

The 'other-Other' Perspective:  
Perceptions and Experiences of Non-Māori Ethnic Minority  
Psychotherapists Practicing in the Bicultural Context of  
Aotearoa New Zealand

**A Thematic Analysis**

By

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## Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), or material to which a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institute of higher learning.

Signed  \_\_\_\_\_

Mihili Salpitikoral 27 March 2015

## **Acknowledgements and Dedication**

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### *Dedication*

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## Abstract

This dissertation explored the perceptions and experiences of non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists residing and practicing in the bicultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Four psychotherapists who self-identified as non-Māori ethnic minorities, participated in semi-structured interviews, which explored their lived everyday experiences in both personal and professional spheres. Data were analysed using thematic analysis and yielded three main themes; Acculturating to Mainstream, Encountering Indigenous Culture, and Relating to Biculturalism. Each of these themes was anchored on two or more sub themes. In the context of this study, these themes represent three different but interspersed cultural/experiential spheres the participants encountered as immigrants and ethnic-minorities, and describe their perceptions and engagement at each level.

The theme 'Acculturation to Mainstream' captures, as a whole, the personal challenges the participants encountered as immigrants, in relocating to Aotearoa New Zealand and adapting to and finding a sense of belonging in mainstream New Zealand culture. The second major theme 'Encountering Indigenous Culture', describes participants' experiences of coming into contact with indigenous Māori culture, and the perceptions and understandings developed through this encounter. The final theme 'Relating to Biculturalism' describes how the participants understand, relate to and make meaning of biculturalism, as it is viewed, conceived and lived by them in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## Overview of Dissertation

**Chapter 1** undertakes a review of the literature that provides purpose and rationale for the current research, outlines the research aims, and defines key terms and concepts that are frequently used throughout this dissertation.

**Chapter 2** outlines the methodological framework, and method of data collection and data analysis employed in this research.

**Chapter 3 and 4** describes in detail how the study was conducted, from the recruitment of participants to data analysis and identification of final themes.

**Chapter 5** describes and explores the results of the data analysis (main themes and sub themes), with illustrative examples from the interview transcripts.

**Chapter 6** discusses the meaning, significance and implications of the findings, in relation to mental health as well as the broader socio-cultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand, and illuminates areas for further research.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **Literature Review and Rationale**

Ethnic and cultural diversity are being increasingly recognised as important variables in psychotherapy and psychological research. Nevertheless, the majority of research in this area focuses on the ethnicity of the client and the challenges of adapting mainstream therapeutic modalities for culturally diverse clients (e.g. Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1989; Barletta, 2007; Comas-Diaz & Griffith, 1998). There is a dearth of research exploring the lived experiences of ethnic-minority therapists.

This is an important gap in research for several reasons. Findings from a few available studies, all conducted in the United States, indicate that being an ethnic-minority therapist can be a rewarding yet challenging experience. These studies highlighted the myriad of challenges faced by ethnic-minority therapists, including, overcoming language and cultural barriers, challenging negative assumptions and stereotypes in institutional and clinical settings, adapting personally and professionally to a foreign culture and navigating multiple ethnic-cultural identities (e.g. Barreto, 2013; Iwamasa, 1996; Rastogi & Weiling, 2005). These experiences seemed to have been pivotal in refining their professional roles and had important implications for clinical practice with both culturally similar and dissimilar clients. Ethnic-minority therapists are also more likely to encounter practice issues related to cultural diversity on an everyday basis, and engage in cross-cultural counselling more frequently (Iwamasa, 1996; Rastogi & Weiling, 2005). Hence the views and experiences of these therapists are a valuable contribution to developing current knowledge and understanding regarding issues of ethnic-cultural diversity and the impact of these variables on therapy.

Currently, no research exists within the bicultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand exploring the lived experiences of non-indigenous ethnic-minority psychotherapists. There are likely to be many commonalities in experiences between ethnic-minority therapists practicing overseas and those practicing in New Zealand. Nevertheless, the latter are likely to have unique experiences owing to the particular historical, social and political antecedents that have shaped, and in many ways continue to shape, the socio-cultural landscape in Aotearoa New Zealand (DeSouza & Cormack, 2009).

Until the late 1970s, New Zealand's social and immigration policies promoted a model of racial assimilation and the entry of non-European immigrants, particularly Asians, were effectively restricted (Williams, 1996). Since the mid-1980s Aotearoa New Zealand began to embrace a bicultural ideology, to recognise the relationship between indigenous Māori and settler Pakeha based on the Treaty of Waitangi. Simultaneously, radical changes in immigration policy resulted in an influx of immigrants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Concern has been raised as to how this increase in ethnic diversity would impact on New Zealand's emergent biculturalism and attempts to address indigenous rights. On the one hand, it can be argued that in many ways Aotearoa New Zealand is still grappling with its bicultural identity and attempts to develop a workable biculturalism. There is also ongoing debate regarding the expected gains of a state directed model of biculturalism (Pearson & Ongley, 1996; Williams, 1996). On the other hand, despite the increasing need to address issues related to non-indigenous cultural diversity, compared to other British settler countries such as Canada and Australia, New Zealand is yet to develop a locally relevant multicultural framework that complements/expands on biculturalism (Belgrave, Kawharu, & Williams, 2004; Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Williams, 1996). As a result, it can be a struggle for migrant and non-indigenous ethnic communities to place

themselves within Aotearoa New Zealand society (DeSouza & Cormack, 2009; Pearson & Ongley, 1996).

This situation is reflected in Aotearoa New Zealand's mental health care and education systems. While efforts are being made at educational, training and health policy levels to improve the knowledge and cultural competence of mental health workers, the main focus of these efforts has been on Māori communities (e.g. Ministry of Health, 1997, 2006). Therapists and counsellors are encouraged to familiarise themselves with Treaty of Waitangi principles and their implications for mental health, and mental health agencies often offer Treaty of Waitangi workshops and Māori cultural supervision for staff. The psychotherapy training at AUT University includes, as an important part of its curriculum, a weekend marae experience where students of all ethnicities have traditionally been intensively involved both as organisers and participants. Māori practitioners themselves have taken the initiative to uphold and promote Kaupapa Māori perspectives, knowledge and values, through the establishment of Waka Oranga - The National collective of Māori psychotherapists, who are formally recognised Treaty Partners of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (<http://nzap.org.nz/members/waka-oranga>). These initiatives are valuable and necessary, given the pivotal place that Māori hold as the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, and given the ongoing need to redress the negative impact that colonisation has had on Māori health (DeSouza & Cormack, 2009). Nevertheless, there has been a comparative lack of initiatives aimed at recognising and addressing the training and practicing needs of non-Māori ethnic minority psychotherapists; neither have those therapists who identify as such, taken initiative at a formal level to form a forum/collective to share their experiences or help increase awareness of their needs. There could be several reasons for this, including the fact that the latter group represents greater complexity and in-group diversity. However, it is possible that these therapists

find it comparatively more difficult to know where they fit, or may hesitate or struggle to access support/resources to meet their training and practice needs. By giving voice to their experiences, this research is an attempt at increasing awareness and initiating discussion around the needs and experiences of these therapists. The findings of this study will contribute towards expanding current understanding and knowledge regarding the impact of ethnic-cultural diversity within Aotearoa New Zealand's unique bicultural context.

### **Aims of the Research**

No research currently exists within the bicultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand, exploring the perceptions and experiences of ethnic minority psychotherapists. Hence, as a starting point of inquiry, this study set out to address the broad research question: "What are the predominant themes that can be identified in the accounts of non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists who are residing and practicing within the bicultural contexts of Aotearoa New Zealand?" The primary aim of this study was to identify and understand their experiences, which have hitherto been overlooked as a topic of empirical inquiry.

Defining the parameters of this study was challenging due to two main reasons. First, I had no previous research to draw from, and second because the population of interest was a hidden or hard to reach group, whose socio-cultural demographics I could not anticipate beforehand for setting sampling criteria. Given the broad scope of the topic being pursued, I divided the overall phenomenon of interest into its two main components; the lived experience of being (1) a non-Māori ethnic minority and (2) an ethnic minority psychotherapist, in the bicultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand. The study hence explored both personal and professional experiences, both of which were situated within a particular socio-cultural context, and this is reflected in the findings (Chapter 4).

The analysis I undertook aimed to provide a rich thematic overview and description of the entire (relevant) data set. Conducting this type of analysis aligns with the secondary aim of the study, which was to illuminate areas for further research relating to ethnic-cultural diversity and race relations in a New Zealand context, that would help enhance both clinical and wider cultural knowledge and understanding.

### **Definition of Key Concepts**

In this section I will briefly define key concepts and terms that are used frequently throughout this dissertation. There are disagreements about the meanings of some of these terms, while others get used interchangeably, which has, at times, led to erosion of subtle differences in meaning. It is hence important to define them, so the reader has clarity about what these terms mean in the context of this study:

**Ethnic-minority:** The term ‘ethnic’ is commonly used to denote segments of the population sharing fundamental cultural values, customs, beliefs, languages, traditions and characteristics that are different from the larger society (Wittman, 1998). In discourses related to race, ethnicity and culture, the term ‘minority’ is used to denote (unequal) representation and power rather than numbers and proportions (Valeri, 2003). In the context of this research, the concept ‘ethnic minority’ is primarily based on self-identification; but in general, is used to refer to immigrant ethnic groups in New Zealand, sharing a set of cultural values, customs, traditions and characteristics. For the purpose of this research, the terms immigrant and ethnic minority are often used synonymously.

**Culture:** Gindro (2003), in the dictionary of race, ethnicity and culture offers the following definition of culture:

The term ‘culture’ is used today mainly with two meanings; the first and most ancient of these, taken up at the beginning of the seventeenth century by Francis Bacon, refers to the body of knowledge and manners acquired by an individual,

while the second describes the shared customs, values and beliefs which characterize a given social group, and which are passed down from generation to generation (p.1).

Through necessity, distinctive ‘cultures’ have developed through the course of history, which in many ways continue to serve as a bond and structural framework for communities within those cultures (Wittman, 1998)

**Monocultural society:** A society where representative structures and discourses have gained validity and acceptance and become the dominant practices, often having a marginalising effect on certain members residing within such a society (Wittman, 1998)

**Pakeha:** is a Māori word that became popularised in usage in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, broadly referring to non-Māori people who settled in New Zealand, but more specifically used to refer to White New Zealanders of mainly British and Irish ancestry (King, 1991). In the context of this dissertation, the term Pakeha is used to denote this latter group.

**Indigenous Māori:** The indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, originating from Pacific Polynesia. In New Zealand, Māori are commonly referred to as ‘Tangata Whenua’ or people of the land. The unique culture that developed through the course of their settlement in New Zealand, reflected in Māori language, customs, traditions, mythology, crafts and performing arts etc. is broadly referred to as Māori culture (Royal, n.d).

## **Chapter 2: Methodology and Method**

This chapter introduces the methodology, and methods of data collection and analysis employed in this research, and outlines how the chosen frameworks fit with the purpose and aims of the study. This research falls under the paradigm of qualitative research, and hence acknowledges the subjectivities of both the researcher and the participants in the process of research and knowledge production. The study is situated within an interpretive phenomenological framework, meaning that the inquiry undertaken focuses on how people make meaning of lived, everyday experiences. The researcher then aims to access meanings embedded within participants' narratives and recollections via a process of text interpretation.

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, which explored participants' perceptions and experiences with the use of open ended questions. The interview transcripts were then analysed using thematic analysis, which focuses on identifying and describing patterns or themes within the data. The method of thematic analysis used in the current study was based on guidelines provided by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Attride-Stirling (2001), as will be described below.

### **Qualitative Research**

The current study is interested in how people make meaning of their subjective experience of reality, and hence falls under the broad paradigm of qualitative research. Qualitative research is conducted based on the fundamental assumptions that there are multiple versions of reality and that experience can only really be understood in context (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As in the case of this study, which used interview data, qualitative inquiry focuses on collecting data from naturalistic settings that more closely resemble real life; as opposed to conducting controlled experiments. Further, qualitative research is grounded on the premise that research and knowledge production are inherently subjective endeavours (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Morrow, 2005). Herein lies an

acknowledgement and acceptance that researchers' values, experiences and motivations inevitably influence how and why they focus on a particular area of research.

Nevertheless, good qualitative research is committed to using subjectivity in a reflexive way, by being critically reflective about how it may have affected the research process and the knowledge that is produced (Morrow, 2005).

Braun and Clarke (2013), made a distinction between what they term "experiential qualitative research" and "critical qualitative research" (p. 21). The former is defined as being driven by participants' experiences, perspectives and meaning making, which are accepted at face value and understood using an interpretive framework. The latter, in contrast, attempts to move beyond meanings expressed by participants, and examines language through a critical lens. The current study falls under the former category, as its overall aim is to understand the phenomenon of interest from the participants' points of view. Data is analysed taking an essentialist/realist stance, whereby language is treated as a medium which provides access to a participant's inner world or reality (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

### **Interpretive Phenomenological Research**

Interpretive or hermeneutic phenomenology, founded by Martin Heidegger and developed by other philosophers, including Hans-George Gadamer and Paul Ricouer (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004), provides the philosophical underpinnings for the research method employed in this study. Phenomenology refers to both a philosophical movement and a framework for research. As a research approach, phenomenological inquiry focuses on how people make meaning of their lived experiences (Finlay, 2011; Lopez & Willis, 2004).

Making meaning of lived, embodied experiences requires a process of conscious reflection, given that most people generally go about their daily lives without consciously reflecting on their experiences (Finlay, 2011). Hence, a phenomenological

researcher begins by getting a narrative of a particular experience from participants, thereby asking them to bring it into consciousness and reflect on it, which then needs to be interpreted to be meaningful (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004).

Hermeneutics refers to the tradition and practice of text interpretation (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004; Lopez & Willis, 2004). Applied to the study of human experience, it provides a means by which meanings that are hidden, or not otherwise apparent, can be uncovered from participants' narratives (Spielgelberg, 1976 in Lopez & Willis, 2004). Thus, hermeneutics "goes beyond mere description of core concepts and essences to look for meanings embedded in common life practices" (Lopez & Willis, 2004, p. 728). Both Heidegger and Gadamer recognised and articulated the idea of intersubjectivity as it applies to interpretive research (Lopez & Willis, 2004). For instance, Heidegger used the term 'co-constitutionality', to explain how meanings derived via interpretation constitute an intermingling of the meanings expressed by the participant as well as the researcher within the topic frame (Koch, 1995). Gadamer (1976) used the metaphorical term 'fusion of horizons' to express a similar idea. The term 'horizon' here represents one's subjective world view, which is seen as fluid and viable to change through new experiences. According to Gadamer, researchers operate from this subjective view point in the process of interacting with someone else, such as our research participants. In accordance with this idea, the act of interpreting would therefore involve an intersection of horizons, of both researcher and participant (Lopez & Willis, 2004). Researchers affiliated with the interpretive tradition thus acknowledge that there will always be more than one plausible interpretation of a text or narrative, so long as the meanings and interpretations assigned are internally consistent and reflect the realities of the study participants (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004; Lopez & Willis, 2004).

## **Semi-Structured Interviewing**

Interviews are the most commonly utilised method for collecting qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). A research interview can be thought of as a type of professional conversation (Kvale, 1996), in which participants are encouraged to describe and recount narratives of experiences and perceptions in relation to a pre-determined research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Seidman, 2013). Interviews are well suited for experience-type research questions such as the one being explored in the current study. As Seidman (2013) explained, “when people tell stories, they select details of their experience from their stream of consciousness” (p. 7). This process of selecting, reflecting on and making sense of experiences, enables the meaning making of those experiences. Interviewing hence allows a researcher to gain access through participants’ narratives to the experiences lived by them (Seidman, 2013).

