# What is whānau research, and how is whānau research being conducted?

## A literature review for the Whakapapa Research Project

Te Atawhai o Te Ao
Independent Māori Institute for Environment & Health

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**He mihi**

E ngā tātai whakapapa o tēnā whānau, o tēnā hapū, o tēnā iwi, tēnei te mihi maioha ki kautau.  Tangi hotuhotu ana te ngākau ki rātau kua riro atu ki tua o te ārai.  Haere, e hoki.  Ki tātau, te kaupapa tangata, tēnā rā tātau katoa.

# Introduction

In line with the overall research theme of whakapapa (genealogy; genealogical table; lineage; descent) for the Whakapapa Research Project, a focus on whanau (family) and research with whānau is important. While many researchers have engaged whānau in research to determine their perspectives on various topics, few have explored notions of whānau, whānau research, whānau researchers, or how and who should undertake whānau research. As a result, there is little consensus on the definition of whānau research. Still, some have theorised motivations for undertaking research with whānau; how whānau, in its various descriptions and definitions, can become integral to the research process; and, whether whānau research should follow a similar approach to Māori (indigenous inhabitants of Aotearoa) research that is advocated as by, for, and with Māori.

This review discusses literature relating to the nature and essence of whānau, including whānau participation, engagement, responsiveness, resilience, endurance, situation, position, life, arrangements, experience, knowledge, and status. This review also focuses on both traditional and contemporary notions of whānau and how researchers and practitioners alike have drawn from these. Themes found in the literature include: incorporating the concept of whānau and all its intricacies into traditional theories of belonging, identity, and whakapapa; the influence of whānau on the intergenerational transfer of knowledge; the increasing importance of whānau ability to motivate, influence, manage, and control change; and, whānau as an essential component of research.

# Understandings of whānau

To identify what whānau research is, then describe how whānau research is being conducted, requires an understanding of whānau and its myriad of representations and interpretations. What seems to be clear is that the concept of whānau remains the core and enduring socialising structure of Māori society, both traditionally and contemporarily. Custom and tradition point to definitions of whānau that highlight belonging and identity through shared genealogy, kinship ties, shared ancestors, collective responsibilities, obligations, and are comprised of three or more generations. It was a responsibility as well as an obligation for older generations within the whānau structure to transmit or pass on their knowledge to younger generations, via Māori oral traditions and practices. The system of education, therefore, was aural and visual, utilising various forms of memory retention tools such as waiata (song), pūrākau (story), human experiences, and relationships with land, rivers, mountains, bush, and sea. Whānau were the educators and knowledge holders of their own past, present, and future. As whānau grew they became hapū (cluster of extended families, descended from an eponymous ancestor); as such whānau could belong to several hapū at any one time. Transmitting knowledge, therefore, became an integral part of sustaining whānau connections to land, people, places, and keeping those linkages and relationships alive (Durie, 1994; Moeke-Pickering, 1996; Te Rangi Hiroa, 1982).

Over centuries, the traditional conceptualisations of whānau have become contemporised, much of it as a result of the impacts of colonisation and gradual whānau Māori migration to towns, cities, and eventually overseas. Cunningham et al. (2005) suggest that the

'whānau model' based on traditional tenets, principles, and rules remains relevant and can be transported outside of its traditional orientation to "other social groupings giving rise to the kaupapa-based whānau [purpose-specific whānau]" (Cunningham et al., 2005, p. 8), as defined by Durie, (1994), Metge (1995), Moeke-Pickering (1996), and Smith (1997). Tomlins-Jahnke and Gillies (2012) maintain that modern whānau Māori realities are diverse and complex, suggesting that whānau identify with a range of groupings that operate continually and simultaneously in both a traditional whakapapa or kaupapa (purpose; topic) reality. Sometimes they conflict, but most times, they are skillfully managed. One simple example is where a sole-parent kuia (elderly woman; grandmother) looks after her mokopuna (grandchild), so that her sole-parent daughter can attend a kōhanga reo (language nest; early childhood learning centre for Māori immersion) or kura kaupapa Māori (Māori immersion school, generally primary, underpinned by Te Aho Matua) hui-ā-whānau (family meeting; family gathering).

# Whānau-based models in education

While many whānau remain connected through whānau, hapū, and iwi (tribe) affiliation, and despite some also associating with more modern forms of whānau groupings, there are large numbers of whānau who struggle to maintain connections with their tribal area. These whānau rely more heavily on being connected to other whānau Māori through a range of different social or other activity groups (Cunningham et al., 2005; Durie, 1994; Metge, 1995; Moeke-Pickering, 1996; Tomlins-Jahnke & Gillies, 2012). The types of kaupapa-based whānau include kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori, wharekura (Māori language immersion school, generally secondary, undepinned by Te Aho Matua), sports, religious, workplace, and interest groups. The word 'whānau' has become embedded in a range of policies in education, health, social service, economics, and politics synonymous to family and families, and commonly referred to as nuclear or extended families. These varied interpretations have had a major role in establishing whānau as a key structural element in whānau-based models, that have been explored and developed to provide avenues for the provision of health, social, and education services to or for Māori.

