiences of Māori dietitians



RHIANNON JONES

Racism, marginalism, and tokenism have ongoing impacts on Indigenous health professionals globally. In Aotearoa, the negative impacts of these mistreatments are documented at a population level, yet evidence specific to health professionals is less well understood.

A recent study (TWT) helped to illuminate the Aotearoa context, revealing high levels of exposure to racism and discrimination in training and workplace environments experienced by Māori medical students and doctors. With support from TWT, this research project was undertaken at the directive of Māori dietitians to document the experiences of racism, marginalism, and tokenism among Māori dietitians and students.

This project used a mixed-methods approach grounded in Kaupapa Māori theory. An online cross-sectional survey was distributed to all members of Te Kahui Manukura o Kai Ora (the Māori dietitians and student dietitians rōpū) in 2023, and a focus group was held at the 2024 Noho Marae.

Māori dietitians are exposed to high levels of racism and discrimination in their training and workplaces. Racism, tokenism, and marginalism are embedded in the processes and practices of these institutions, resulting in culturally unsafe situations, challenges to identity, and negative impacts on wellbeing. Māori dietitians developed coping mechanisms to prioritise working with whānau Māori, and despite these mistreatments, there was widespread positivity for the future of Māori in dietetics.

Māori dietitians have provided direction for delivering results to key organisations. The extensive nature of these experiences requires transformation from organisations to create safe environments free from racism, tokenism, and marginalism for Māori dietitians now and in the future.

“Ngā pakiaka a Te Rēhia, ka tipua i te ao rangatahi” Kapa Haka and Healing for Rangatahi Māori



JADE MARINO GIFFORD

“Pāpaki whakapapa, Pāpaki ahurea, Pāpaki orange, Ki ngā pakiaka a te rēhia, Kia tipua ai i te ao Rangatahi.” This research explores Kapa Haka as an avenue of wellbeing for rangatahi Māori, focusing on their experiences and its potential to nurture identity, healing, and belonging. It builds on the findings of the author’s Master’s thesis completed at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington in 2021.

Grounded in Kaupapa Māori theory and approaches, this research employed Wānanga as a powerful qualitative method for co-constructing knowledge with rangatahi Māori. Claiming Wānanga as method contributes to the decolonial project not by inventing something new, but by recognising the sophistication and authority of Indigenous knowledge-making processes. This research weaves together participant experiences with literature, cultural theory, and contemporary discourse.

Findings reveal the dynamic value of Kapa Haka in addressing cultural disconnection, intergenerational trauma, and in facilitating healing. These benefits are especially relevant given current challenges facing rangatahi Māori in Aotearoa, including the mental health crisis, climate change tensions, and systemic discrimination.

This work joins broader Māori calls advocating for Kaupapa Māori modes of healing and presents Kapa Haka as a legitimate, culturally grounded pathway to wellbeing. It contributes to the wave of decolonial research highlighting the transformative power of tikanga, kawa, mātauranga Māori, and creative expression in countering colonial harm. Kapa Haka emerges not just as performance, but as resistance, reconnection, and renewal for rangatahi Māori — including those of Ngāti Kahungunu and beyond.

Rongo ā Puku, Puku as a source of intelligence to inform well-being



DR SALLY RYE

My research investigates the revitalisation of more traditional knowledge, practices and understandings related to kai in an effort to optimise the health and well-being of Māori and Indigenous Peoples.

‘Rongo ā Puku’ is the methodological approach developed within a kaupapa Māori framework. It conceptualises Puku (gut) as a

source of ‘intelligence’ to inform well-being and is an Indigenous approach to hauora Māori. Employing both Māori and western approaches the method includes a comprehensive literature review; the collation of pūrākau; individual and focus group interviews; online surveys; hau kōrero, and an analysis of kōrero tawhito.

This research found that whānau have the capability to engage in their own well-being solutions. It outlines a set of key findings that discuss the importance of articulating our own Indigenous solutions for well-being. This work contributes towards whānau understandings on how we can exercise rangatiratanga through revitalising and applying traditional ways of knowing, being and doing towards improving the health of our communities.