Semi-structured interviews, the method of data collection used in the current study, are the most popular form of qualitative interviewing. In this type of interview, the researcher prepares a list of indicative questions as a guide but does not adhere to it in a rigid manner; instead remains responsive to the participant’s account and open to exploring unanticipated issues. Thus as Braun and Clarke (2013) asserted, semi-structured interviews have the potential to generate useful and richly detailed data, given the capacity for researcher control as well as spontaneity, and the flexibility to explore unanticipated accounts.

## **Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis is a qualitative method of data analysis that allows for the identification, analysis and description of patterns or themes across a data set (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is widely used as a method in itself, or as a specific tool for demarcating themes used across different methods (Boyatzis, 1998). In their 2006 paper, Braun and Clarke named and claimed thematic analysis as a method in

its own right, clarifying what it is, and how it differs from other qualitative methods that similarly seek to identify themes or patterns across a data set. They also devised a six-stage framework for conducting a rigorous thematic analysis. Data analysis in the current study is largely based on the method demarcated by these authors.

In Braun and Clarke's (2006) method of thematic analysis, themes or patterns are identified via a rigorous process of familiarisation with the data, coding, theming, and reviewing and refining themes until a satisfactory thematic map of the data is reached. Further, they identify thematic analysis as a flexible method that is not theoretically bound and relatively devoid of detailed theoretical and technical commitments that would be required for a more ambitious method such as grounded theory. They are, however, not implying that data analysis occurs in a vacuum; as every research is situated within theoretical and epistemological frameworks. What is important is that the theoretical assumptions underlying the analysis are clearly stated, and that there is an appropriate fit between the theoretical framework, research methods and aims (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

As described previously, in the current study, thematic analysis is used within a realist/essentialist stance, whereby language is treated as a medium which provides direct access to a participant's inner world or reality. The type of thematic analysis attempted is inductive or data driven, and the overall aim of the analysis is to provide a rich description of the themes across the entire data set.

My decision to use thematic analysis in the current study was influenced by some of the above mentioned advantages identified by Braun and Clarke (2006). As a student, and a novice researcher, I found it to be a more accessible method, which as mentioned, could be used across a variety of epistemological frameworks. Thematic analysis was suited for answering questions such as those posed in the current study, related to perceptions and experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, given that I had very

little previous research specifically related to this topic area to draw from, the flexibility offered by a method like thematic analysis was useful, as I did not want to be too constrained by theoretical or technical commitments.

### **Phases of Thematic Analysis**

Braun and Clarke (2006) outlined the following 6-stage process as a guideline for researchers seeking to conduct thematic analysis in a more rigorous and deliberate way; (1) Familiarizing yourself with the data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, (6) Producing the report. Nevertheless, as these authors explained, analysis rarely proceeds in a step by step manner; hence each of these phases may involve multiple steps depending on the research and the data collected.

The initial stages of data analysis in the current study were closely based on these guidelines with modifications where necessary. Towards the latter stages (creating third order themes), I found the technique of ‘thematic networks’ demarcated by Attride-Stirling (2001) a more suitable method for organising my themes. Chapter 4 outlines in detail the manner in which I used the methods conceptualised by these authors for analysing data in the current study.

A brief description of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) phases of thematic analysis is provided below.

#### *Phase 1: Familiarizing yourself with the data*

As the name indicates this phase involves immersing oneself in the data to get a better sense of its content and what the data are like. The authors recommended re-reading the entire data set at least once before embarking on analysis, as well as “reading the data in an active way” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87), marking ideas and codes that might be useful in later stages.

When the data are verbal, as in the case of the current study where interviews were audio recorded, this phase begins during the process of transcribing the data into written format, which is a useful means of becoming familiar with the data set.

### *Phase 2: Generating initial codes*

Braun and Clarke (2013) described coding as a “process of identifying aspects of the data that relate to your research question” (p. 206). Coding can hence be thought of as a way of (minimally) organising the data in a meaningful manner. The coding framework used by a researcher would, to some extent, depend on whether an analysis is data driven or theory driven (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The current research is an example of the former type of analysis, where codes generated were closely linked to the data (as outlined in Chapter 4). By contrast, in a theory driven analysis, the researcher would approach the data with pre-existing theoretical or analytical frameworks and attempt to code around those frameworks.

The method demarcated by Attride-Stirling (2001) also begins with coding the data, and the guidelines provided correspond with those described above.

### *Phase 3: Searching for themes*

This can be thought of as the phase where purposive interpretation of the data really begins. It involves analysing codes that were generated in the previous step and organising them at the level of themes, based on patterns and commonalities between the themes. The goal at the end of this stage is the identification of a set of candidate themes and sub themes that help collate all the coded data extracts.

Attride-Stirling (2001) too described ‘abstracting themes from coded segments’ as part of the next step in her method (Step 2a). She acknowledged that identifying

themes is a painstaking process, which requires attention to detail and flexibility, as emerging themes often need to be re-worked to accommodate new codes.

#### *Phase 4: Reviewing themes*

The task at this stage is to recheck and refine the candidate themes identified previously; first, at the level of the coded data extracts, to ensure they form a coherent pattern, and second at the level of the original text, to ensure the validity of individual themes against the original data. This step corresponds with Attride-Stirling's (2001) Step 2(b); 'refining themes'. This author's recommendation at this stage is to go through the candidate themes and identify which ones are distinct enough to be themes on their own and which ones are broad enough to encapsulate a group of ideas. Details of phase 3 and 4 as applied to data analysis in the current study are provided in Chapter 4, under the sub heading "Creating first-order themes" and continued onto the next stage "Creating second-order themes".

Once I had a candidate set of second-order themes, I switched from an essentially linear process of analysis, and followed Attride-Stirling's (2001) method for constructing thematic networks; which allows for summarising and presenting the main themes identified in the text as web-like illustrations or networks. This process led to the creation of three thematic networks as will be outlined in Chapter 4.

#### *Phases 5: Defining and naming themes*

As their final guidelines, both Braun and Clarke (2006) and Attride-Stirling (2001) describe similar processes of refining and verifying final themes. They recommend reviewing the final themes in light of lower themes to ensure that higher-order themes accurately represent ideas captured by lower-order themes, and vice versa, that data in lower-order themes support the higher-order themes. Braun and Clarke

(2006) also recommend that researchers refine the working titles that have already been allocated to themes, and consider what names they will assign to themes in the final report.

*Phase 6: Producing the report*

The writing up of the findings is considered the final step of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and is about weaving the themes together with illustrative data extracts, into a compelling narrative which reflects the merits and validity of the analysis. Findings of the current study are presented and described in Chapter 5.

### **Chapter 3: Data Collection**

This chapter describes how the study was conducted, from the initial recruitment and selection of interview participants, to the analysis of data and identification of final themes. Data was collected via semi-structured interviews with four psychotherapists who self-identified as ethnic minorities in New Zealand. All four participants were born and socialised overseas, and undergone a process of acculturation and adaptation to New Zealand culture as immigrants.

Interviews were transcribed and analysed by the researcher using Braun and Clarke's (2006) method of thematic analysis, with guidance from Attride-Stirling's (2001) method for creating thematic networks. Data analysis yielded three main themes, supported by and anchored on a number of lower order themes.

#### **Participant Recruitment and Selection**

**Criteria for participant selection.** 'Non-Māori ethnic minority psychotherapists practicing in New Zealand' comprises a broad and diverse category. Hence it was difficult to predict before-hand the specific socio-cultural demographics of the potential participants. When making decisions about participant recruitment and selection, I anticipated there would likely be a great deal of variability between participants, in terms of ethnic/cultural background and factors such as age, length of stay in New Zealand, training (New Zealand or overseas), accumulated level of experience, nature of practice and so on. Such heterogeneity within a sample of participants would prove problematic in quantitative research, where the aim is generalisability to the wider population. In contrast, qualitative, phenomenological research such as the current study, does not aim to find out how often or how many have experienced a particular phenomenon, but instead inquires "what is it like?" to have that experience (Englander, 2012). Phenomenological research aims to present the

participants' experience in as rich enough detail and depth as possible, so that readers may be able to connect with, learn about the constituents, and deepen their understanding of a particular phenomenon (Seidman, 2013). Thus, in recruiting participants for phenomenological research, the task for the researcher is to find and select participants who report having experienced the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2007; Englander, 2012). In accordance, the key criteria for being eligible for participation in the current study were established as follows;

- 1) Participants needed to be registered with the Psychotherapy Board of Aotearoa New Zealand (PBANZ) and/or the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP)
- 2) Self-identify as a non-Māori ethnic-minority psychotherapist in New Zealand
- 3) Be interested in sharing their experiences and willing to participate in a 60-90 minute interview

**Recruiting and selecting participants.** I used purposeful sampling to help identify participants who could purposefully inform the research (Creswell, 2007). Given the small sample size required, I began by reaching out to network contacts in the psychotherapy community to help identify potential participants. The third party was asked to make contact with potential respondents to avoid the possibility of coercion. If an identified (potential) respondent indicated interest in participating, the researcher made contact with that person and e-mailed him or her a Participant Information Sheet and Consent form (Appendices B and C). Ethics approval was sought and granted by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK) (see Appendix E) for these forms. Of the potential participants contacted via this method, two psychotherapists indicated interest in participating. The general feedback I received from other potential respondents was that while they could not commit to participating, they had an interest in the aims of the research and believed the topic was relevant.

I hence attempted to reach out to a wider network of psychotherapists by placing an advertisement in the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists' (NZAP) monthly newsletter. The advertisement provided a brief description of the aims of the research and the eligibility criteria, and invited those who might be interested to contact the researcher. A copy of the advertisement is included as Appendix D. This method did not yield any new interested participants. However, after seeing the advertisement a participant previously identified via a third party made contact to confirm interest in participating.

The three psychotherapists who confirmed interest identified at least one other potential participant in their own networks and offered to notify this person of the study. This type of snowball sampling, where existing study participants help the researcher locate future participants can be particularly useful for identifying members of a hidden/hard to reach population (Faugier & Sargeant, 1997), such as the population of interest in the current study. I had already reached my target sample size of three participants. Nevertheless, due to the exploratory nature of this study I thought it would be useful to attempt to include a wider range of ethnicities, and was hence open to making contact with other potential participants. Unfortunately snowball sampling did not result in generating any new participants in this instance. However, by going back to network contacts I was able to make contact with a fourth participant.

All four participants who had confirmed interest in participating at this stage agreed to be interviewed. One of the participants was male and the other three female, with ages ranging from 31–60 years. Two of the participants identified as other-European (non-British), the third as South Asian and the fourth participant identified as Pacific Islander. All four participants were born overseas and socialised in their culture of origin before relocating to New Zealand. They had been resident in New Zealand for varied lengths of time; one of the participants, for as short as 2 and ½ years, two of the

participants, have been resident in New Zealand for nearly twenty years, and the fourth participant, who has been in New Zealand the longest, has been a resident for nearly fifty years. Nevertheless, the participant with the shortest length of stay had opportunity to develop familiarity with New Zealand culture before residency as she had visited every year to see extended family. All the psychotherapists had psychoanalytic/psychodynamic training backgrounds. Three of them had trained in New Zealand while one had trained overseas. In terms of nature and location of practice, the participants worked in a combination of private, public and agency settings.

### **Ethical Issues**

Ethics approval for this study was granted by the AUTEK. A copy of the approval letter is attached in Appendix E. This research explored perceptions and experiences that were of a personal and sensitive nature. Participants were hence at risk of experiencing some discomfort when describing their experiences. I anticipated that the likelihood of distress would be minimal given that the participants are practicing psychotherapists, who have been trained to explore their own vulnerabilities. However, measures were put in place to mitigate such risks.

I was attentive to participants' manner and body cues during the interviews, and they were informed of their right to discontinue the interview/audio recording at any time during the process. If required, participants were also offered free counselling at the AUT Health and Wellbeing Centre.

The design and practice of this research implemented the principles of participation, partnership and protection, drawn from The Treaty of Waitangi. Participation in the research was voluntary. I ensured that consent was informed and participants were informed of their right to withdraw consent at any time, without there being any negative implications. I endeavoured to ensure that the interview process was collegial by asking open questions in an enquiring manner, and invited participants to

offer feedback after the interview. On going consultation with cultural mentors was built into my research design, as a means of enhancing cultural safety for participants, as well as enhancing and engaging my reflexivity in relation to the topic.

Anonymity and confidentiality were important considerations, given that ethnic-minority psychotherapists are a minority group within the psychotherapy profession, and hence more easily identifiable. Care has been taken to exclude all identifying information from the final report. I have also used broad cultural identifiers (e.g. Other-European, South Asian) when describing a participant's ethnicity, to ensure as much anonymity as possible.

### **Conducting interviews**

Participants were contacted via e-mail or where possible by telephone to make arrangements for the interviews, and were informed that the interview would take between 60-90 minutes. I arranged to meet with participants 10-15 minutes ahead of the actual interview. This preliminary meeting allowed opportunity for establishing rapport and provided space for interviewees to ask questions or clarify concerns. I travelled to a location nominated by the participant for conducting the interviews. Two of the interviews were conducted at participants' homes, one at a participant's work place and one at a suitable public location. Participants read and signed the consent form prior to the start of the interview. The interviews were audio recorded with consent, and participants were informed of their right to discontinue the interview or audio recording at any time during the process.

An important part of my preparation as interviewer in this research involved considering the possible coercive influences of my subjectivity on the interview process, given my position and identification as an ethnic minority psychotherapist in New Zealand. One way that phenomenological researchers have traditionally attempted to manage the intrusion of subjectivity in the research is known as 'bracketing', which

is a process of placing preconceptions and prior assumptions aside in brackets, in order to be fully present to the phenomenon of interest (Finlay, 2011; Morrow, 2005).

Although, as many contemporary researchers have pointed out it is impossible to fully know our preconceptions and prejudices, qualitative researchers can employ reflexive strategies to gain self-awareness and uncover hidden biases (Morrow, 2005). Many recommend the use of a self-reflective journal, which I found very useful as a means of engaging reflexivity. I used an online journal where I could reflect on my experiences and assumptions in relation to the research topic on an on-going basis at various stages of the research. Before embarking on the interview process, I wrote a description of my own experiences in relation to interview questions as a means of reflecting on and recording my own position. I also made journal entries after each interview so that I could record any responses, reactions and awareness that emerged as a result of interaction with interviewees. This helped me re-examine my assumptions and biases and develop further self-understanding. In addition to this self-directed strategy, consultation with my cultural mentors for this project provided a reflexive and supportive space for the critical exploration of perceptions and understandings that emerged during the interview process.

The interviews were semi-structured in format, hence an interview guide or list of open-ended questions were prepared in consultation with my supervisor and cultural mentors. These questions were used when necessary to help guide the interview and probe an experience fully; but were not adhered to in any rigid format. So whilst all the main topic areas were explored in each interview, each participant was not asked exactly the same questions. My focus was to allow space for participants to describe their experiences as it presented itself to their consciousness. I was also mindful of the fact that participants may become apprehensive of professional evaluation given that the researcher is also a psychotherapist. I thought it was important to speak to this before

beginning the interview, by assuring them that my role in this context is that of a researcher and that the purpose of the research was to give voice to their experiences.