For example, Pohatu (2015) indicates that experiences of mātauranga (knowledge) should be drawn from whānau first. Whānau, according to Pohatu, are a rich source of knowledge and experience, and the potential power of whānau should be considered as highly-valued companions in the range of different kaupapa across sectors. After his analysis of other mātauranga positionings, including those of Royal, (2009), Mead (2003), Winiata (1913, as cited in Royal, 1998), Marsden (2003), and Doherty (2010); Pohatu concludes that a 'mātauranga-ā-whānau' (family knowledge) position influences all Māori because it draws from the resevoirs of known experiences and realities of ones own mātauranga. Therefore Māori experience, knowledge, insight, perception, and analysis are taken as validated and mātauranga-ā-whānau sits alongside of, and as a key companion to, whānau ora (flourishing whānau). Furthermore, according to Gillies et al. (2007) 'whānau' emphasises that one has relationships and connections with wider groups of people through whakapapa which can, as Pohatu (2015) has already suggested, be applied and be integral to a wide range of kaupapa including across sectors. Gillies et al. (2007) maintain that whakapapa allows a form of access to an individual or group that is more culturally affirming and far more likely to be longer-lasting.

Cunningham et al. (2005) put forward two analytical frameworks that link positive educational development to whānau. These frameworks might also be helpful in the analysis of research findings or provide a guideline when undertaking research with whānau Māori. The first framework, Whakapiripiri Whānau (analytical framework that link positive education development to whānau), comprises four components: principles; functions; indicators; and, educational implications. These are then premised on six principles which underlie whanaungatanga (relational systems):

- **Tātau tātau (collective responsibility);**

- **Mana tiaki (guardianship);**

- **Manaakitanga (exemplary host; caring);**

- **Whakamana (enablement);**

- **Whakatakoto tutoro (planning); and**

- **Whai wāhitanga (participation).**

*(Cunningham et al., 2005, pp. 59-60)*

In a matrix format, the six principles sit on the vertical axis, and the principles, functions, indicators, and educational implication extend across the horizontal axis.

The second framework, Whakamātauranga Whānau, enables the conceptualisation of whānau practices, whānau interactions, and whānau economic arrangements in relation to educational outcomes (Cunningham et al., 2005).

Conceptualisations of whānau as a model or framework for research has a much longer history which has emerged from the Kaupapa Māori (a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society) movement initiated by Linda and Graham Smith (Pihama et al., 2002). Kaupapa Māori was identified, at the time, as a revolution and a whānau reaction to the failure of the education system for Māori children who were underachieving. It was clear that no amount of policy change and intervention was working (Smith, 1995). The Kaupapa Māori agenda emerged in education where whānau concerns around the education of their children was growing. Smith (1995) asserted that the notion of whānau was, and remains a core feature of Kaupapa Māori theory, because it is based on those core structural elements of whānau that are the essence of social change and intervention. It is those core interventions initiated by whānau that resulted in kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori, wharekura, and wānanga (traditional method of learning). Smith provided examples of how whānau are integral to these interventions and, in particular, in kura kaupapa Māori:

1.  The Whānau Concept and Knowledge: Knowledge belongs to the whānau/group

2.  The Whānau Concept and Pedagogy: Māori values used in teaching emanate from whānau

3.  The Whānau Concept and Discipline: Teachers are referred to as whaea [mother; aunt; aunty] or pāpā/matua [father; parent; uncle] – the kura is the whānau

4.  The Whānau Concept and Curriculum: Whānau have input into the curriculum and have roles in day-to-day teaching.

*(Smith, 1995)*

Pihama et al. (2002) briefly review the progression of Māori thought, work, and developments prior to Kaupapa Māori. These include the decades where notions of Māoritanga, bilingualism, and taha Māori were expressed by Māori scholars and practitioners to assert a Māori perspective. Although Pākehā were quick to provide their own definitions of these terms:

*Rangihau (1975) added relish to the debate. For him the term 'Māoritanga' was invented by Pākehā as a means of positioning Māori as a homogeneous grouping rather than affirming the diversity of whānau, hapū, and iwi identification.*

*(Pihama et al., 2002, p. 31)*

A similar process of the emergence of Kaupapa Māori also took place with later scholars Graham and Linda Smith, Ranginui Walker, Tuki Nepe, Peter Sharples, Leonie Pihama, and Russell Bishop. Pihama et al. states that:

*... Kaupapa Māori has emerged as a contemporary discourse and a reality, as a theory and a praxis directly from Māori lived realities and experiences. One of those realities is that for over a century and a half the New Zealand education system has failed most of the Māori children who have passed through it. Kaupapa Māori as an educational intervention system was initiated by Māori to address the Māori educational crisis and to ensure the survival of Kaupapa Māori knowledge and Te reo Māori.*

*(Pihama et al., 2002, p. 32)*

Pihama et al. (1992) and Pihama (2010) assert that Smith deliberately adopted the word theory, linking it to Kaupapa Māori, and calling it Kaupapa Māori theory in order to develop a counter-hegemonic practice and challenge prevailing Eurocentric ideologies in education and research. Pihama (2010, p. 5) goes on to say that because "Kaupapa Māori theory is informed by indigenous underpinnings and is defined and controlled by Māori … Kaupapa Māori theory has transformed theory in Aotearoa [New Zealand]".