This research is of particular relevance to Ngāti Kahungunu at a time when Māori are developing increasing emphasis on self-development strategies and the recognition of solutions informed by Indigenous knowledge. This rangahau argues how ‘kai ora and puku ora’ might be normalised as an Indigenous approach to well-being. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to the reclamation of our own ‘hauora’ knowledge, practices, and values.

Taku koha ki te āhuru mōwai o Kurawaka



PIRI TE RAINA GALBRAITH

This is the continuation of a solid legacy founded over 25 years ago by Te Raina Ferris, tōku Māmā, in the artform of te reo karanga. I intend to share the impact that Kurawaka Retreat Centre has had on the wāhine of Ngāti Kahungunu and beyond, presenting the koha from a Professional Practice Research Project and the leadership within. We explore the attributes exemplified through our wānanga spaces, guided by the artform of Karanga and grounded in our tirohanga Māori worldview and theoretical frameworks.

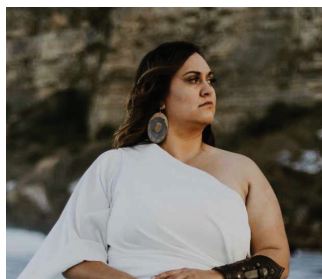
The koha is examined — what it is, its origins, and its deep connection to our teachings. The ultimate aim is to ensure this kaupapa is present, nourished, sustained, and enduring. Our goal is to strengthen the paekaranga of all marae and ensure our people stand firmly in their mana motuhake, mo ake tonu atu.

The framework developed through this research is expressed through RERE: Reawaken, Educate, Realign, Empower — amplified through Wairuatanga, Manaakitanga, Pukengatanga, Ūkaipōtanga, and Rangatiratanga. These represent spiritual alignment, kindness, teachings and achievements, strengthened home connections, and accountable, chiefly leadership.

Insights are drawn from key cultural pillars: Karakia, Pūrākau, Mōteatea, and Whakapapa, supported by statistical data and testimonies.

Excellence in the propagation of mātauranga Māori is critical. We are the vessels of knowledge transmission. It is our responsibility to preserve the teachings of our tīpuna, uphold tikanga tuku iho, and protect our taonga tuku iho — while creating space for new knowledge and lived experiences to emerge through each wānanga.

Tino Rangatiratanga- Deconstructing and Reconstructing the Ideology of Māori Sovereignty



GABRIELLE KUPA

This research examines the ideology of Māori sovereignty (tino rangatiratanga) through the collective experiences of Māori impacted by colonisation. It responds to the disconnection between Māori and their cultural identity by exploring how the revitalisation of mātauranga Māori can restore wellbeing and self-determination.

The significance of this study lies in its ability to bridge academic research with lived realities, offering a culturally grounded framework that reclaims Māori autonomy. By centring Indigenous knowledge systems and healing practices, it empowers whānau to define their pathways to ora and reaffirm their tino rangatiratanga.

The research employs a Kaupapa Māori methodology, guided by the pūrākau of Tāne-nui-a-Rangi as a metaphor for ascending toward higher knowledge. A combination of wānanga, whānau surveys, interviews with Māori healers, and analysis of quantitative Māori data such as Census statistics was used to provide a holistic understanding of well-being from a Māori perspective.

Key findings show a clear decline in Māori well-being when identity is defined through non-Māori systems. In contrast, participants consistently identified whakapapa, tikanga, and rongoā as essential elements in restoring wellbeing and tino rangatiratanga. The research highlights the inadequacy of Western frameworks to capture Māori realities or aspirations.

For Ngāti Kahungunu and Māori katoa, the implications are profound. Without understanding the policies and systems that have severed us from our sovereignty, we risk further disconnection. By reclaiming our narratives through informed, collective research, we create a legacy grounded in our tikanga, a foundation for future generations to build upon, guided by our aspirations rather than colonial definitions.