As a means of warming up the participants to the topic area, I began each interview by asking them to describe their experience of immigrating and what it was like being an immigrant and an ethnic minority in New Zealand. Below is a sample of the follow up questions that were prepared:

- How do you see yourself fitting into New Zealand? How do you see yourself fitting into bicultural New Zealand?
- What are your views and your experiences of biculturalism in New Zealand?
- When was the last time you thought about or became aware of your position as a non-indigenous ethnic-minority? What prompted that awareness? Can you recount that situation?
- How has your identity and experience as an immigrant and an ethnic minority influenced your work as a psychotherapist? Can you recall a situation where these ethnic and cultural issues were a significant part of the work?

I paid close attention to participants' responses as the interview progressed and endeavoured to maintain a bracketing of any prejudices and presuppositions. I also attempted to be mindful of instances where I might miss asking for explanations or encourage expansion because of assumptions made by either myself or the participant of shared cultural knowledge.

Once all four interviews were completed, I transcribed the recordings into written format and checked them for accuracy. This was a time consuming and involved process, and often required listening to the same section of an interview several times to ensure accuracy. Nevertheless, paying close attention to the verbatim in this manner was a useful means of familiarising myself with the data. As a result of going back and forth

between the verbal and written data when transcribing, I became intimately familiar with the content of the interviews and, when required, could easily go back to the original transcript to check the validity of themes identified at latter stages of analysis. This aligns with Braun and Clarke's (2006) phase 1 of thematic analysis, and is described further in the next section.

## Chapter 4: Data Analysis

I did not begin analysing the transcripts until all four interviews were completed and fully transcribed. Proceeding in this way helped ensure that themes I may note in earlier interviews did not unduly influence later interviews. I conducted three stages of analysis based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines, which involved moving from codes to first-order themes, and subsequently to second-order themes, and constituted a gradual consolidation or reduction of the data. At the fourth stage, I made a shift from an essentially linear process of analysis to one that involved clustering groups of themes into a coherent thematic network. Although this may indicate that analysis largely proceeded in a step by step manner, in reality it was very much a recursive process. Each stage of analysis involved revisiting earlier stages and re-examining how and why themes were grouped together to ensure internal consistency between codes, themes and overarching themes. At times, revisits were necessary to ensure that lower order themes had not been grouped together prematurely to form a higher order theme. Hence, although in theory analysis seems to involve a gradual reduction of the data, in reality, it was much more a back and forth process of reducing, expanding and/or considering alternative reductions. A description of each stage of analysis I undertook is provided below.

### **Familiarising Myself with the Data**

As described, building familiarity with the data began during the process of transcribing the interview verbatim. However, before beginning any formal analysis, I re-read each interview transcript (raw data) from beginning to end to get a sense of the whole description. Braun and Clarke (2013) explained that familiarisation is about "starting to *read data as data*" (emphasis in the original) (p.206). Accordingly, I started to engage with the data in a more active way, casually noticing sections that I found interesting and surface level patterns that I began to see. Simultaneously, I was mindful

of not reading too much into these preliminary noticings, given that they most likely reflected either the most evident features of the data or what we bring to the data ourselves (Braun & Clarke, 2013). During these readings, I also noted sections of transcripts that did not seem immediately relevant to the topic and marked them for re-examination at the next stage.

### **Close-to-Text Coding**

The next stage of analysis involved generating initial codes and aligns with Braun and Clarke's (2006) phase 2 of thematic analysis. Since I had decided on conducting an inductive thematic analysis, codes needed to be generated in a 'bottom up' or 'data driven' way (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2013). I hence decided on a type of 'close-to-text' coding that would allow me to stay as close as possible to what the participant had said, and help minimise interpretation. Codes generated were semantic in nature and captured the surface meaning of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Nevertheless, even at this level of close-to-text coding it is not possible to completely eliminate subjectivity, as it inevitably influenced how and which data extracts I selected for coding, and which element of an extract I focused on in creating codes.

Given the sheer breadth of my research topic, when approaching the data for coding I confronted the questions, "what should I be coding for"? and "how should I determine what is relevant or not"? My aim for a data driven analysis required that I remain open to the idea that there may be many disjunctures between the themes I end up identifying, the specific questions asked of participants, and what may have appeared interesting pre-analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Nevertheless, it was important to consider these questions to ensure that coding was performed in a robust and consistent way. So in a sense, I needed to be both inclusive and appropriately selective in determining relevancy. Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) recommendation, I coded for as many potential themes and patterns as possible. For instance, I coded for any

descriptions related to immigrating, acculturating, biculturalism, multiculturalism, personal and professional adaptation as immigrants, negotiation of ethnic-cultural identity, values, conflicts, ways of being and influence of ethnic-cultural identity in practicing with culturally similar and dissimilar clients.

Coding was undertaken using Microsoft Word. I created a table with two columns on a word document and placed the interview transcript on the left hand column of the table. I began by selecting and highlighting a small section of the transcript related to the description of a single idea, and recorded corresponding codes in the right hand column. I worked systematically through each transcript in this manner. By using two different coloured highlighters to mark alternating sections of the transcript and the corresponding codes, I could keep track of which codes belonged to which data items. An example of this process is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Example of Transcript and Close to text codes*

Transcript	Close to text codes
<p><b>Interviewer: Can you recount your experience at the marae?</b></p> <p>...um you know on the marae and on the mattresses and people were invited to stand and speak about themselves and where they come from and there was this invitation out and I heard ,Māori speak about the shame in being Māori and how difficult it was to retrieve the language after what has been happening and what's been taken from them, and I just found myself feeling the grief of that and crying and feeling and identifying with that experience of feeling um ashamed and then at the same time I could feel the guilt of what has been done to them...of of being the one who takes something</p>	<p>On the marae people were invited to stand and speak about themselves and where they came from</p> <p>(On the marae) I heard Māori speak about the shame in being Māori</p> <p>(On the marae) Māori spoke about how difficult it was to retrieve their language after colonisation</p> <p>(Hearing Māori speak on the marae) I found myself feeling the grief of what the Māori people have been through</p> <p>I identified with the experience of feeling ashamed that the Māori spoke about (on the marae)</p>

<p>away from the other, and that had had more to do with my culture [<i>Deleted – identifying information</i>]and being from a country [<i>deleted- identifying information</i>] that had exploited other parts of the world, and the sense of responsibility for that it's kind of in my blood, even though I haven't done anything personally, but I know that my grandfather has been in the front line, he has been a soldier and even though he hated it he still did and a lot of harm was done and so it wasn't logical and it wasn't in anyway sensible but what I was feeling was very deep</p>	<p>(on the marae) I felt the guilt of what has been done to Māori  (on the marae) I felt the guilt of being the one who takes something away from the other  The guilt I felt (on the marae) was related to my own cultural heritage  The guilt I felt (on the marae) was related to being from a country which has been involved in exploiting other nations  The sense of responsibility for the exploitation that my country has partaken in is kind of in my blood  I feel a personal sense of responsibility for the exploitation my country has partaken in because my grandfather was a soldier  My grandfather played a part in the harm that was done (exploitation of other nations) although he hated it  The shame and guilt I was feeling on the marae wasn't sensible or logical but it was very deep</p>
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As shown in Table 1, data were essentially coded on a word-by-word, line by line basis, and codes generated closely mirrored the participant's language and ideas. This was an overwhelming and time consuming task. Nevertheless, I felt this sort of rigorousness was needed in order to minimise researcher bias at this early stage of analysis.

In order to preserve contextual information I used brackets to denote context where necessary or included surrounding information when creating a code. For example, the data item “and so it wasn't logical and it wasn't in anyway sensible but what I was feeling was very deep” was coded as “The shame and guilt I was feeling on the marae wasn't sensible or logical but it was very deep”; so that the code mapped onto the original section of the transcript.

Data extracts that were marked for relevance during stage 1 of analysis were re-examined at this stage, which resulted in the exclusion of small sections of transcripts that I ascertained as not being relevant to the topic. For example, two transcripts contained descriptions about why each participant had chosen to train as a psychotherapist. While these descriptions contained interesting and idiosyncratic information, they did not directly relate to their ethnic-cultural identity or cultural adaptation to New Zealand. Overall, majority of the raw data was included in the coding and resulted in the generation of 1238 codes.

### **Creating First-Order Themes**

This stage aligns with Braun and Clarke's (2006) phase 3 of thematic analysis. It involved collating and analysing codes generated in the previous stage, and sorting them into first-order themes based on commonalities and patterns between them. In essence, this stage involved analysing the data at the lowest level of abstraction (Attride-Stirling, 2001). As in the previous stage, I aimed to maintain proximity with the original data and wanted to reserve more interpretive analysis for later stages. Accordingly, when identifying patterns between codes, I focused on semantic meaning and not on interpretations made based on theoretical or topic based knowledge.

I found it more comfortable to perform this analysis manually rather than on the computer. I collated all the codes on a word document, increased the font size to facilitate readability, printed them out and separated the codes into strips using a cutting board and Stanley knife. This way the codes were readily available for examination in front of me, and I was able to sort and re-sort them as needed into theme-piles. Each group or pile was identified using a short phrase that captured the essential meaning of the codes it contained, and these phrases made up the first-order themes.

Since I had more than 1000 codes to work with, I first grouped them into piles quickly, based on my immediate sense of similarities and differences between them.

Codes that did not seem to fit in any theme-piles were retained in a separate pile that I labelled “Unsure”. Once all the codes were reduced into theme-piles in this manner, I re-examined each pile. This helped me determine if one or more codes assigned to one pile would fit better within another, needed to be separated to make a different theme, or should be discarded due to lack of relevance or supporting material. My familiarity with the data set aided in this process, as making these decisions often necessitated going back to the level of the original data to check the validity of themes and codes identified. However, on occasions where more than one meaning in a code was significant, these codes were assigned to more than one theme. An example of this process, with first-order themes and their associated codes is shown below in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*First-order Themes and Associated Codes*

<b>First-order Theme</b>	<b>Associated Codes</b>
Immigration requires a lot of adaptation	It was so different (cultures) I really struggle to explain how different it is Couldn't describe all the adjustments I have to make Struggled to describe all the things I am trying to digest and absorb Had to relearn how to be Have gone through different phases in the 18years of living here <b>Immigration is full of surprises that are really hidden in the culture</b>
Immigrating/Being an immigrant is challenging & overwhelming	<b>Immigration is full of surprises that are really hidden in the culture</b> I'm overwhelmed by so many impressions It's overwhelming to write about my experiences Immigrating hasn't been an easy thing for me Being an immigrant has been challenging

	Being an immigrant is regularly challenging I have a lot to say about immigrating It was tough immigrating to NZ
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As demonstrated above (Table 2), the code “Immigration is full of surprises that are really hidden in the culture” was assigned to the group “Immigration requires a lot of adaptation” and also assigned to the group “Immigrating/Being an immigrant is challenging & overwhelming” as I judged the meaning of the code to be relevant to both these groups.

This process of re-examining and re-assigning resulted in a refinement of the theme-piles, with some piles containing only few codes or at times a single significant code, but better preserved subtle differences between groups without reducing them at this stage. The end result of this stage was the identification of 200 first order themes.

### **Creating Second-Order Themes**

This stage involved further consolidation of the data by considering patterns and relationships between first-order themes identified above, and grouping them together to form second-order themes. This involved a higher level of abstraction and interpretation, based on semantic content and, where relevant, theoretical and topic based knowledge.

Up to this point, I had retained all codes that broadly related to the topic and contained enough supporting material. As a result of the review and refinement of themes at this stage, some codes that were judged as being irrelevant were discarded. As an example of the type of codes discarded at this stage-the participant who had trained and worked overseas before relocating to New Zealand spoke in length about challenges encountered in adjusting professionally to the New Zealand context. Some of this material related to systemic gaps in New Zealand’s mental health system, as perceived and characterised by this therapist, which did not directly relate to the current topic and

were hence discarded at this stage. On the other hand, some of this material, for instance, the participant's experiences of adjusting to bicultural practice within the mental health system, was retained and incorporated into the findings. This process of consolidation and review of themes resulted in the identification of 26 second-order themes.

### **Creating Third-order themes, Sub Themes, and Main Themes**

This stage is essentially a continuation of Braun and Clarke's (2006) phases 3 and 4, and involved the review and analysis of second-order themes with the aim of organising them into higher order themes. The end goal was to come up with a satisfactory thematic map that would accurately summarise and represent the main ideas and patterns identified in the data. Although this process seems fairly straightforward, once I got to this stage, I experienced a sense of stuckness and found it difficult to proceed with the analysis. One of the main reasons for this stuckness was the resistance to losing some of the richness of the data by conflating ideas and abstracting. I felt wary of generalising and abstracting the data to a level where nuances, contradictions and complexities were lost. While I was cautious not to pre-define themes, which would negate the purpose of analysis, my goal was to present an analysis that captured the main ideas and patterns but preserved complexities and layers within them, because they too contribute to understanding the experience being explored.

So, while Braun and Clarke (2006) in presenting their method, acknowledged and allowed for a recursive process of analysis, their guidelines, as I conceptualised them, led me on a more or less linear path. In trying to move out of my stuckness, I searched for other tools or methods, and came across the technique of 'thematic networks' presented by Attride-Stirling (2001). This technique seemed a better fit with how I wanted to proceed, as it allowed for the creation of a network and, if required, more than one network via clustering groups of themes. The aim of thematic networks as

defined by Attride-Stirling (2001) is to “explore the understanding of an issue or the signification of an idea, rather than reconcile conflicting definitions of a problem” (p. 387). She provided the following guidelines for creating such a thematic network:

- (1) Themes identified previously are clustered into groups (themes about X, themes about Y etc.). If themes are too numerous to fit under one network, or if quite distinct issues arise, the recommendation is to create more than one network. These themes are now re-named ‘basic themes’ (i.e. Third-order themes in current analysis, described below).
- (2) Groups of basic themes are assembled together based on larger, shared issues to form ‘organizing themes’ (i.e. Sub themes in current analysis).
- (3) The final step of creating the network is to deduce ‘global themes’, that is to select the “main claim” or proposition encapsulated by the organising themes, in light of the basic themes, and deducing that main claim as the ‘global theme’ (i.e. Main themes in current analysis). Thus, each global theme would produce a thematic network, supported by organising themes and basic themes.