More recently, community research has gained popularity. Similar to whānau-based research, definitions of good community-based research are those which require researchers to be permanently based in the community because they are considered best placed to undertake the research, that is, they are closer to the need for the research. Others define or are more concerned with the quality of the relationship between the researcher and the community rather than where they are placed. Many Māori researchers now identify as community researchers for reasons stated, so that they are closer to their communities of research (Blundell et al., 2010). Most funders of research, however, do require evidence that researchers have community support (The Clearing House, 2007). Given research for, with, and by whānau is gaining some momentum, it is likely they will be categorised as perhaps Māori community-based researchers. Blundell et al. (2010) assert that good quality community-based research requires excellent relationships between the community and the researcher, but it is also important when conducting research in Māori communities that the Māori voice comes through clearly throughout the research process. In their diabetes project, the research team worked closely with whānau Māori who preferred a 'kanohi-ki-te-kanohi' (face to face) approach that involved a process of whakawhanaungatanga (actively building relationships and connections), especially at the beginning. One concern and unsettling aspect, identified by whānau, was the fact that people on the team with clinical expertise, that is nurses or doctors, were often not the same people. Some aspects of the research, such as forms and questions, were also thought to be intrusive and excessive for some whānau. Other issues that emerged were literacy and numeracy, parts of the process were rigorous, and the potential for harm. Most of these issues were addressed and ameliorated by the Māori provider partners. Cultural insensitivities increased during the research and digital tools interfered with cultural processes such as whānau connectedness and well-being (Blundell et al., 2010). The Māori health providers believed that a focus on whānau connections, affiliations, and whakapapa would have brought the project to fruition, after all, whānau had been the driver in initiating the project in the first place.

# Whānau-based models of service provision

Much research undertaken by Māori researchers has a focus on developing models, frameworks, and policy to support health, education, and social service providers in undertaking services with whānau Māori. While providers may be known as Kaupapa Māori health or other sector providers, many are unable to fully apply a Kaupapa Māori approach because of stringent reporting and other requirements in contracts. Government sector agencies have yet to develop reporting templates that can be utilised across sectors.

Building provider capability across sectors to deliver whānau-centred services was the objective of the first phase of Whānau Ora (people and agencies working collaboratively to meet health, social, and educational needs of whanau, developed by Dame Tariana Turia in 2002) (Boulton et al., 2018). This effectively provided the impetus for establishing the Whānau Ora commissioning approach, which took place between 2010-2014. Te Pou Matakana (Whānau ora commissioning agency based in Auckland) is one of three Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies, which focuses on funding providers to deliver appropriate health and Whānau Ora services to whānau. There are eight key elements to commissioning, that ensure providers:

- are whānau-centred;
- incorporate Te Tiriti o Waitangi [Treaty of Waitangi] and in particular upholds the rights of Māori to be self-determining;
- are ecosystem-focused, allowing resources to be more effectively allocated to the frontline;
- value effective systems;
- are expertise-led, and acknowledges the ability to draw on global indigenous best practice;
- build the capacity of both providers and whānau;
- are outcome-driven; and,
- promote active and responsive governance which ensures transparency, accountability, and independence, while demonstrating an inclusive, community-focused decision-making process:

*(cited in Boulton et al., 2018, p. 49)*

Whānau Ora—the policy and funding element—is based on the needs of whānau, their perceptions, and experiences. Māori health providers who are providing Whānau Ora services are also considered to be whānau-based providers. Health providers often have a range of health services to offer whānau. For example, at least one Māori health and social service provider in the Eastern Bay of Plenty (Te Puna Ora o Mataatua, 2017) provides the full suite of wrap-around services for whānau, that include māmā (mother), pēpī (baby), rangatahi (youth; adolescent; young person), whānau ora, health promotion, women's health, medical, ACC (Accident Compensation Corporation), and home-based services. Whānau can access intergenerational primary and medical health services as it becomes more streamlined.