Restoring Rongomaiwahine Tamatakutai Kahungunu Grammar: Tohunga Reo of the Ancient Wānanga ki Wairarapa



NGAIRE REWAREWA ABEN

Tohunga of the Wānanga spoke knowledge recorded by Scribes. That recorded knowledge reveals a syntax unique to our ways of communicating. My PhD research examines the reo of the Tohunga to reveal a grammar born of our ancient world, not of the English world. I am certain we can elevate te reo teaching and learning pedagogy, based on old recorded Rongomaiwahine, Tamatakutai, and Kahungunu reo.

Since the teaching of te reo Māori in schools, some teachers and leaders have relied on English grammar to teach te reo Māori. This approach is a confusing conundrum and raises questions like “why do we rely on English grammar to learn te reo Māori?”; “why do speakers and learners say that te reo Māori is ‘back to front’ when applying English grammar to the Māori language?” And for our parents, born in the 1940s and 50s, the conundrum was and continues to be, “The second language speakers of the 70s, 80s and 90s speak new Māori, why can’t I understand what they are saying”?

Tohunga reo illuminates syntax specific to our language. That syntax shines direct light to the oral language of old. It illuminates the ways to restore the language of our ancestors. When our syntax or grammar guides teaching and learning, te reo Māori speakers will learn the flow, pace and place of words according to Our people. And when Our reo is resounding, the conundrums from the 1970s will fade into the past.

He Uri ō Ngāti Kahungunu, He Tangata Pākiki: A Personal Reflection on Curiosity, Identity, and Becoming a Researcher



SUZANNE PITAMA

In this presentation, I reflect on a personal and professional journey shaped by whakapapa, place, and an enduring sense of curiosity. As an uri of Ngāti Kahungunu, I draw on the whakataukī “He tangata pākiki, he tangata mātauranga” – a curious person is a person of knowledge – to trace how questions born from lived experience, community commitments, and a desire to understand and uplift Māori realities led to a pathway in research.

This kōrero traverses the often nonlinear journey of ‘becoming’ a researcher – not just through academic milestones, but through growing confidence in positionality, navigating institutions not built for us, and finding courage to centre kaupapa Māori approaches in all aspects of inquiry. I share key lessons learned along the way: the importance of listening deeply, holding space for complexity, and remaining accountable to those whose stories and futures are entangled with our research.

Ultimately, this talk is not only about my own story, but about the collective potential of Māori-led inquiry grounded in whakapapa, tikanga, and pākikitanga (curiosity). It is a call to nurture our own and each other’s questions, to value the knowledge we carry innately, and to encourage emerging Māori scholars to see their curiosity not as a deviation from the path – but as the path itself.

Kaumātua Ringarangahau Manaaki



MATTHEW BENNETT



CHARLIE LAMBERT



SID ROPITINI

On the invitation of Ngāti Pāhauwera Development Trust, kairangahau of Te Tātai Hauora o Hine, led by Director Professor Bev Lawton (Ngāti Porou) – Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year 2025 - have been working in partnership to improve outcomes and support for whānau in Wairoa and beyond.

Starting with ‘He Korowai Manaaki Te Wairoa’ (a pregnancy care pathway offering augmented support), followed by ‘Whakapounamu Mana Wāhine’ (exploring the impact of methamphetamine on hapū whānau), and more recently ‘He Tapu Te Whare Tangata – Empowering Rural Solutions’ (offering the human papillomavirus self-test with point-of-care testing) this community-based rangahau hauora has been recognised by the Health Research Council as making a real difference to the health of māmā, pēpi, and whānau Māori.

The work has contributed to changes in the National Cervical Screening Programme and overall continues to inform wider programmes and associated lobbying to see system transformation to better meet the needs of whānau Māori.