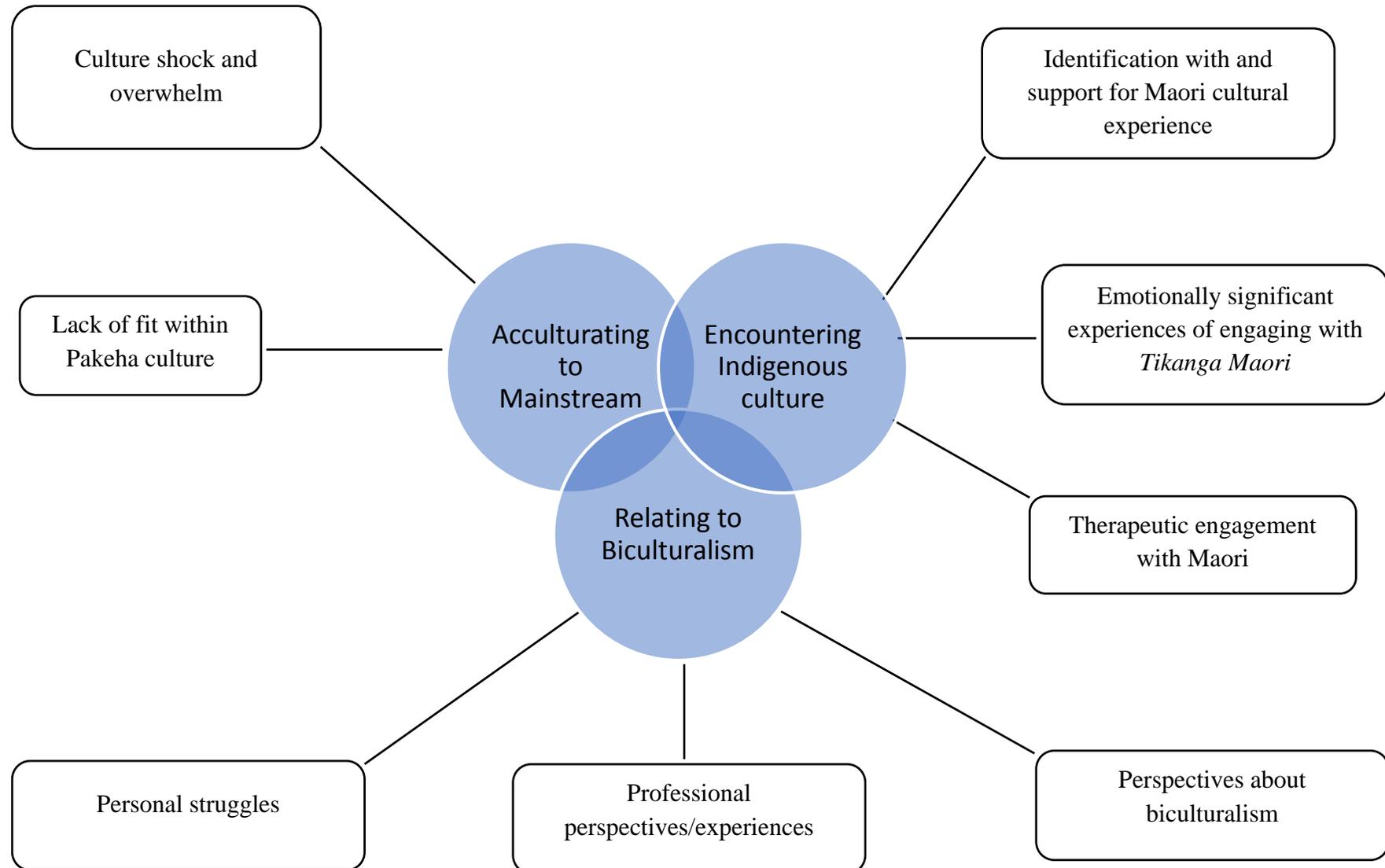
Table 3 on p.33, shows the results of my first attempt at clustering themes to create thematic networks. This first attempt resulted in the identification of two candidate networks, each containing a main theme, supporting sub themes and third-order themes, which were temporarily defined as shown.

**Table 3***Two Candidate Thematic Networks*

<b>Third-order themes</b>	<b>Sub Themes</b>	<b>Main Themes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived gaps in addressing cultural diversity in mental health treatment</li> <li>• Bearing professional burden of bridging cultural gaps</li> <li>• Valuing bicultural training and perspective</li> <li>• Perspectives about working cross culturally</li> </ul>	Professional Perspectives/Experiences	Cultural Difference within a Bicultural context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling excluded in bicultural context</li> <li>• Unrecognised potential (Skills and strengths of immigrants undervalued/under-utilised)</li> </ul>	Personal Struggles	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critique of New Zealand’s bicultural model</li> <li>• Benefits of biculturalism in New Zealand</li> </ul>	Perspectives about Biculturalism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiences with Māori as an ethnic minority psychotherapist</li> <li>• Emotionally significant experience of engagement</li> <li>• Identification with and support for Māori culture</li> </ul>	‘Immigrant other’ meets ‘Indigenous other’	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture shock and overwhelm</li> <li>• Acculturating to western (Pakeha) culture</li> </ul>	Challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal factors</li> <li>• Cultural factors</li> </ul>	Facilitators to integration	Acculturation to mainstream

Upon reviewing this theme combination, I decided that the sub-theme “Immigrant other meets Indigenous other” warranted a network of its own. The sub theme “Facilitators to Integration” was discarded at this stage as it was too idiosyncratic to experiences described by one therapist, and hence did not accurately represent themes identified across the data. In addition, the third-order theme “perspectives about working cross culturally” was also discarded, as it described factors that were non-specific to the New Zealand context.

This process of reviewing and refining led to the final creation of three thematic networks- that is three main themes, Acculturating to mainstream, Encountering indigenous culture and Relating to biculturalism, each supported by sub themes and third-order themes. **Figure 1**, p.35, demonstrates the three main themes and associated sub themes in the web-like format recommended by Attride-Stirling (2001).



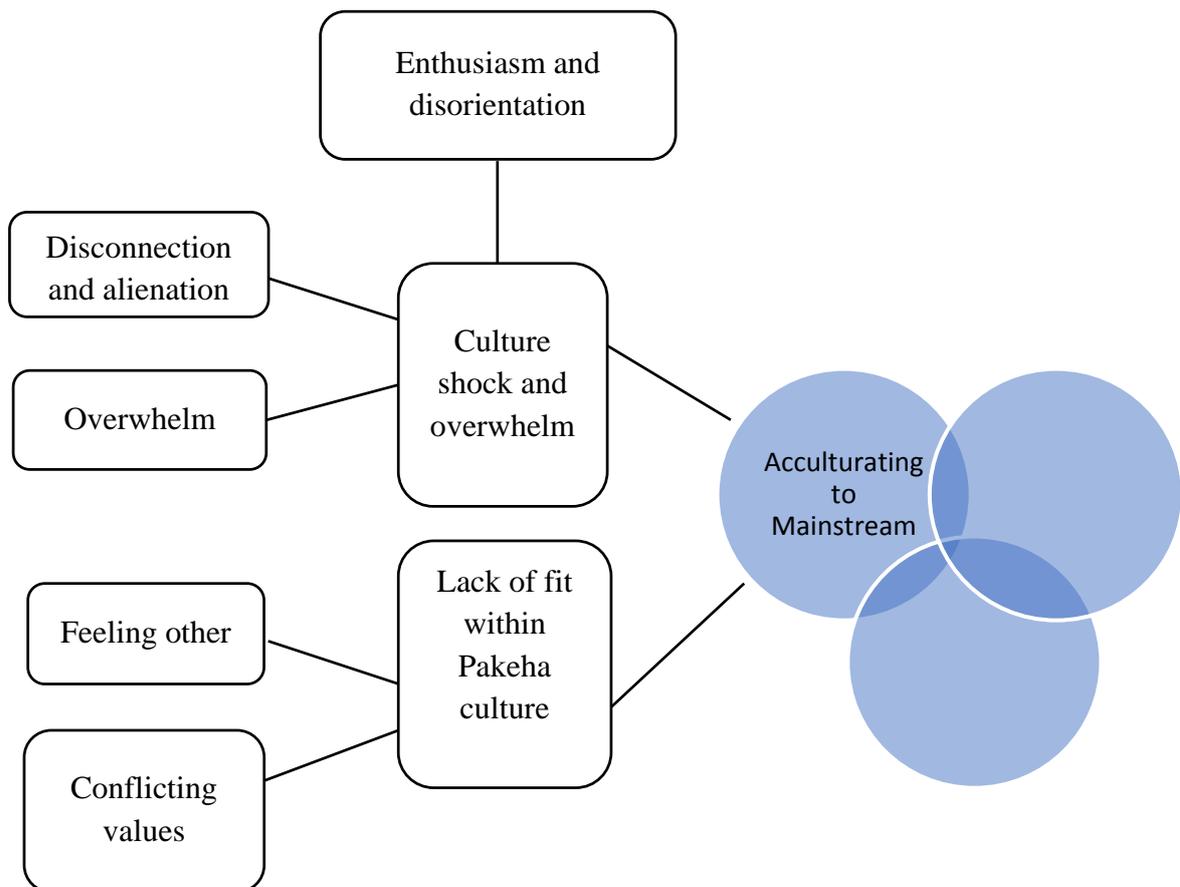
**Figure 1.** Map of final main themes and sub-themes.

## Chapter 5: Findings

In this chapter I will describe the three main themes and associated sub themes identified via data analysis in the previous stage, with illustrative examples from the original interview transcripts. Together these themes provide a thematic overview and description of the participants' perceptions and experiences.

I have used broad ethnic-cultural identifiers when referring to participants' ethnicity as a means of protecting their anonymity. I have not changed participants' words except to delete identifying information and, where appropriate, meanings and grammatical corrections are provided in square brackets for the benefit of the reader.

### Main Theme: Acculturating to Mainstream



*Figure 2.* Main theme 'Acculturating to Mainstream', associated sub themes and third-order themes

Acculturation is a popular term used in the immigration literature and can be broadly defined as the process of cultural adaptation that occurs when individuals from different cultural backgrounds come into continuous first-hand contact with each other (Redfield, Linton & Herskovitz, 1936 cited in Berry, 1997). Thus, in principle, acculturation may lead to changes in either or both cultural groups. In practice however, owing to important power differences (numerical, economic, political etc.) between cultural groups that come into contact in this way, for instance immigrant and host cultures, acculturation has a significantly larger impact on the non-dominant culture or the culture with less power (Berry, 1997).

In the context of this analysis, the theme ‘Acculturation to Mainstream’ captures, as a whole, the personal challenges the participants encountered as immigrants and ethnic minorities in relocating to New Zealand and adapting to and finding a sense of belonging in mainstream New Zealand culture. In the context of this discussion, I employ the term ‘Mainstream New Zealand culture’ to refer broadly to the prevailing ‘Pakeha’ cultural norms and institutions that dominate New Zealand’s economic, socio-cultural, legal and political spheres (DeSouza & Cormack, 2009).

Immigrating and acculturating are highly individualised experiences, influenced by a myriad of contextual factors such as age, race, gender, reasons for leaving one’s home country and so on. This was certainly true with regards to the experiences of these study participants. Nevertheless, there were important commonalities that I identified across participants’ recollections of their experiences, which are represented by the two separate but inter-related subthemes described below.

**Sub theme - Culture shock and overwhelm.** The notion of culture shock is used in the immigration literature to explain a broad range of experiences, symptoms, reactions and responses related to cross-cultural interaction (e.g. Adler, 1975; Garza-Guerrero, 1974; Pederson, 1995). Adler (1975) provided a more accessible definition of

culture shock as on the one hand, a form of alienation arising from the “loss of perceptual reinforcements from one’s own culture”, and on the other hand, an attempt to endure, understand and adjust to a new culture (p. 13). As will be described below, the above definition closely resembles the ideas represented by the term ‘Culture shock and overwhelm’ in the context of the current sub-theme.

The accounts of some of the participants reflected that their initial engagement with mainstream New Zealand culture was largely pleasant, while the initial process of adjustment was experienced as being simultaneously both disorienting and freeing. For instance, one participant recounted that coming to grips with the differences in cultural environments elicited a sense of excitement and freedom in the potential to be a different person:

I felt like I was a total different person in a way to how I was back home. It was also in a small community but very kind of narrow minded conservative environment that I grew up in [deleted-identifying information] and somehow I found New Zealand... was so much different and I could also just be different and I was flourishing in that for a while.

Alternately, another participant experienced this sense of freedom not in the potential to be different, but in the allowance that relocation offered to escape their home culture; “My first impression of New Zealand was that it was very different from [home country], and I was trying to escape [home country].”

This initial sense of novelty and freedom however seemed to dissipate as participants’ encountered the realities of immersing and adapting to a different cultural setting. One participant captured this struggle quite succinctly when she reflected, “...immigration for me is full of surprises that are really hidden in the culture”. Participants’ descriptions reflected that they experienced a sense of disconnection and alienation in their attempts to engage with mainstream culture, owing to cultural attitudes and ways of relating that seemed to prevent authentic and meaningful interpersonal connection. Identifiable in their accounts were two main attitudes or ways of relating which were experienced as barriers to connection. One can be defined as a

perceived lack of emotional openness. For example, one therapist explained how this was a barrier to getting to know people beyond first contact,

So the first contact is people are very ah welcoming, talking to you easily but in fact to go further, to get to know them further, it's very difficult, it's not that it's difficult, it doesn't happen. If you, yeah it doesn't happen and even when it happens, the level at which people connect for me is very different from what I'm used to. So people don't easily speak about their issues... yeah they don't, they don't speak about things that are not going well, it's always the bright side, the bright façade that they show.

The second attitude that was experienced as disconnecting and alienating was the perceived lack of awareness and responsiveness to cultural differences. One participant experienced this lack of understanding of different cultural values and ways of being as an important barrier to finding a sense of belonging within mainstream New Zealand culture;

It was really hard to find your own footing here for a number of reasons I think, one was obviously you're not from here and people don't understand you, don't understand the food you eat, and so there's lots of um, what's the word for it, it's not racism but um, their lack of understanding, people's lack of knowledge that other people do things differently you know, and having to battle that was quite difficult.

Another therapist expressed a similar perception commenting, "New Zealanders, they can't hack it [being in culturally diverse gatherings], they find it very uncomfortable".

A second pattern of experience I identified in participants' accounts was that acculturating is a continuous and dynamic process, quite often producing a sense of overwhelm. For instance, I asked one participant if she had ever felt motivated to write about her acculturation experience and she responded; "A lot of people tell me that I should write, and I'm going to write, but it's ah, it's overwhelming for me because I'm overwhelmed by so many impressions, and I'm thinking all the time which is very tiring". Another participant commented that being confronted with all the readjustments required of her was akin to feeling like she had to "relearn how to be".

Also poignant was a participant reflecting that she felt afraid that the stress of continuous adjustment to cultural stimuli that felt unfamiliar or made little sense might be making her a grumpy, critical person; “Very often I think am I right to be critical? What am I doing? Am I becoming a grumpy person who is not happy with anything? Which I wouldn’t like to be”. This participant’s accounts further reflected how the loss of familiar systems of meaning and cultural reinforcements left her devoid of a trustworthy frame of reference; “You’re never sure if you’re perceptions are something you can trust or if it’s your own reactions against rejection... yeah you need to constantly assess your own impressions and your own perceptions”.

Thus in the context of the current sub-theme, the term culture shock and overwhelm represents themes associated with participants’ experience of adjusting to mainstream New Zealand culture, which included a sense of both disorientation and freedom during initial contact, followed by a sense of disconnection, alienation and overwhelm, as they attempted to adapt to and make sense of a myriad of novel and often unfamiliar cultural stimuli.

**Sub theme – Lack of fit within Pakeha culture.** Many ideas presented in this section overlap with those described above and would also fit under the notion of culture shock. Nevertheless, I organised them under a separate sub theme as they describe more specifically the challenges of reconciling different cultural value systems, and finding a sense of belonging or fit within dominant Pakeha culture. The current sub theme hence represents two inter-related experiences (i.e. lower themes), that together capture participants’ experience of not fitting in with the Pakeha group or culture.

The first pertains to an important experience voiced predominantly by the two non-European participants, and describes the challenges of reconciling internalised cultural values and norms which differ significantly from the westernised, individualistically oriented ethos that seems to pervade Pakeha culture. Participants’

accounts reflected that there were two components to this struggle. One is the challenge of integrating different cultural value systems in a healthy way; while the other relates to the implicit demand placed on ethnic minorities to shift their systems of value in order to meet the requirement of the dominant culture. One therapist explained the conflict in cultural values and norms between westernised Pakeha culture and her home culture as follows; “We have in our system a patriarchy, a hierarchy and we are very directive and prescriptive, whereas the western world is very self-exploratory, autonomy etc., so not many of us have combined the two healthily”. She went on to explain that immigrants of her cultural origin often struggle to keep up with the demands of the dominant culture, for example obtaining academic qualifications, due to their inability to successfully navigate through these conflicting value systems; “[People of my culture] struggle through their studies because we have a different value system, if somebody dies, there’s a baptism they leave their study”.