There have also been a number of evaluation research projects around Whānau Ora, these include: Whānau Ora navigators; initial research for Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu (Whānau Ora commissioning agency for Te Wai Pounamu) (Savage et al., 2017); Baker et al. (2015) with their Kaupapa Māori action research in a whānau ora collective; and, the work of Underhill-Sem and Lewis (2008) on whānau action research with Te Rarawa (Northland iwi), a project relaying the experiences of grandparents as parents, highlighting the many whānau Māori caring for mokopuna and the impacts and stresses this has on whānau. A later piece of research undertaken by Liz Gordon with approximately 1,100 grandparents of which 36 percent identified as Māori also highlighted the same issues (Gordon, 2016). Whānau that are often not represented in discussions

have formed part of a major project for Te Atawhai o Te Ao (Independent Māori institute for Environment and Health), (Smith & Tinirau, 2019), which involves whānau who have been incarcerated and have yet to provide a real voice in research around whānau. Recent research was undertaken with current incarcerated members of whānau, and their stories also need to be told because "they're our whānau" and the impact of their experiences is likely to continue to impact on future generations of whānau for some time to come (Ashton-Martyn & O'Connell Rapira, 2018).

Even though whānau are a core feature of Māori society, little is known about the experience of whānau Māori, as patients or as members of whānau supporting whānau patients in hospital care. Research (Masters-Awatere et al., 2017) explored the experiences of whānau in hospital care and whānau supporting those in their care journey, and in particular, hospital transfers for whānau. Whānau were asked about their perceptions and experiences using reflexive praxis:

> *In our study, we sought to uphold the rangatiratanga [self-determination] of the whānau who participated, meaning it was up to each whānau to define for themselves the membership and composition of their own whānau. In supporting the principle of rangatiratanga it was equally important that we acknowledged that not every whānau would necessarily be whakapapa-based… So-called kaupapa whānau, those collectives who come together around a common aim or objective could, for the purposes of our study, be the main support network of a participant transferred away from their home.*

> *(Masters-Awatere et al., 2017, p. 24)*

The range of programmes available for whānau Māori are wide and varied. They are applied in a broad range of settings. However, there is always a need to consider the whakaaro (thoughts; thinking) of whānau. The apt title—'Before you tango with our whānau, you better know what makes us tick' (Bradley, 1995)— for a paper that describes an indigenous approach to social work and the realities of working with whānau Māori brings further light to this need.

# Whānau-based research

Research, then, needs to be cognisant of these diverse whānau dynamics, especially when undertaking research with whānau Māori. If Kaupapa Māori research has emerged from whānau knowledge, values, realities, and experiences, then research for, with, and by whānau must have similar hegemonic-countering qualities that are taken for granted and contested. Whānau undertaking research with and for whānau is providing the opportunity for innovative research practices and new insightful methodologies, potentially informing whānau, hapū, iwi, and community policy. Whānau members, individuals, and whānau groups have a vested interest in the research they undertake. As with Kaupapa Māori research, whānau research aims to facilitate whānau participation by valuing whānau contribution at varying levels which incorporates whānau well-being and views of the world.

Whānau research often starts with wanting to find a connection to land, people, or places. Simple things like a comment from koroheke (elderly man; grandfather, term used in Whanganui) about having land interests in a tribal region, or remembering the name of a tupuna (ancestor; grandparent) might spark interest in researching whakapapa, a waiata, or even remembering whakapapa through kai (food; nourishment). Whānau research can also be sensitive, revealing, and traumatic but can have healing and uplifting elements (Smith & Tinirau, 2019). Undertaking whānau research then means understanding that whakapapa, whanaungatanga, and other generic Māori

values have multiple constructions and interpretations. Given Māori connections and relationships with land and waterways, the physical and the abstract, and to past, present, and future, it is not unusual for Māori individuals and groups to research back, to search for the whakapapa of a deed, an item, a word, a place, or a person, then whakawhanaunga (the building of relationships and connections), and manaaki (support; hospitality). As such, whānau research is endless and highly valuable.

Māori researchers have utilised whakapapa as a formal model or structure, for undertaking research procedures and methods, because these connections are made through whānau relationships, affiliations, connections, and link to past, present, and future.

## CASE STUDY: WHĀNAU TALK PROJECT

Tomlins-Jahnke and Gillies (2012), in their Whānau Talk project, fully engaged with whānau, not just as a unit of analysis, but in the research process. Whānau were recruited into the study by whānau investigators. To assist in seeking answers to the research questions, the study applied an innovative, qualitative, and participant-directed method of data collection. An important aspect of this method is that whānau participants controlled the data collection process, the aim of which was to minimise researcher intrusion. Whānau identified amongst themselves who would be responsible for capturing, collating, and transcribing their own data. They were then invited to assist in the analysis of data whereby their responses to pieces of transcripts were video recorded, and later watched, and were asked to explain their video recorded responses. In this way, whānau were invited to record the conversations and talk the way they wanted, they controlled the recording and could listen to their talk and delete if they wished. Whānau were provided guidelines (for example, times to record during dinner, on the way to school, at a sports event). Six key principles emerged from the research that have whānau values as common threads:

1. The principle of whānau – whakapapa genealogical connections;

2. The principle of Māori language and customs – te reo me ōna tikanga [Māori language and its cultural practices];

3. The principle of relationships – whanaungatanga;

4. The principle of exemplary host – manaakitanga;

5. The principle of reciprocity – koha [giving and receiving]; and,

6. The principle of guardianship and care – kaitiakitanga.

*(Tomlins-Jahnke, & Gillies, 2012, pp. 501-504)*

## CASE STUDY: HE MOREHU TANGATA PROJECT

Tinirau (2008) explains the importance of involving kuia and koroheke in research initiatives, especially in the Whanganui region, but also in other tribal areas because they are deemed to be key repositories of traditional knowledge and respected leaders of their whānau. They are relied upon to pass on their knowledge to younger generations. The research team comprised mokopuna who were hapū and whānau members, fluent in te reo Māori and competent in tikanga (correct and accepted practices) Māori, and in particular, expertise in tikanga Whanganui. They were also trained in western research methods and worked in an Aoteroa/New Zealand university context. Kuia and koroheke from Whanganui provided cultural and whānau support to the research team during the project, and this relationship carried over from 2005 to 2014, well after the project was completed.

Gillies et al. explains that this research team, with established traditions and customary understandings of the whānau concept, were able to develop and adopt the notion of a research whānau through their methodology and chosen recruitment method, whakawhanaungatanga:

*In practical terms, whakawhanaungatanga was incorporated into the research design, which made it necessary that the research was undertaken by a group of researchers who were connected through whakapapa and were thus considered whānau. This represents a departure from Bishop's (1998) whānau of interest where whānau might include non-Māori. Whakawhanaungatanga in this research involves a Māori research team made up of members who are whānau in traditional terms (linked through whakapapa), as well as whānau in terms of kaupapa (purpose), which in this case, involves Māori academics working collaboratively on a project with a specific kaupapa. In other words, this research exemplifies a contemporary interpretation of Māori customary principles while staying true to the core notions of whānau, and in particular whakawhanaungatanga, which are fundamental to a Māori worldview.*

*(Gillies et al., 2007, p. 33)*

## CASE STUDY: WHĀNAU AND PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Eruera (2010) promotes Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a methodology that supports whānau participation in research. PAR lends itself to research that is solutions-focused and that Māori can and should take a leading role in research that involves them as individuals, a group, or whānau. Whānau know their own reality and experience best, and should be the ones in control of the research that involves them. Just as Pohatu (2015) has suggested, whānau have the knowledge and lived experience that requires no validation. Whānau also make the best companions in partnerships with others for different kaupapa:

*...whānau would choose and design processes they believe would maximise participation,*

*mutual benefits and positive solutions for themselves.*

*(Eruera, 2010, p. 5).*

Zavala (2013) describes whānau as 'base communities' who represent decolonising spaces and organic structures, suggesting that these forms of structures or community have a dual character. At one end, they are grass-root structures of family or church, for example, and represent radical collectives and decolonising experiments in community self-determination, and at the other, they are spaces of recovery, healing, and nurturing development. In contrast, they are also sites of struggle on individual and collective levels. PAR, then, is part of the broader legacy of activist scholarship and action research, traced to anti-colonial movements, in the same vein as Kaupapa Māori theory and practice.

## CASE STUDY: WHĀNAU TUATAHI PROJECT

The range of Māori health research and researchers who have found ways to incorporate the views, perspectives and experiences of whānau Māori is growing. Many researchers acknowledge the importance of whānau aspirations for good health and seek to find innovative and creative ways to enable whānau Māori voices to emerge through the research process. Through their experiences, whānau are experts in their own realities and merely require the tools and support to action their solutions. Jones et al. (2010) have developed a framework for research based on Kaupapa Māori methodological processes—that is with, for, and by whānau Māori. The framework, Whānau Tuatahi (Māori community partnership using a Kaupapa māori methodology), enabled a community research partnership with a Māori health provider,together with research whānau, to explore whānau experiences of tamariki with asthma. The team utilised photovoice and drawings as part of their method to engage tamariki and their whānau and health professionals in conversations around asthma, unwellness, and

their feelings, analysis of findings, and solutions to managing and living with asthma. The analytical framework was Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1994) with its fundamental elements of health—taha tinana (physical aspects), taha wairua (spiritual aspects), taha hinengaro (psychological aspects), and taha whānau (familial aspects). Whānau Tuatahi research framework principles for implementation included:

1. Whakawhirinaki: trust [and reliability through kanohi kitea, a face seen in the community];

2. Whakawhanaungatanga: building relationships [researchers and participants];

3. Whakamana: empowerment [whānau control over decision-making];

4. Ngāwari: flexibility [being mindful, respectful, letting whānau decide their research path];

5. Utu: reciprocity [stepping outside of researcher role if required, being humble];

6. Hurihuringa: reflexivity [utilising an iterative process in regularly evaluating processes].

*(Jones et al., 2010, pp. 5-9)*

## CASE STUDY: EXTENDING THE 'COMMUNITY-UP APPROACH'

Kennedy & Cram (2010) in their research with a range of whānau collectives and researchers working with whānau, noted whānau concerns about the connection of whakapapa to whānau. Their research highlighted the importance in whānau research of identity markers such as landmarks, wāhi tapu (sacred land; places of significance), rivers, lakes, maunga (mountain), and the recognition of whānau knowledge and experience. A whānau researcher guideline was developed based on the 'community-up approach' (Smith, 1999). The aim of the guideline is to provide the opportunity for researchers to work with whānau and to encourage them to engage whānau Māori fully and involve them as much as possible in the research process.