Wairua as a catalyst for public service transformation



KRISTEN MAYNARD

Wairua is often acknowledged as the most fundamental and powerful dimension of a person, essential to life, and the primary source of human wellbeing. Yet, wairua is hardly understood in global-Western public administration systems, like in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Inspired by the idea that wairua could help realise a more humane and effective public service in Aotearoa I deeply examined three wairua-centred/conscious practices in a public sector context as part of my doctoral research.

Using a wairua-centric kaupapa Māori methodology with an interpretivist twist, the research sought to ascertain what a wairua-centred/conscious approach was understood to be.

It also examined the effects, and potential enablers or constraints to authentically incorporating a wairua way of working in the public service. The case information was interpreted thematically and iteratively using abductive reasoning and lived experience.

This presentation will communicate some of the key findings and conclusions of this research, and articulate why and how wairua and a wairua way of working could potentially transform the Aotearoa public service.

Taonga Ihi Orooro – The source and development of a wairua-centric Kaupapa Māori sacred sound healing practice



WAIRETI ROESTENBURG

He Atua! He Tangata!
You are divine! You are human?
(*Dr Rangimārie Te Turuki*
Arikirangi Rose Pere)

To become all of who we are,
Nanny Rose (tohunga, tohuna)
urged us to recognise and
release both our divine and
human natures.

At our 2012 Ngāti Kahungunu Rongoā Hui, she shared teachings on ihirangaranga — the vibrational source-stuff of the universe that moves through us, inspiring renewal, healing, and wellbeing. These energies inform our unconquerable vitalities — our capacity not only to survive, but to thrive.

Building on this directive, I have woven together reawakened whakapapa giftings, decades of wairua-centric practice, and obsidian-edged praxis-based Kaupapa Māori scholarship (including doctoral research) to emerge and share Taonga Ihi Orooro. These taonga support us to become more aware of, and in conscious relationship with, ihirangaranga as it flows through our spirits, hearts, minds, and bodies — both personal and collective.

Taonga Ihi Orooro form the foundation of Te Wānanga Wairua Māori — a wairua-centric Kaupapa Māori practice, rangahau and research enterprise.

This presentation shares the story and development of these taonga. As Nanny Rose reminded us, what cannot be recognised cannot be released — this applies not only to our trauma and harm, but also to our healing and revitalisation.

This work expresses and enacts Nanny Rose's vision: to inspire, restore, and release the healing, wholeness, and wellbeing of our Ngāti Kahungunu people, lands, and life-ways.

Testing nine Critical Success Factors for Tribal Self-governance in health care in the United States



MARA ANDREWS (MBA, PhD)

This PhD study examined a Critical Success Factor (CSF) Framework for Tribal Self-Governance (TSG) in health care, drawing on the experiences of Native American and Alaska Native Tribes in the U.S. It aimed to validate, refine, and critique this framework to support Indigenous development, including Tribal Self-Governance and self-determination, in Aotearoa New Zealand.

A mixed-methods approach was used, including documentary analysis, observation, literature review, and expert interviews (n=10), with member-checking interviews from U.S. TSG practitioners to provide further validation. Analysis followed a deductive framework based on the author's original CSFs, guided by the UK's National Centre for Social Research Framework Analysis Model.

Findings confirmed the validity of the nine-factor CSF Framework, with refinements to sequence, content, and structure. The factors were reorganised into three stages: commitment and initiation, operationalisation, and sustainability — offering a logical pathway for those beginning the self-governance journey. Factors were redefined and prioritised based on perceived importance and participant feedback. While no major gaps were found, critical insights revealed contextual cautions for practitioners and Tribal governors.

The refined CSF Framework aligns with Te Tiriti and Kaupapa Māori principles, and a tailored implementation plan for Aotearoa is proposed. This research enhances understanding of effective Tribal Self-Governance models and their relevance in Indigenous contexts — including Ngāti Kahungunu and other iwi/hapū. Over 60% of U.S. Tribes now govern and deliver health care aligned to their cultural values, highlighting devolution as a key interest for Māori self-determination in Aotearoa.

NOTES

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