The other (non-European) participant explained in a similar vein, the challenges inherent in navigating conflicting cultural landscapes within a dominant cultural setting, and feeling pressured to assimilate:

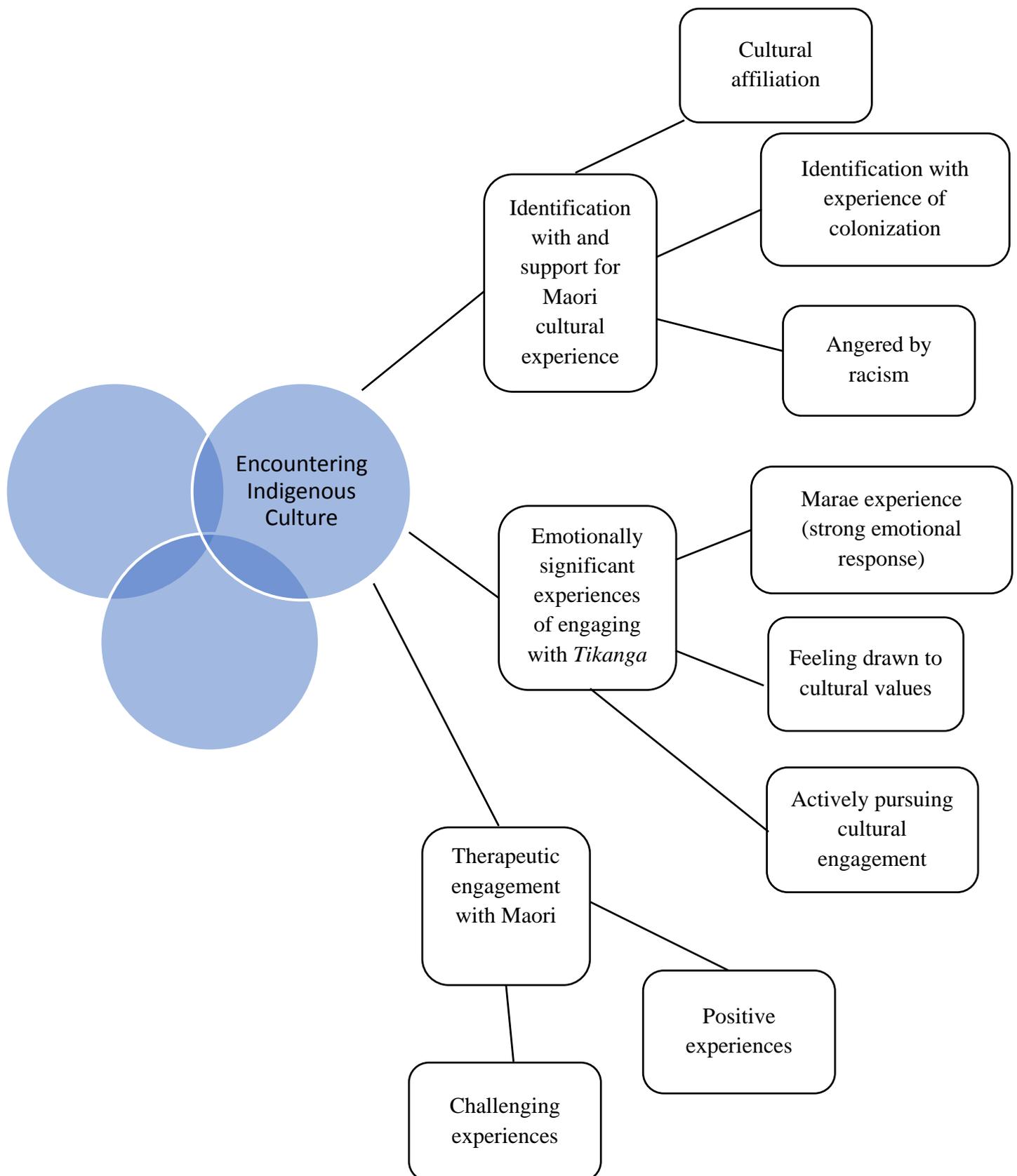
Our traditions are far, far different from the white people, the white Kiwis that are here...we get pushed aside into that category and in that we don’t have a footing, we get lost or we need to comply with what the [New Zealand] Europeans do to have a footing.

This same participant also gave voice to the second experience represented under the current sub theme, the sense of otherness arising from a lack of identification with, and fit within the Pakeha group, as follows: “Within that [Pakeha] group we are seen as aliens as well, because we don’t identify with Pakeha, um the white Europeans”. Interestingly, this theme was also identifiable across the accounts of the two therapists who identified as other-European. This finding inspired my curiosity, given my preliminary wonderings whether the therapists whose cultural origins were based in

Western Europe found it easier to fit in to the dominant stream. These two participants did not speak directly about conflicting cultural values, nevertheless, their narratives illuminated many instances of being “foreign”, being “a stranger” and hence feeling different and ‘other’ to Pakeha. For instance, one therapist reflecting on how her ethnic-cultural identity impacts on her work with clients, reflected that hearing her accent, Pakeha clients may immediately relate to her as other; “oh gosh she’s got an accent, she won’t understand what it’s like to be kiwi, and then how do I work with that”, she commented. The second participant reflected that she had experienced greater culture shock in relation to Pakeha culture than Māori culture “I knew [Māori culture] would be a different culture from mine, but in fact the shock for me, the cultural shock is much, much stronger with Pakeha culture”. Curious, I inquired further if they had expected to be able to identify more with Pakeha culture, and they replied, “Well I knew there would be differences because I had come here [visited New Zealand], but I hadn’t lived here, and it [Pakeha culture] feels quite different”.

In summary, the current sub theme captured themes identified in participants’ accounts which more specifically related to their experience of feeling ‘other’ in relation to and not fitting in within the dominant Pakeha group. For the two non-European participants, this experience was underscored by significant challenges in reconciling and integrating conflicting cultural values systems between their culture of origin and westernised, individualistically oriented Pakeha culture.

## Main Theme: Encountering Indigenous Culture



**Figure 3.** Main theme 'Encountering Indigenous Culture', associated sub themes and third-order themes.

This second major theme describes participants' experiences of coming into contact with indigenous Māori culture, and the perceptions and understandings developed through this encounter. I use the term encountering rather than acculturating here, because unlike their encounters with the dominant culture, this contact did not occur on a continuous basis and did not significantly impact their daily lives. In fact participants commented on how authentic contact with Māori culture is not readily available in the mainstream and happened only in select spheres such as academic or work environments.

Encapsulated under this main theme are three sub themes, each of which focus on and describes different elements of participants' experiences of engaging with indigenous Māori, and Māori culture.

**Sub theme – Identification with and support for Māori cultural experience.**

Participants' descriptions indicated that they felt supportive of Māori culture, and contained many accounts of relating to and feelings of identification with Māori cultural experiences. There were different facets to this latter experience, or different ways in which participants related to and identified with Māori, many of which were rooted in their own cultural history and heritage.

For two of the participants, whose cultures of origin are fundamentally collectivist in orientation, this sense of identification was embedded in the many broad cultural similarities they shared with Māori culture. This was particularly identifiable in the accounts of the Pacific Island (or Pasifika) participant, who from the beginning made reference to both visible similarities and common ancestral roots, indicating that affiliation with Māori culture is almost a given for a person of her ethnic origin; "I look Māori ... I am Pacific Polynesian which Māori are also...we are sort of in the same boat as Māori indigenous people" she explained. The therapist who identified as South Asian similarly expressed affiliation with Māori culture as demonstrated below:

I feel like we just connect on so many different levels, you know in the sense of um, the way we treat our elders, the way we look at family. I think family is a huge aspect of our cultures, and the way we go about managing our mistakes or managing things that are not right in our lives, we do it in a community rather than individualistic base.

There was also a strong theme related to participants feeling identification with and grief for indigenous experience of colonisation in New Zealand. These feelings too, were coloured by participants' own cultural experiences related to colonisation. For one of the therapists, being from a culture who had themselves experienced British colonisation for a significant period, was an important element in their feeling more identification with Māori than with Pakeha culture, "I am more likely to identify with Māori than with Pakeha, mainly because we were colonised too back in [home country], and we lost family, if you go back in our lineage". Alternately, another therapist described, how the sense of shame and guilt stemming from her own colonising cultural heritage triggered deep feelings of grief, as well as identification with indigenous Māori experience of colonisation:

I heard Māori speak about the shame in being Māori and how difficult it was to retrieve the language after what has been happening and what's been taken from them, and I just found myself feeling the grief of that and crying and feeling and identifying with that experience of feeling ashamed, and then at the same time I could feel the guilt of what has been done to them, of being the one who takes something away from the other, and that had more to do with my culture.

Participants also reflected that encountering racism and "misrepresentation" of Māori were common in their interactions with mainstream culture, and describe reacting with shock and anger to racist comments. One therapist commented, "My hairs go up in my head when I hear that" [Māori waiting to take advantage of system]. She also reflected that while she has encountered similar racism towards immigrant populations in her home country, she found it "even more shocking" that in New Zealand the racism was directed towards the indigenous population.

Thus in summary, this first sub theme describes participants' encounters with indigenous Māori culture which triggered feeling of identification, connection and support for Māori cultural experience, quite often grounded in and stemming from their own cultural experiences and histories.

**Sub theme – Emotionally significant experiences of engaging with *Tikanga Māori*.** This second sub theme represents participants' experiences of engaging with *Tikanga Māori*<sup>1</sup> that felt emotionally significant and led to meaningful cultural engagement and understanding. Further, the marae encounter seemed to form the backdrop for many experiences that felt especially significant to participants, and most participants recalled their first marae experience without the interviewer's prompting.

Participants' accounts indicated that the experience of being welcomed on a marae, particularly for the first time, was a significant, emotionally moving and at times overwhelming experience, and in many ways set the foundation for continued engagement with indigenous culture. One participant recounted her first *powhiri* experience as the first time she really felt she made contact with Māori people and culture; "for me what put me in contact with [Māori culture] was the first time I was welcomed at a marae, for me the experience...was extremely moving, extremely, I was close to tears very often". She further commented that each time she had been welcomed on a marae she had found it to be an "extremely emotionally overwhelming experience". The customary process of *pepeha* which usually follows the more formal *powhiri* process, seemed to make space for participants to connect with their own genealogy and heritage, and come into relationship with *tangata whenua* in a manner that felt personally and culturally meaningful; "it's not a formal introduction, it's a very personal introduction. It made me realize it's important to say where I am from, because it tells them that I come to meet them from that place". Another participant reflected

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<sup>1</sup> Glossary of Māori words and concepts with English meaning – see Appendix 3

that the most significant aspect of her first *Noho Marae* experience was that it “really made room”, for connecting with her own cultural history and heritage. Her poignant descriptions of the process reflected that it was an emotionally painful yet liberating experience for her. She explained that she had a “strong cathartic experience”, and felt that the *Noho Marae*, “bought everything together, not only just for me personally, but also as a community”. Another participant explained that the *Noho Marae* was an invaluable and authentic learning experience, particularly given that meaningful contact with Māori culture was not readily available in the mainstream:

I found it very difficult to get in touch with Māori culture, and I think reading about the culture in books yeah you learn things... but telling me, you could tell me 10 times its important to introduce yourself, until I met with Māori people and saw how they were introducing themselves to me.

Apart from the *Noho Marae*, participants described other, albeit more isolated, experiences of engaging with *tikanga Māori* that enhanced cultural learning and engagement. For instance, one participant reflected that the first time she rehearsed *waiata* with a group of mainly Māori psychotherapists was a poignant moment of connection and “an important step” in her integration to New Zealand:

They just, didn’t care that I don’t know the waiata, that I didn’t know what the words meant, they took me in it and I just sang with them and it was like a warm envelope and people taking me with them, it was the first time I felt it.

Two of the study participants were also more actively engaged in furthering their knowledge and understanding of Māori culture, as well as advocating for Māori interests. Both participants felt these cultural engagements and explorations were a significant part of their personal and professional journeys as immigrants to New Zealand.

**Sub theme – Professional (therapeutic) engagement with Māori clients and cultural services.** During the interview process, I had opportunity to ask three of the participants more specifically about their experience of engaging with Māori clients and/or cultural advisors in a therapeutic context. Themes generated from these accounts

are subsumed and described under the current sub-theme. Many ideas presented in this segment would naturally overlap with those described previously. Nevertheless, I organised them separately, as they have important implications for the development of clinical knowledge and understanding relating to cross-cultural therapeutic engagement, and also have broader implications for understanding cultural relations between indigenous and immigrant communities in New Zealand. I purposely did not attempt to use psychotherapy theory when analysing this material, firstly because the strength of evidence was insufficient to warrant such an in-depth analysis, and secondly because it would be beyond the scope of this study. The initial themes generated were instead sorted into two categories (i.e. second-order themes) – ‘positive experiences’ and ‘challenging experiences’, both of which will be described below. Although this categorisation facilitates the organisation of themes based on broad commonalities, I am aware that juxtaposing positive experiences with challenging experiences can be an oversimplification and an artificial separation. As, for instance, challenging experiences can also be positive if they lead to increased insight and understanding. It is therefore important to note that these definitions do not indicate that participants found one set of experiences more useful or meaningful than the other. In fact, both positive and challenging engagements were overwhelmingly recounted as being valuable learning experiences.

The first category, positive experiences represents experiences of working with Māori clients and their whanau in which participants felt supported and resourced, thus leading to positive therapeutic engagement. For one of the three therapists, positive engagement stemmed from feeling internally resourced to engage with indigenous clients. This therapist felt identification with Māori at a broader cultural level and perceived these shared cultural attitudes and values as providing a common meeting ground and point of connection. Further, this participant reflected that his recognition

and acknowledgment of the indigenous clients' collective identity, and *mana* around that identity, often aided in generating positive relations with whanau, and paved the way for resourcing family support for a client's recovery:

The way we go about managing our mistakes or managing things that are not right in our lives, we do it from a community rather than an individualistic base, so in that part I get it, because I can always get family members of [Māori] clients to support them through the treatment...the other thing is, when I'm working with a [Māori] client I'm not just working with him...he's representation of a family, an iwi, he brings an identity, so he carries a lot of mana about it... so there's a lot more to work with there.

The other two therapists, who did not position themselves as having these same benefits of shared cultural attitudes and values, found it helpful to draw from both internal and external resources that were available to them. Both therapists seemed to feel internally resourced in terms of their training, skills and experience which, as one participant described was about "connecting to people and understanding how they feel". Further, their recollections indicated that exposure to and engagement with indigenous culture, particularly via the *Noho Marae* provided an invaluable foundation for culturally appropriate and sensitive engagement. In addition, both participants had access through their respective employers to cultural supervision and support via a Māori agency, which they had found helpful to different degrees. One of the therapists explained that she had also benefitted from cultural trainings provided by her employer and explained that they "provided cultural information, and things I wouldn't have thought of if no one had told me". These two therapists' accounts hence reflected that while their professional knowledge, skills and experience provided the foundations, cultural training and support, as well as personal encounters with *tikanga Māori*, facilitated and enhanced therapeutic engagement with Māori clients and their whanau.

In contrast, the second category represented under the current sub theme, describes therapeutic engagement with Māori clients that had felt challenging, as well as engagement with Māori cultural advisors where participants had felt isolated and

unsupported. Participants' accounts reflected that challenges encountered in therapy stemmed from challenging or uneasy transference/countertransference reactions. While this is a common phenomenon in any therapy, the type of reactions generated in this context can be viewed as characteristic to this therapeutic dyad. For instance, one therapist reflected that difficulties arise when indigenous clients perceive the immigrant therapist as invading their space and consequently displacing them; "Clients see me as an invader, just like Europeans but probably worse that I've come later on and taken their work, and their place in society and are now telling them what to do". They reflected further, that the position or privilege occupied by the minority therapist can create envy and resentment in Māori clients; "This is their country, and I am telling them how to live their lives and what they need to do, and that creates envy and also resentment". Nevertheless, they had come to recognise these challenges as an important part of the work, and as reactions that need to be "overcome and work[ed] through" with clients.