## CASE STUDY: WHĀNAU OF INTEREST APPROACH

Bishop (1999) developed a strategy for undertaking research with Māori based on Kaupapa Māori research discourse. Whakawhanaungatanga is about maintaining whānau relationships established for specific projects. Establishing a research group as if it were an extended family, or a whānau of interest:

> *...the process of whakawhanaungatanga as a research strategy. In a Kaupapa Māori approach to research, [where] research groups constituted as whānau attempt to develop relationships and organisations based on similar principles to those which order a traditional or literal whānau. The whānau is a location for communication, for sharing outcomes and for constructing shared common understandings and meanings. Individuals have responsibilities to care for and to nurture other members of the group, while still adhering to the kaupapa of the group.*

*(Bishop, 1999, p. 4)*

The whānau as a group behaves more like a support team, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to flourish within the group in a safe, secure, and positive environment. Outcomes and outputs of the group are based or measured on the group or whānau performance, not individual performance. Whānau rituals and values are incorporated as much as possible into the group dynamic such as karakia (ritual chants; invocations), mihimihi (greeting), sharing kai, and waiata. Further, decision-making is likely to be undertaken by the group, and groups often have the cultural support and guidance of a kaumātua (elders). In this way, the multi-generational aspects of whānau might be addressed as well as the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of whānau members (Bishop, 1999). This approach utilises the concept of whānau to manage research; the whānau vis a vis group then becomes the equaliser of research (Smith, 2017).

**CASE STUDY: NON-ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF WHĀNAU CONTRIBUTION TO RESEARCH**

A high profile research project initiated by whānau Māori, over two and a half decades ago, has produced groundbreaking results and garnered massive media attention over the years. However, according to Rankine and McCreanor in their analysis of media:

> *...media coverage of a ... partnership research project on the genetics of inherited stomach cancer show a decided preference for stories that depict the discoveries as the achievement of only one research partner, a genetics research team at Otago University.*

> *(Rankine & McCreanor, 2004, p. 5)*

Māori and whānau participants affected by the cancer were seldom mentioned and contributions made by whānau to the project were ignored and placed in a subordinate position to the Pākehā geneticists. Rankine and McCreanor (2004) highlight that such media practice is not a new phenomenon for indigenous peoples in Canada, Australia, America, and Aotearoa/New Zealand and refers to a study of 70 years of media coverage of Native Americans and the marginalisation effects of the coverage (Weston as cited in Rankine & McCreanor, 2004). They identified numerous examples of how the media has been influential in the continued marginalisation of Indigenous peoples worldwide, and in particular Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

# Conclusion

The aim of this review was to explore notions of whānau research and provide a description of how whānau research is being conducted. It became clear fairly early on that whānau research has glaring gaps, and whānau research itself requires further definition. Current literature describes whānau involvement in research as participants, respondents, or subjects of research undertaken for them or about them. Custom and tradition point to definitions of whānau that highlight belonging and identity through shared genealogy, kinship ties, shared ancestors, collective responsibilities, obligations, and are comprised of three or more generations.

Over centuries, traditional conceptualisations of whānau have become contemporised, and utilised in a wide variety of settings at both national and local levels in Aotearoa/New Zealand society. Whānau in its various forms is a key unit of analysis in a range of well-being determinants that measure social, economic, cultural, environmental, and political challenges. For Māori, there is increased acknowledgement supporting assertions that traditional and contemporary whānau, are a rich source of knowing and experience with underutilised potential to enable positive long-term and intergenerational change. The literature strenuously maintains that the power of whānau therefore, should be highly valued, nurtured, and engaged with, in wider areas of society.

Even though modern whānau Māori realities are diverse and complex, whānau can and do identify with a range of groupings that operate continually and simultaneously in both a traditional whakapapa or contemporary kaupapa reality. Moving between the two is often smooth and fluid for whānau as individuals and as a group, although there are some exceptions. There are also expected responsibilities, obligations, and allegiances for both types.

Whānau relationships and connections with wider groups of people through whakapapa are likely to be more resilient and enduring especially in times of adversity when people need to be there to support each other. However, there are other challenges many whānau experience, often leaving them isolated and disconnected not just from society in general but also from Māori society. In these instances, having advocates, practitioners, or researchers who are also whānau is likely to provide a bridge or link that facilitates a reconnection to wider whānau and Māori society.

Whānau research in many instances is better undertaken by whānau who are more likely to: be trusted; be understanding; take account of and know of their own whānau peculiarities, interests, experiences, situations; and, have whānau interests at the forefront of their research. Many researchers often feel protective towards their participants and, in this respect, it is no different for whānau researchers.