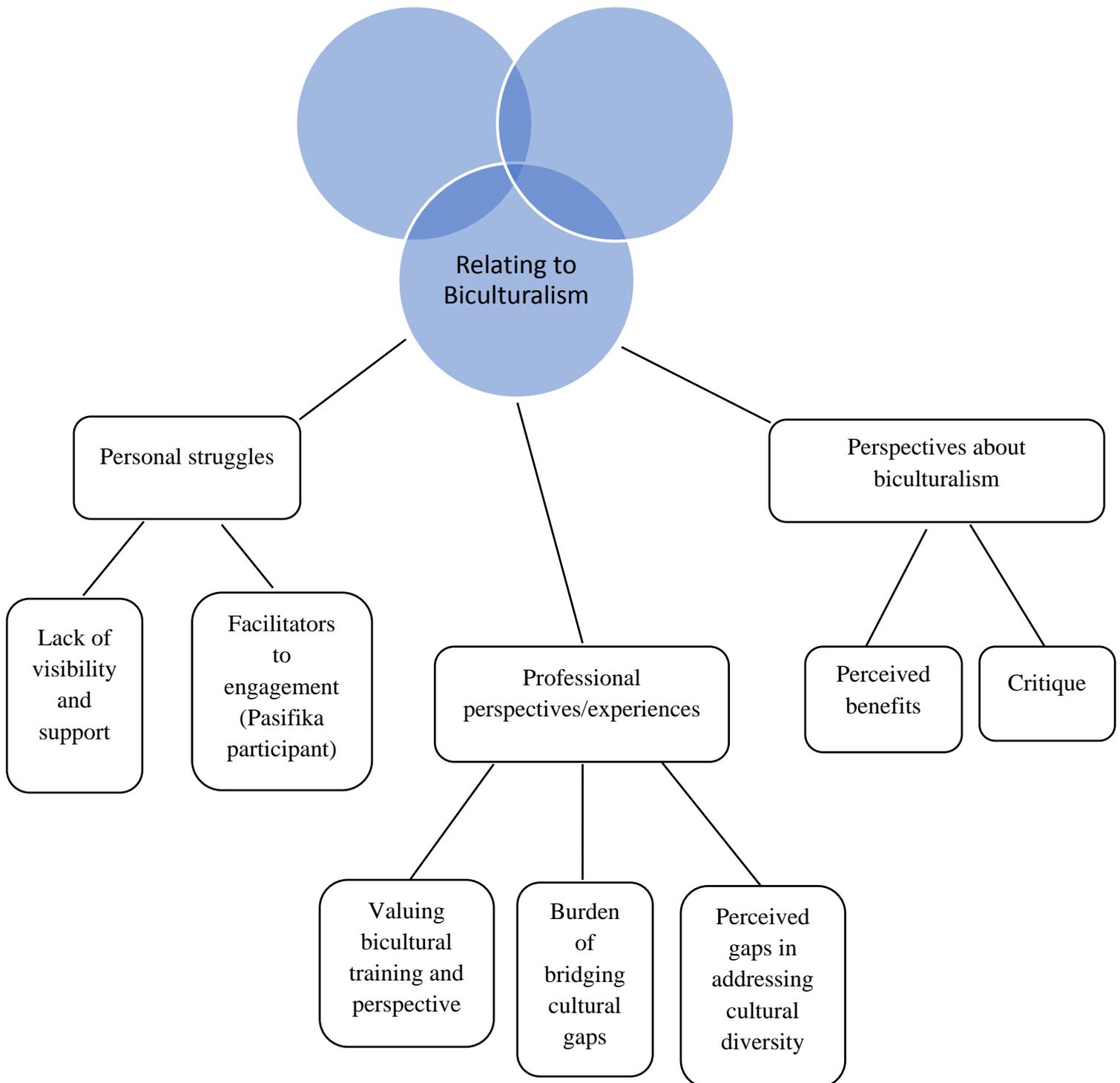
Two therapists described situations of engaging with Māori clients and/or support services that each had found particularly difficult. Although the situations described differed from each other, both engagements were experienced as painful as they triggered similar experiences of rejection. One of the therapists reflected that they often encountered rejection when engaging in group work with Māori clients. They described feeling unseen and shamed owing to clients' disavowal of them, and projection of negative cultural stereotypes and prejudices; "They look at you and think, 'Oh you're one of those sleeze bags' ... it's not easy, especially being [a person of my ethnicity] in an environment like that". Alternately, the second therapist described a situation in which they had been able to establish a beginning working relationship with a young Māori client, but furthering this therapeutic engagement had been difficult because of the rejection she experienced from the consulting Māori cultural advisor and

support agency; “It felt hostile”, she recounted, “it felt like they didn’t see me from the beginning, I didn’t even have to say anything, [I was seen] as incompetent in working with this [client]. It made the work harder”. Although both participants indicated they were able to use professional training and insight to make sense of these experiences, both described having to work harder to establish a sense of visibility and authority.

The third therapist described a different kind of experience, not as painful as those described above but one that made her feel less at ease and more cautious when working with indigenous clients. She described it as a “fear of offending without knowing”, of unintentionally causing further harm to the indigenous person and/or his/her whanau, because she anticipated that they may have had numerous experiences of feeling hurt already; “When I know it’s a Māori client I have a sort of fear that, ‘what if’ I make a cultural mistake, or something that’s not culturally safe”. This response seemed to make her feel less at ease and overcautious about making mistakes or getting things right, “There is a kind of fear of not doing well, that is more there with Māori clients” she reflected. Nevertheless, she was able to recognise that this fear dissipates once she has been able to make a connection with the client.

In summary, the main theme described represents participants experiences of encountering indigenous culture and the different levels at which they furthered this contact and related to Māori people and culture. While the majority of these experiences were characterised by mutuality, identification and connection at different levels, some underlying tensions that have broader implications became evident during therapeutic engagement with Māori clients and support services. Overall, participants overwhelmingly perceived these engagements to be valuable learning experiences.

### Main Theme: Relating to Biculturalism



*Figure 4.* Main theme 'Relating to Biculturalism', associated sub themes and third order themes

Biculturalism reflects the dominant discourse and a national preoccupation in New Zealand since around the early 1980s. This preoccupation is reflected in the nation's ongoing struggles, at political, social and cultural levels, to understand what it

means to have a partnership between the two cultural groups implicated in this discourse, the indigenous Māori group and settler Pakeha group.

This third and final theme pertains to how the current study participants, who by virtue of their immigrant status and ethnic-cultural identifications do not qualify to belong to either of these two cultural groups, understand, relate to and make meaning of biculturalism, as it is viewed, conceived and lived by them in New Zealand. The four sub-themes encapsulated under this main theme represent different levels (e.g personal, professional, emotional, intellectual) of relating to and engaging with biculturalism and the diverse responses that were triggered in this endeavour.

**Sub theme – Personal experiences (lack of visibility and support).** This sub theme represents the personal struggles that some participants described encountering, in their endeavour to find a sense of belonging and visibility within New Zealand's bicultural discourse. Themes identified in these accounts, pertain to the sense of displacement, exclusion and lack of visibility that permeates their lived experience as immigrants and non-indigenous ethnic minorities, within a political and socio-cultural milieu that seems to predominantly legitimise the experiences of only two (predefined) cultural groups. An exception to this predominant pattern was identified in the accounts of one participant, whose experience differed from others' in one significant respect, but on the other hand, reflected some of the common tensions and conflicts voiced by other participants.

One participant reflected that within the bicultural discourse that attempts to prescribe criteria for belonging based on ethnicity and cultural affiliation, his predominant experience has been to feel continuously displaced; "as much as they promote it as a good system, biculturalism, I get lost in that" he explained. "It's only about Māori and [New Zealand] Europeans, this battle, and you are thrust in the middle of it and you have to find your place". Further, the place or grouping assigned to them

within this prescriptive discourse appears to be ambiguous, “we get placed as Pakeha or other”, he commented; yet neither positioning seemed to provide them a sense of inclusion or visibility.

Another participant’s account illuminated this same struggle for inclusion, but from a slightly different position. This participant felt that her own cultural wounds led her to identify with both positions of the bicultural struggle, “I hold [the bicultural wound] in a different way, but the feelings are still the same”, she reflected. Her recollections revealed that in spite of this identification, the attempt to participate in New Zealand’s bicultural discourse from a personal and cultural position that was meaningful to her left her feeling isolated:

[I spoke] about the shame and guilt in my own body and blood and being and how I can identify with both [positions of the bicultural discourse]. I shared a little bit about my childhood and where I come from, and yeah when I said that I felt very alone... I felt in a way, that I went back to being the child who was alone with all of that.

This experience had also left her feeling more cautious about the implications of being visible as cultural ‘other’; “following from there I was a bit more careful about standing and speaking about where I’m from, and what that would trigger for me, to be so visible and the aloneness of that” she explained. A different participant gave voice to this same sense of exclusion, but again from their unique cultural position, in the following way:

We were colonised too back in [home country], and we lost family, if you go back in our lineage through Europeans colonising us. But we don’t have the right to connect with that Māori element of it; in that I feel pushed away.

These narratives are revealing of how biculturalism, in the way it is currently constructed and perpetuated in New Zealand, serves to exclude those who are cultural others to Māori and Pakeha, and prevent their engagement in the dominant discourse from a position that feels meaningful to them. This is a painful exclusion, given that many of them can relate to the historical context that gave rise to this postcolonial

discourse, and the struggles and conflicts it raises still resonate with their own cultural wounds.

Within these accounts of feeling marginalised and unseen, participants also made references to the unique strengths and values that immigrants bring to their host country and culture; or the ‘potential’ that is unrealised and unrecognised. This potential was framed both in terms of intellectual, economic and social contributions, and how they can help strengthen and enrich the host culture and race relations within it.

For instance, referring to their own ethnic community, one participant commented, “[My ethnic community] here are very educated, hardworking and I think they do a lot for the country”. A different participant made reference to accumulated overseas qualifications and experience saying, “I’ve been working for 25 years in a lot of different settings, but always kept one foot in general hospitals, and I worked really with very difficult clinical cases...I have, I mean a lot of experience”

Another participant gave voice to a more personal level of contribution, embedded in the sense of identification she felt with the culturally wounded in New Zealand, through her own struggles, and the implications of this identification,

I feel like something has been re-activated in me through living in this country that benefits, even though it’s painful, but it benefits me personally as an expansion of understanding who I am and where I come from, as well as others who are silenced, who have been silenced or don’t even know that they are.

She continued to explain that she would like to be a “strong voice” in bringing out experiences and conflicts that are not spoken about and/or have been silenced, including that of the indigenous community, “I like to be a strong voice in that, it’s there internally but I don’t always manage to externalize that strong voice inside of me”, she reflected.

Nevertheless, in a socio-cultural and political climate that is predispositioned to make invisible immigrant others, these contributions, strengths, skills and experiences remain largely unseen and unrealised:

No one is there saying look, look how amazing he's done, let's have a quota for people like that. But they get subjected to same place [system] as [New Zealand] Europeans would, who you know are born in this country, bought up in this system.

There was however an exception to this predominant pattern identifiable in the accounts of the Pacific Island participant, illuminating a potential ethnicity-based difference in the experience of inclusion or exclusion within New Zealand's bicultural context. As previously described (Main theme 1), this participant made reference to cultural affiliations between Pasifika and Māori cultures which are grounded in and strengthened by common ancestral roots. The Pasifika therapist reflected that these cultural ties provided a root for acceptance and fitting in, within a bicultural context where indigenous Māori voices and consciousness was on the rise; "I came to New Zealand at a time when indigenous consciousness was beginning to be on the rise, yeah Māori were becoming more vocal, so I simply fitted into that stream, and didn't find it too alienating". Importantly, another factor that contributed to this sense of fitting in and belonging, as characterised by this participant, was the indigenous group's acknowledgement and acceptance of Pasifika people as their cultural siblings:

Māori like to have Pacific Islanders as their brothers and sisters, or in their *waka* so to speak...so we feel a bit cosy in that sense, 'cos we are sort of in the same boat as Māori indigenous people.

This freedom to claim ethnicity based membership with the indigenous Māori group was unique to the Pasifika therapist's narrative and rendered her experience as distinct in this respect. Nevertheless, the next part of her narrative revealed that the many cultural affiliations and synergies between these two communities, are also underscored by conflict and competition for resources,

But when we are on our own we get very racist amongst ourselves and we will compete for funding, because the Pacific people come here wanting western things, so comments will be like, Māori are lazy, we work harder than Māori .

Thus, while the Pasifika participant did not give voice to the same sense of exclusion or displacement voiced by some of the other participants, the competition for visibility as cultural other to Māori and Pakeha still appeared to be part of her experience in the bicultural context.

Finally, the following comment by one of the participants', reflects the essential challenge of reconciling conflicting experiences of biculturalism, and illuminates what may be a central conflict for many immigrants who feel marginalised in this manner:

I understand why they are doing it, to look after the tangata whenua, the people who have always been in this land. I guess this is the part that, as I speak I feel my irritation and my frustration with it, even though I understand it, I am also thinking it's quite unjust and unfair, because I'm not seen, our efforts are not seen.

**Sub theme – Professional perspectives/experiences.** Mental health is a domain where biculturalism has been gaining momentum both at policy and practice levels in New Zealand (Durie, 1998). As mental health clinicians, the current study participants hence frequent a professional setting where bicultural endeavours are relatively more visible and accessible. This section describes the themes that I identified in participants accounts, of how they perceived and experienced biculturalism in a professional context.

To provide context to the analysis that follows, I will begin by presenting an overall pattern identified across participants' accounts, which reflects how the New Zealand mental health system is currently set up to meet the needs of various cultural groups. Participants' accounts reflected, that mainstream mental health treatment is monocultural by default, prioritising evidence based practice, framed around western values, counselling theory and clinical knowledge. Biculturalism or bicultural endeavours are evident and present in a more scattered form, and made accessible through specialised cultural training, Māori cultural advisors and support services, and specific treatment programmes, cultural groups and cultural spaces for Māori clients.

Immigrant and other ethnic-minority clients are subsumed under the mainstream (monocultural) mode, and cultural resources or support for addressing their specialist (cultural) needs are lacking or non-existent.

The presence of biculturalism and access to bicultural endeavours, within the (monocultural) mainstream setting, was largely experienced as positive and valuable by participants. These sentiments tie in with those presented under the sub-theme, 'Identification with and support for Māori cultural experience', in that participants felt supportive of attempts made to provide cultural reparation and cultural safety for indigenous New Zealanders. One participant reflected that the mental health field was where they had seen "most efforts" been made to address and take biculturalism into account.

The availability of bicultural resources such as trainings, workshops and cultural services were valued as a means of resourcing practitioners to engage with Māori clients in culturally appropriate and responsive ways, "These are things about biculturalism that I have found really well taken care of... that I found really supportive in my institution [work place]" one therapist commented. In addition, the presence of biculturalism was perceived as valuable, in terms of the opportunity it afforded for a different, in this case more favourable frame of reference from the dominant (evidence based) perspective. For instance, one participant made a critical comparison of the perceived aims of these two approaches to treatment as follows:

I find that the way mental health [is approached as] 'evidence based' is not in connection with the Māori culture, because it's not a way of connecting with people, it's a way of containing people. I have a kind of fear that I will be identified with that way of doing things. So I give a lot of importance to how I connect with people.

She reflected further that the mutual (rather than prescriptive) engagement she experienced in bicultural trainings better complemented her own therapeutic aims and approach:

Every time you work with them you learn more, it's an exchange... and in the end I feel that my own skills, which are also about connecting to people and understanding how they feel, and how this will impact them, and how they will cope with it- it's complimentary.

However, the flip side of this focus on biculturalism, as reflected in participants' accounts, was the exclusionary impact on other minority groups with competing cultural and treatment needs. Further, subsuming these client groups in with dominant cultural clients was seen as a quick fix that serves to make invisible significant cultural and treatment disparities. Coincidentally two different participants both used the term "herding cattle" to refer to this culturally unresponsive approach to treatment, "it's like herding cattle, put them into the same box and [apply] the same treatment for everyone else, but don't look at them from a very cultural perspective".

One therapist, referring particularly to clients of Asian origin, commented; "The success rate at my work [place] for ethnic minority clients is quite minimum". They explained further that most of clients of Asian origin terminate treatment prematurely. A main reason for this premature termination, as identified by this participant, was the lack of cultural fit between minority clients' attitudes and values, and westernised treatment models that are based on western philosophy and values, which often serve to pathologise other cultural ways of being. Consequently, they explained, that practitioners who approach treatment from this dominant, western perspective often misunderstand and misappropriate these clients' behaviours; "they are caught up in not knowing why they [clients] behave the way they do...and in that they miss the true working of these clients". Interestingly, this same participant noted that practitioners immersed in mainstream perspectives and approaches, fail to extend the cultural awareness and understanding drawn from bicultural training, towards other ethnic minority groups with similar customs, traditions and values as Māori.

The implications of this lack of understanding and support for addressing non-indigenous cultural diversity in mainstream treatment, as reflected in these participants'

accounts, was that they often carried the burden of bridging such cultural gaps. For instance one therapist reflected; “I feel like I have to carry the voice or the banner, trying to be a bridge between my residents [colleagues] and clients that come in”. This participant explained further that this task felt like a “huge weight to carry” as their intentions can be misunderstood, “you can be seen as wrong, you get judged as “you’re siding with the client”, “you’re enabling them”. Referring to a client for whom he was a case manager, whose treatment experience he had explained to me in detail before, this therapist commented, “I had to battle for my for my client and I had to put the best case forward to keep him going through treatment, if it weren’t for me, Ravi [pseudo name] wouldn’t have got through treatment”. Another therapist’s practice was based exclusively in a low socio-economic area, which served a predominantly minority client base, and felt that her cross-cultural skills and experience was most needed in such areas; “I have to stay out in [deleted-identifying information], because I have to help these [minority clients] at least get a degree or diploma”.

Finally, the following comment made by one of the therapists brings together some important ideas presented under the current subtheme; of these participants’ professional views and experiences of the competing and often conflicting needs that get overlooked in a system predisposed to recognise only two (predefined) cultural groups:

We hardly see any Chinese men or women come through our programme, we hardly see any Fiji Indians...hardly see any Indians, Sri Lankans, but I know there’s [mental health issues] in all of those communities. How are we not reaching out to those people? But we definitely make a focus on reaching out to Māori and Europeans...I think the health sector in general can do a lot more, the DHBs [District Health Boards] could do far more work in reaching out to these communities, by giving them education, by actually training clinicians on what it means to come into a culture that is dominated by this bi-cultural concept.

**Sub theme – Perspectives about biculturalism.** The current sub-theme describes participants’ observations and critical reflections about what they perceived as

benefits and gaps in New Zealand's model of biculturalism. These reflections emerged from participants' experiences, and hence represent a subset of their experience of relating to biculturalism.

The benefits, as perceived by participants, were reflected on in relation to the continued impact of colonisation on indigenous Māori, and the huge imperative to redress this cultural trauma; "there is still a lot of exploitation here, and you can feel all the past and all the inequities that are still there at the roots of colonialism", one participant reflected. Another participant in response to my questioning about what he understood as the purpose and need for biculturalism in New Zealand commented,

This is a European system that has taken over the system that was here, which belonged to the Māori people. For them to succeed we need to make this allowance, this is the simplest form... at one point Māori were even stopped from speaking their language, so there's a whole generation that lost their language you know.

Nevertheless, most participants questioned the gains and implications of the state led model of biculturalism that is currently being pursued, "who's running the system? Still the Europeans isn't it?" one participant commented. Another participant commented on the absence of biculturalism in the mainstream, and reflected on her encounters with mainstream attitudes towards biculturalism:

Bi-culturalism, it's a bit there but not very much when you look in the real, when you look whose doing the politics I mean it's a huge majority of Pakeha, a lot of people are still very racist, there's a lot of misrepresentation, and I don't have to go far to hear about Māori waiting to put their hand up and take advantage of the system.

Another participant made the interesting observation that at the time he immigrated, New Zealand was not renowned or promoted as a bicultural society internationally, "when New Zealand is advertised throughout the world, it's not advertised as bicultural... when I came here, it was seen as a kind of ideal place for a multicultural society". Despite having no proper orientation to biculturalism and what it means in New Zealand, he had nevertheless felt an expectation to subscribe to it, which as a new

immigrant had been disconcerting. Consequently, exposure to biculturalism had initially been coloured by racist attitudes in the mainstream; “I learned that [about biculturalism] through school, I went to a predominantly white, European school, they were very racist towards Māori people, with what they get and how much they get”.

These benefits and gaps identified by the participants reflect issues that are very much part of wider debates around biculturalism, and will be discussed in the next chapter.

One participant summarised many of the ideas presented in this section with the following observation, where she reflected on the comparative gains of New Zealand’s bicultural endeavours by situating it in a wider postcolonial context:

I think [biculturalism in New Zealand] is a very unique outcome, even though it’s extremely far from being perfect and respectful, but nevertheless it’s an attempt at getting out of colonialism in a different way than splitting or killing each other, which is very interesting and rare in the world.

## **Chapter 6: Discussion**

Data analysis of interview material in the current study led to the identification of three main themes, 'Acculturating to Mainstream', 'Encountering Indigenous Culture' and 'Relating to Biculturalism'. In the context of this study, these themes represent three overlapping cultural/experiential spheres that the study participants as immigrants and ethnic minorities, encountered, interacted with and adjusted to in various ways. Each of these main themes were anchored on and supported by lower order themes, which together created three thematic networks. The cultural spheres identified are not mutually exclusive, but as was evident in the previous chapter, participants' experiences of engagement at each level were different. So while the separation rendered in conceptualizing them as three separate spheres (and themes) was in some ways artificial, juxtaposing them in this way was helpful for describing the relations and tensions experienced within each sphere. Taken together, these three thematic networks provide a sense of the 'other-other' experience as characterized by these participants.

### **Implications of Participants' Acculturation Experience (in light of immigration theory and research)**

The first major theme, described challenges that participants faced in their attempts to adjust to, and find a sense of fitting in and belonging within the dominant Pakeha culture of New Zealand. Participants experienced culture shock and alienation, found the acculturation process overwhelming, and two participants in particular, described the challenges of reconciling conflicting cultural values underscored by the pressure to assimilate in order to 'make it' in a westernized dominant culture. These struggles voiced by participants, relate to common challenges described by immigrants in the process of relocating and acculturating to a new host culture, and are well

established in the immigration literature (Barreto, 2013; Berry, 1997; Chen, 2004; Iwamasa, 1996).

In the description of the findings, I introduced the notion of culture shock as a useful means of understanding the adjustment experiences described under the first sub theme. Adler (1975), one of the first authors to identify and describe this transitional experience, conceptualized culture shock as occurring in a sequence of five interrelated stages; the first stage, frequently referred to as the 'honeymoon phase', is the phase of initial contact with a new culture, where immigrants are more likely to feel captivated by their new environment and by its apparent contrast with their previous experiences, much like a tourist. This is however followed by the second stage, 'disintegration', where according to Adler (1975), cultural differences between the home and host cultures become increasingly apparent, intrusive and disorienting. The requirements of the new culture starts to overwhelm the individual, particularly given that their usual behaviours do not bring about expected responses and reactions. Themes identified in the current study in relation to culture shock reflect a similar pattern, of enthusiasm and freedom during initial contact, followed by a sense of disconnection, alienation and overwhelm as participants' encountered the realities of immersing and adapting to a different cultural setting. Most theories relating to culture shock move beyond the disintegration stage, and focus on how individuals reconcile the differences between their old and new experiences and eventually moved towards a hybrid identity (Adler, 1975; Garza-Guerrero, 1974). This study did not set out to explore the immigration experience in depth, which may explain the lack of identification of themes related these subsequent processes of adjustment. Nevertheless, none of the participants spoke of their acculturation experience as a completed process, but rather, as an ongoing and dynamic process, which continues to have an impact on their lived experience as immigrants.

In the immigration literature, a distinction is frequently made between visible and invisible immigrants, the former denoting immigrants who are visibly different to their host cultural (usually Anglo-Saxon) participants, and the latter term used to denote white immigrants, usually from European backgrounds (George, 2012; Leinonen, 2012; Trlin, 2012). Such a distinction has been necessary, as accumulated evidence suggests that visible migrants face significantly more challenges and hardships compared to invisible immigrants (e.g. Leinonen, 2012; Preston, 2005; Statistics New Zealand, 2012; Bartley, 2004; Fleras, 1999). Although this study included the experiences of two non-European (visible) and two European (invisible) participants, findings indicated that all four participants felt visibly different in some sense, making it possible to identify common themes and patterns across their experiences. These visible differences comprised of more straightforward differences based on skin colour (non-European participants) and accents (European participants), but also based on their self-identification as ethnic-minorities, and their lived experience of feeling 'other' to the dominant Pakeha group.

Nevertheless, historical antecedents and attitudes that have shaped New Zealand's immigration landscape bear evidence to the differential treatment of visible and invisible immigrants (Bartley & Spoonley, 2004; Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). New Zealand has a long history of racializing visible immigrants such as those of Asian and Polynesian origin, including the implementation of assimilationist migration policy aimed at keeping the country 'white', that specifically excluded the entry of non-European, visibly different migrants (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). DeSouza (2006) asserts that at an implicit level, these policies and attitudes continue to shape the treatment of immigrants in Aotearoa New Zealand. This assertion is corroborated by evidence from research on New Zealander's attitudes towards immigrants. For instance, findings from a study by Ward and Masgoret (2008) where majority of the research participants

identified as New Zealand European (76%), indicated that perceived cultural distance affected attitudes towards immigrants, leading to a reported preference for immigrants from Anglo-Celtic backgrounds as opposed to those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

On the other hand, research exploring the experiences of invisible immigrants indicate that they too experience settlement difficulties owing to perceived social and cultural disparities, and despite their apparent invisibility, experience prejudice and discrimination at less overt levels (Trlin, 2012). A study of older white immigrants in Aotearoa New Zealand illuminated that for the majority, negotiation of a hybrid identity was a continuous process, and that being perceived and treated as a foreigner was still part of their lived experience, despite expectations as white immigrants to be able to blend in easily with the dominant culture (George & Fitzgerald, 2012). These findings indicate that both visible and invisible immigrant groups encounter difficulties in adjusting to and finding a sense of belonging within mainstream Pakeha culture, although some may experience more overt discrimination and barriers to integration.

Findings of this study reflected that the two non-European participants experienced acculturative stress directly related to reconciling conflicting cultural values, and feeling pressure to assimilate; struggles that were not referred to by the two European participants. This evidence however was not strong enough for making inferences about differences in their experiences. In addition, an in-depth exploration of the acculturation experience of these two groups of immigrants was beyond the scope of this study. Overall, findings presented under the first main theme highlighted that acculturating to mainstream Pakeha culture, including adapting to and making sense of the dominant cultural attitudes, values, structures and practices constituted a significant set of adjustments for these foreign born therapists.

## **Making Sense of the Difference in Experiences in the Dominant Cultural and Indigenous Settings**

As was evident in the previous chapter, participant's experiences of relating to mainstream Pakeha culture differed quite significantly from their experiences of relating to indigenous Māori culture. The former was characterized by disconnection, alienation, overwhelm, otherness and pressures to assimilate. In contrast, the latter engagements were characterized overwhelmingly by identification, support, and connection. Indeed, for the two non-European therapists, these identifications were based on cultural affinities and similarities with Māori culture. Nevertheless, these positive experiences and engagements ensued, even when some participants encountered cultural differences that necessitated adjustment of their own cultural frameworks and viewpoints in order to understand the indigenous experience. There could be several reasons for the contrast in experiences between these two cultural settings. One is that unlike with mainstream culture, engaging with Māori culture was not underscored by some of the pressures to acculturate and assimilate. So although participants commented on the lack of access to Māori cultural experiences in the mainstream, this also meant, perhaps paradoxically, that participants had more choice and control over the level of engagement they initiated with the indigenous community and culture.

On the other hand, as epitomized by participants' experiences on the *marae*, Māori philosophies and cultural values that underpin how engagement is initiated and relationships are developed with others, contributed significantly to the differences in participants' experience in the dominant cultural setting vis-à-vis the indigenous setting. Hence, if we attempt to understand this experience by situating it within a particular moment in time, the *marae* encounter is perhaps the best example. This encounter provided a gateway into the indigenous context, and as described in the previous

chapter, for many participants, set the foundation for continued engagement with Māori. This initiation into Māori culture, etched in participants' memories, and as characterized by their recollections, seemed to be underpinned by *manaakitanga* – the literal translation of which means to care for a person's *mana* or sense of well-being (Some key marae values concepts and practices, n.d.). At the gates of the Marae, they were ceremoniously welcomed (*powhiri*), and in accordance with the tradition of *pepeha*, invited to bring themselves in by relating their own story of who they are, where they come from and how they came to be here. Although an unfair comparison in many respects, this is in stark contrast to how participants were welcomed into New Zealand and by extension into mainstream culture, with a stamp on a foreign passport which specified conditions of entry and length of stay. Therefore, not only did the indigenous context provide relief from the cultural pressures that participants felt in the mainstream, it offered an alternative way of engaging and being in the world, quite different to the dominant cultural ethos and ways of being. Relations between migrant and indigenous communities have received scant attention as a topic of empirical inquiry. However, I found some support for the kind of inferences I make above, in the writings of migrant scholars, especially postcolonial feminist writers (e.g. DeSouza, 2006; DeSouza, 2011; Wittman, 1998; Mohanram, 1998), who have explored and written about these relations and their implications. For instance, Ruth DeSouza, a nurse academic of Goan Indian ancestry, and currently a senior lecturer at Monash University Australia, maintains a blog where among the other topics, she explores and writes about the shared cultural spaces occupied by immigrants and indigenous groups in white-settler societies (<http://www.ruthdesouza.com>). In one of her articles, she describes an experience she witnessed at a refugee conference at New Zealand's AUT university, where a refugee participant had delivered a *mihi*, reflecting on how a *powhiri* held for refugees as part of their resettlement process, "helped him regain his *mana* after the

dehumanizing experiences of his refugee journey” (DeSouza 2011, para 8). This refugee participant’s experience in many ways parallel experiences described by the current study participants, and indicate that they felt cared for by Māori in the indigenous setting, in a way that allowed them to regain a sense of integrity following the disintegrating experiences of their immigrant journeys.