The literature supports arguments for whānau research by whānau researchers to be held in the same regard as research that is for, by, and with Māori, which is underpinned by Kaupapa Māori theoretical perspectives and Māori cultural nuances and worldviews. The literature reviewed, described, and discussed, points to a clear gap in research that is for, by, and with whānau.

While not presented in the review the arguments against for, by, and with whānau approaches to research are likely to be the same as those that challenged other Kaupapa Māori and Māori-centric approaches, including: being subjective and not objective; being an insider rather than an outsider; being collective rather than individual; and, qualitative rather than quantitative. As with Kaupapa Māori research, these can all be defended in a similar vein. Whānau talk is important, it is insightful, it is meaningful, it is talk that

is handed down ancestors and often it is or will only be imparted to whānau.

Under for, by, and with whānau Māori approaches, experience, knowledge, insight, perception, and analysis are taken as validated. These were also aligned to a mātauranga-ā-whānau approach to research with whānau, thus, acknowledging not only the depth but the tremendous value of whānau knowledge that is founded on whakapapa connections, and relationships of whānau to natural landscapes. A key traditional function and responsibility of whānau was the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, which was an integral part of sustaining whānau connections to land, people, places, and keeping those linkages and relationships alive. Therefore, a position of mātauranga-ā-whānau has relevance for all Māori because it draws on the reservoirs of known experiences and realities of one's own mātauranga-ā-whānau. These all need to be explored further.

In terms of whakapapa, practitioners and researchers agree that whakapapa allows a form of access to an individual or group that is more culturally affirming and far more likely to be longer-lasting. It highlights a responsibility as well as an obligation for older generations within the whānau structure to transmit or pass on their knowledge including whakapapa to younger generations, via Māori oral traditions and practices.

The review described a range of 'whānau models' based on traditional tenets, principles, and rules and these remain relevant. The 'model' can easily be transported outside of its traditional orientation to other social groupings giving rise to the kaupapa-based whānau. While many whānau remain connected through whānau, hapū, and iwi affiliation, and despite some also associating with more modern forms of whānau groupings, there are large numbers of whānau who struggle to maintain connections to their tribal area.

These whānau rely more heavily on being connected to other whānau Maori through the range of different social or other activity groups such as kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori, sports, religion, workplace, or other interest groups.

Current research does increase understandings and knowledge of whānau, however, a by, for, and with whānau approach requires further exploration. Further, as a unit of analysis in research and practice, a more rigorous examination of current frameworks and models would likely benefit by, for, and with whānau research moving forward.

# Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| **Aotearoa** | New Zealand |
| **hapū** | cluster of extended families, descended from an eponymous ancestor |
| **hui** | meeting; gathering |
| **hui-a-whānau** | family meeting; family gathering |
| **hurihuringa** | reflexivity (utilising an iterative process in regularly evaluating processes) |
| **iwi** | tribe; nation |
| **kai** | food; nourishment |
| **kaitiakitanga** | guardianship and care |
| **kanohi-ki-te-kanohi** | face to face |
| **karakia** | ritual chants; invocations |
| **kaumātua** | elders |
| **kaupapa** | purpose; topic |
| **Kaupapa Māori** | a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society |
| **koha** | giving and receiving |
| **kōhanga reo** | language nest; early childhood learning centre for Māori immersion |
| **koroheke** | elderly man; grandfather(term used in Whanganui) |
| **kuia** | elderly woman; grandmother |
| **kura kaupapa Māori** | Māori language immersion school (generally primary) underpinned by Te Aho Matua |
| **mānā** | mother |
| **mana tiaki** | guardianship (Whakapiripiri Whānau framework) |
| **manaaki** | support; hospitality; caring for |
| **manaakitanga** | exemplary host; caring (Whakapiripiri Whānau framework) |
| **Māori** | indigenous inhabitants of Aotearoa |
| **mātauranga** | knowledge |
| **mātauranga-ā-whānau** | family knowledge |
| **matua** | father; parent; uncle |
| **maunga** | mountain |
| **mihimihi** | greeting |
| **mokopuna** | grandchild; grandchildren |
| **ngāwari** | flexibility (being mindful, respectful, letting whānau decide their research path) |
| **pāpā** | father |
| **pēpī** | baby |
| **pūrākau** | story |
| **rangatahi** | youth; adolescent; young person |
| **rangatiratanga** | self-determination |
| **taha hinengaro** | psychological aspects (Te Whare Tapa Whā framework model) |

| | |
|---|---|
| **taha tinana** | physical aspects (Te Whare Tapa Whā framework model) |
| **taha wairua** | spiritual aspects (Te Whare Tapa Whā framework model) |
| **taha whānau** | family aspects (Te Whare Tapa Whā framework model) |
| **tātau tātau** | collective responsibility (Whakapiripiri Whānau framework) |
| **Te Atawhai o Te Ao** | Independent Māori Institute for Environment and Health, the organisation conducting the research project |
| **Te Pou Matakana** | Whānau Ora commissioning agency based in Auckland |
| **Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu** | Whānau Ora commissioning agency for Te Waipounamu |
| **Te Rarawa** | Northland iwi |
| **te reo me ōna tikanga** | Māori language and its cultural practices |
| **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** | Treaty of Waitangi |
| **Te Waipounamu** | South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand |
| **Te Whare Tapa Whā** | health philosophy, based on a holistic health and well-being model, developed by Sir Mason Durie in 1982 |
| **tikanga** | correct and accepted practices |
| **tupuna** | ancestor; grandparent |
| **utu** | reciprocity (stepping outside of researcher role if required) |
| **wāhi tapu** | sacred land; places of significance |
| **waiata** | song |
| **wānanga** | traditional method of learning |
| **whaea** | mother; aunt |
| **whai wāhitanga** | participation (Whakapiripiri Whānau framework) |
| **whakaaro** | thoughts; thinking |
| **whakamana** | empowerment (whānau control over decision making); enablement (Whakapiripiri Whānau framework) |
| **whakapapa** | genealogy; genealogical table; lineage; descent |
| **Whakapiripiri Whānau** | analytical framework that link positive educational development to whānau |
| **whakatakoto tutoro** | planning (Whakapiripiri Whānau framework) |
| **whakawhanaunga** | building relationships and connections |
| **whakawhanaungatanga** | actively building relationships and connections |
| **whakawhirinaki** | trust and reliability through kanohi kitea (a face seen) |
| **whānau** | family |
| **whānau ora** | flourishing whānau |
| **Whānau Ora** | people and agencies working collaboratively to meet the health, social and educational needs of whānau, developed by Dame Tariana Turia in 2002 |
| **Whānau Tuatahi** | Māori community partnership research using a Kaupapa Māori methodology |
| **whanaungatanga** | relational systems |
| **wharekura** | Māori language immersion school (generally secondary) underpinned by Te Aho Matua |

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# Conceptual design

Whānau and whānau research are the key themes of this literature. Whakapapa as histories of whānau and stores of whanau knowledge is reflective of both themes. The conceptual design, therefore, pays particular attention to whakapapa. The design elements in this publication include the colour palette, font, motif, layout, and photos. Explanation to their conceptual design is detailed below.

Traditionally, whakapapa were recorded orally. The main colours—black and white—is reflective of poi, which were and are used as a tool when reciting whakapapa and practising this oral tradition. The calligraphic font in headings and simple layout is representative of the once modern practice of handwritten recordings of whakapapa.

The photos are of different whānau researchers involved in whānau research projects. Many of these researchers have whakapapa connections to the researchers of and stories told in the Whakapapa Research Project. These include the: whānau researchers of the Whakapapa Research Project; rangatahi leaders of Te Morehu Whenua, the environmentalist rōpū of Ngāti Ruaka; and, whānau of Rānana Marae along the Whanganui River at the launch of He Morehu Tangata Research Project.

Finally, the motif carried throughout the publication is a mamaku pattern, representative of generations, born and unborn. This particular mamaku is from the kōwhaiwhai in the wharepuni, Te Pakū o Te Rangi, at Pūtiki Pā, Whanganui, where some of the whānau researchers in the photos have whakapapa connections.

Ngarakauatakarara

Wanganui
March 1st 1909

I can describe the boundaries. Begining at Te Arku that was a great kanga of my tupuna, whom I have mentioned down to my own time, some of the names given by Raikawa are wrong. Potianuku. Kapuka. Waikiwa, Te Kiwa. Okirirangi. Riu are all the mahinga on the boundary. between this block and Carreau Waiunupa. Riu takes us up to the wood, where the workings were bird catching. Ngamala Kautira, Outakiriki. Te Hapua, Te Whakaumu. Riu is up to Ngarakauatakarara Rii. all these places were mahinga many. Te Kahika, Mahanui. Riu the line runs up the stream Oruango, to Mangaiti is to Te Ranginui an eel catching place; to Te Kawakia Papatangitangi a bird place, Omaratautu, Te Aru Ararima, Rukupuku a stream running into Mangaiti, the boundary runs down that stream to Mangamanu, Totara, Otauki, Otiti a hill, Manawapita, Tautunikau, to Lower of Oronguku. Whatanero, Te Aionitini, Manawapou. These were planting places. Tangitinana (Tiringa a bird place, Akini, The line should have followed down Oronguku but my father threw out some of our land and took the boundary down Whangamanuhini; to itangibingi a mahinga of mine. Orariirangi to Mangamanui called by Raikawa Totara. Riu to Whangamui river, and the river to Te Arku. I have gone right round the block. Okawa was a pa of Ngaturangi. the horner end is called Mairoriki. Ngaturangi used to assemble in that pa. Taumahapuka was another pa below Okawa. Te Maeru was another rangi mother was buried Riu. The Kupai his son Teneki was eaten by Te Whatanui, Riu are our Riu Kai Ngaturea puanga was a house