Wittman (1998), talks about the commonality or shared reality endured by both indigenous Māori and many immigrants to Aotearoa New Zealand. Wittman asserts, that both groups need to be bicultural by necessity “if they are to both make it in present day New Zealand society and retain their own culture” (p.58). She also reports findings from interviews she conducted with 48 Jewish women residing in New Zealand, in which some participants express a natural sense of affinity with Māori. For instance, one of the participants that Wittman (1998) quotes is a Jewish woman who was born and socialized in New Zealand but who strives to retain ties with her Jewish ancestry as part of her identity. This participant is quoted as saying “I can identify with the Māori side of being a New Zealander very easily...that Māori side is as natural as swimming for me” (p.62). None of the participants in the current study made direct references to the shared plight that Wittman (1998) talks about. However, the kind of cultural pressure they described encountering in mainstream society, and by contrast, the almost automatic sense of affiliation they felt with Māori indicates, that the recognition of this commonality may underpin their sense of identification with and support for the indigenous experience.

Further, as described in Chapter 4, some of them recognized and reflected on the historical plight they share with Māori, albeit from two opposite angles. One participant through awareness of his own colonized cultural history, which naturally led him to identify more with Māori than with Pakeha. On the contrary, the second participant, through identification with the sense of shame that she heard Māori speak of, which

resonated with her own sense of shame rooted in her colonizing cultural heritage. These experiences represent the many cultural positions and spaces that are shared by non-indigenous ethnic minorities and Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, both as part of their cultural histories, but also as part of their current struggles in a context where practices and structures that govern their daily lives and experiences are by default monocultural and othering.

### **Construction of ‘*Competing Others*’ and its Implications**

Despite the sense of affiliation that predominated participants’ engagement with indigenous Māori, some tensions and difficulties became apparent in the therapeutic context. Notably, one therapist described having to work through transference reactions where they felt positioned as an invader, “just like Europeans or worse”, a cultural other who has displaced Māori and taken their place in society. On the contrary, the main theme ‘Relating to Biculturalism’, highlighted participants’ own struggles as immigrants and ethnic minorities for a place in a society where cultural understanding and resources are only extended to the indigenous group. In particular, the first two sub themes under the above main theme, reflected how experiencing biculturalism is often simultaneous with experiencing further marginalization and invisibility as non-indigenous ethnic minorities. These dynamics reflect wider debate surrounding biculturalism and multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly in relation to resource allocation, where indigenous and immigrant groups are often positioned as “*competing others*” (DeSouza & Cormack, 2009, p. 219, emphasis in original). Arguments have been raised in support of each group or position, usually in opposition to the other.

The unprecedented rise in immigration following the restructuring of immigration policy in Aotearoa New Zealand, drew protest from Māori, who were concerned about the cultural and economic implications of immigration, but for different reasons than

Pakeha. Some of these concerns persist into the present (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). Pressure for recognition of greater cultural diversity is seen as diluting the primacy of biculturalism, of Māori as *tangata whenua* and their claims for special status and rights under the Treaty of Waitangi. Asian immigration in particular has been criticized as a quick fix economic solution, and as imposing a threat to improving Māori employment and participation in the labour market (Walker, 1995). Walker also criticized the government for not consulting with Māori, prior to instigating changes in migration policy that allowed for the entry of immigrants from non-traditional source countries (Walker, 1995). Similarly, arguments have been made against biculturalism in favour of multiculturalism, based on the premise of a multicultural state where all ethnic groups have equality of access to support, resources and legal processes; as opposed to a state where one group has special status or rights based on indigeneity (Thakur, 1995). DeSouza and Cormack (2009) argue that this construction and perpetuation of ‘competing others’ only serves to maintain the dominance of white-settler practices, by obscuring the monocultural core around which these arguments are made. Similarly, Mohanram (1998) points out, that far from being a vehicle for equal power sharing, biculturalism in the way it is currently set up is “ultimately revealed to be something that can be initiated only by Pakeha, because it is Pakeha who control the resources” (p.26). In this mode of biculturalism, she points out, “Pakeha have, Māori have not. Pakeha give, Māori receive” (p.26). Understandably then, such an environment would be further muddled by the addition of ‘others’ whose needs also claim visibility, who then find themselves competing with the ‘have nots’, but without the status of the indigenous group and without clearly demarcated policy or processes to support their needs.

Nevertheless, as one of the current study participant’s reflected, “[biculturalism in New Zealand] is a very unique outcome...it’s an attempt at getting out of colonialism in

a different way...” At the very least, central to most bicultural endeavours in Aotearoa New Zealand, is an ambition towards balancing power relations between two cultural groups in a different way than that allowed by assimilation or even integration (Durie, 1998; Spoonley, 1993). Further, biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand has been the result of a long and arduous struggle by Māori to reclaim their Māoriness and the sovereignty promised to them under the Treaty of Waitangi. Colonization had a devastating impact on the well-being and culture of indigenous Māori, with Māori facing significant depopulation and near genocide during the nineteenth century (Durie, 1998). Observations made by participants in the current study, are corroborated by accumulated evidence which demonstrates that Māori continue to face significant barriers to access and inclusion (Webby, 2001). The ongoing impact of colonization on Māori is evident in the significant disparities in health, education, employment and socio-economic advancement (Durie, 1998).

Despite the signing of the Treaty, successive governments pursued a course of assimilating Māori into mainstream European society, amidst tribal protests and Māori voices of opposition, which were largely ignored and did not influence any restructure in policy (Durie, 1998; Hill, 2010). So in essence, Māori had to continue on their quest for reparation and justice based on the Treaty and its principles long after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. According to Hill (2010), a key factor that led to the overturning of the assimilative policies pursued by the government, was the “longevity of Māori resistance and its intensification following the advent of what is generally called the Māori renaissance” (p.293). According to Durie (1998), the move towards biculturalism rather than assimilation or integration resulted in a necessary and in some ways radical restructuring of New Zealand’s approach to health. The Treaty of Waitangi, eventually came into effect in health policy over 150 years after its signing. However, there are still significant gaps in how the Treaty has been translated into practice to ensure health

gains for Māori (Webby, 2001). To summarize, the historical factors described above reflect only a brief overview of the enormous effort that Māori had to make to retain their Māori identity, well-being, cultural practices and structures from being completely eroded by colonizing processes.

### **Learning to See One ‘Other’ may pave the way for Seeing Many ‘Others’**

In light of the historical developments outlined above, some migrant authors like DeSouza (2009), emphasize the importance of returning the indigenous to the centre, because “Māori have paved the way for others to be here in Aotearoa/New Zealand” (para.38). There is indeed some promise in the hope that the understanding and acceptance extended to one ‘other’ will eventually be extended to many ‘others’. However, there seems to be little realization of this hope reflected in the way cultural diversity is currently being approached and engaged in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Findings in the current study, related to how participants’ perceived and experienced biculturalism in the professional context illuminated that biculturalism provided a welcome alternative to the dominant westernized perspectives and approaches to mental health and treatment. However, these cultural services are exclusively reserved for Māori, while other ethnic minorities are usually subsumed under the mainstream model, making invisible their disparate needs. Participants in the current study indicated that while they felt fairly well resourced to work with Māori, and could engage the support of *Kaupapa Māori* services when required, they felt significantly under resourced when it came to supporting clients of other ethnic groups. Some practitioners were left carrying the burden of bridging these cultural gaps in mainstream treatment. As mentioned, one participant also made the observation that in mainstream mental health treatment, cultural awareness and understanding generated via bicultural training is not extended to other ethnic communities whose customs, traditions and values resemble that of Māori. Whilst evidence generated in this study is

insufficient for generalizing to the wider system, other research has reported similar patterns. Pavagada and DeSouza (2007) draw attention to the lack of official data available for the mental health of Asian ethnic groups, illuminating the paucity of research efforts aimed at these communities. This is concerning, given that Asian ethnic groups constitute the fastest growing ethnic group in Aotearoa New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Despite their population growth, national health surveys tend to subsume members of Asian ethnic groups in with New Zealand Europeans. Asian ethnic groups have been overlooked in health research and policy, albeit evidence that prevalence rates for major illnesses like Type 2 diabetes amongst certain Asian groups exceeds that seen in Māori (Duncan, Schofield, Duncan, Kolt, & Rush, 2004). In some cases, reservations have also been expressed by educators regarding the addition of an Asian cultural competency dimension, to a curriculum that has already been stretched to include Māori and Pacifica cultural issues (Nayar, Tse, & Sobrun-Maharaj, 2009).

Research cited above focused specifically on the overlooked needs of Asian ethnic groups, currently the largest non-indigenous visible minority group in Aotearoa New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Indeed, it would be reasonable to assume that disparities are more apparent when visible minorities are subsumed in with New Zealand Europeans, given the significant cultural distance between these groups and Pakeha culture. The two non-European participants in the current study, also alluded to the significant differences in cultural values between their cultures of origin and Pakeha culture. Thus, speaking specifically of visible migrants Mohanram (1998) questions, “what place does the visibly different body of the coloured immigrant occupy within the discourse of biculturalism?” (p.27). Mohanram argues that in New Zealand, whiteness is constructed in opposition to indigeneity, and that consequently, New Zealand’s biculturalism has become a model that is predicated on race – “whiteness and blackness that does not extend beyond the Māori” (p.27).

On the other hand, experiences of the two European participants in the current study reflected that they felt other and foreign to Pakeha in significant and pervasive ways. These experiences suggest that there are implications, perhaps less well researched, in subsuming less visible migrants in with New Zealand Europeans expecting their course of assimilation will be relatively smooth.

### **Immigrant Others and Indigenous Others**

As discussed in the foregoing sections, thus far efforts to address non-indigenous cultural diversity in Aotearoa New Zealand, have been seen as conflicting with efforts to realize the needs and rights of indigenous Māori.

However, as demonstrated by findings in this study, which parallel observations made by other migrant scholars, immigrants and Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand share many cultural spaces and positions, that have the potential to develop into mutually enhancing relationships. Immigrants who feel other to Pakeha in significant ways feel identification and affiliation with Māori. Sometimes these identifications are rooted in and strengthened by the cultural wounds they carry as part of their own cultural heritages. Being positioned as ‘competing others’ may prevent immigrant minorities and indigenous Māori from utilizing these shared experiences as instruments for empowering each other in meaningful ways. Indeed, in the course of researching for this dissertation I became aware that at a peripheral level, immigrants have been supporting indigenous rights and claiming justice for both groups, in Aotearoa as well as overseas. For instance, the ‘Idle No More’ movement, a movement of indigenous resurgence in Canada drew substantial support from immigrant groups under the collective ‘Immigrants in support of Idle No More’ (Immigrants in support of Idle No More, 2013). In New Zealand, a young Asian feminist movement has come together in support of indigenous rights under the collective, ‘*Tau iwi* people of colour supporting tino rangatiratanga’ (Tau iwi people of colour supporting tino rangatiratanga, 2013).

In the mental health context, Pavagada and DeSouza (2007) note that other ethnic communities can draw from Māori experiences and initiatives to address health and treatment gaps in their own communities. Sachdev (1998, cited in Pavagoda & DeSouza, 2007) points out that two factors are necessary for the realization of this change- one is that ethnic communities themselves take the primary initiative, and second, that an appropriate socio-political environment is created to facilitate such initiatives.

One therapist in the current study, highlighted the paradox he faced as a new immigrant – of needing to reconcile the internationally promoted image of New Zealand as a flourishing multicultural society, and the national preoccupation with biculturalism that implicitly serves to exclude immigrants. This participant's experience reveals an important gap in current efforts directed at orienting new immigrants to New Zealand society and culture. DeSouza (2004) calls attention to this gap, emphasizing the need to resource new migrants to become informed of their role in relation to the Treaty of Waitangi, and helping them to recognize and understand the position occupied by tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, this qualitative study explored the 'other-other' experience, the perceptions and experiences of four non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists residing and practicing in Aotearoa New Zealand, whose official status is that of a bicultural society. Four psychotherapists who self-identified as non-Māori ethnic minorities participated in semi-structured interviews that explored their lived experiences in the personal and professional settings. Themes identified via thematic analysis, led to the identification of three thematic networks which together provided a sense of the 'other-other' experience as characterized by these participants.

Findings generated indicate that these therapists as immigrants and non-indigenous ethnic-minorities face a dual struggle – on the one hand, acculturating and

finding a sense of fitting in and belonging within the dominant Pakeha culture, and on the other hand, feeling excluded from the dominant discourse and practices of biculturalism, a discourse that will determine the future direction of their new adopted country. Participants' experiences in the dominant cultural setting differed markedly from their experiences within the indigenous Māori cultural setting. The former was characterized by disconnection, otherness and pressures to assimilate, and the latter characterized overwhelmingly by identification, support, and connection. However, situated in the context of biculturalism, there was tendency for immigrant and indigenous others to be positioned as 'competing others', whereby the focus on biculturalism served to dilute and make invisible the presence of non-Māori ethnic minorities. These struggles for visibility however did not prevent participants from being able to recognize the impact of colonization on indigenous Māori and the imperative to reinstate Māori identity and culture in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In an Australian context Ghassan Hage (Hage, 1998) argues, that in order for non-indigenous Australians to ethically belong to Australia, they must develop an ethical relationship with Australia's history of colonization. According to DeSouza (2004), for immigrants in white-settler societies, this means recognizing their collusive role in colonial capitalism, and consequently in usurping the indigenous. Developing this sort of historical and political awareness she says, will enable immigrants to see past their own oppression, and realize that their futures are intertwined with that of the indigenous and their struggle for justice and self-determination.

My own position is in accord with these assertions made by Hage (1998) and DeSouza (2004). The awareness developed through immersion in this research, and through my interaction with the four thoughtful individuals who participated in the interviews has been pivotal in being able to reach that position of understanding. My conclusion is that immigrants and ethnic minorities in Aotearoa New Zealand can

become empowered to have their voices heard and their struggles recognized, by working in collaboration with, rather than in opposition to indigenous Māori. I think such an endeavor provides for ethical and mutually enhancing grounds for negotiation, and have the potential for rebalancing power relationships.

### **Limitations and Ideas for Further Research**

Data analysis in the current study focused on providing a rich thematic overview of the entire (relevant) data set. Such an analysis is useful when investigating an under researched area, or when conducting research with participants whose views about a topic are unknown (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Both these conditions were applicable to the current research topic. However, this type of analysis does not provide for a lot of depth and complexity, as the aim is to provide a rich overall description of the predominant themes.

Another limitation of this study was its small sample size, confounded by the heterogeneity within this sample. These factors do not constitute criteria for measuring quality or trustworthiness in qualitative research (Englander, 2012; Morrow, 2005). However they did impose limitations on the findings I could generate from this study. Qualitative phenomenological research is interested in the meaning of a phenomenon, and not on 'how many people' have experienced the phenomenon. In this sense, a larger sample size does not indicate better generalizability of results. However it would allow for better appreciation of the variation of the phenomenon of interest (Englander, 2012).

A more homogenous sample would have added to the depth and complexity of the findings. For instance, the current study participants were all at different stages in their acculturation process, and also differed in terms of other factors such as ethnicity, age and stage of life at entry, factors that motivated migration and so on, all of which influences adjustment to a new host culture (Karni, Alba, & Maureen, 2013). Hence

their individual accounts related to immigration and acculturation were idiosyncratic and complex. However, due to the need for reporting patterns across the data, the analysis was limited to providing an overview of the struggles participants encountered on a broader level.

This study identified and described some common struggles faced by immigrant (ethnic-minority) psychotherapists in adjusting to the socio-cultural and political context of Aotearoa New Zealand. In doing so, the study contributed to bridging an important gap in the research literature pertaining to cultural diversity in the counselling/psychotherapy profession in a New Zealand context. However, the dissertation did not explore in-depth how these struggles translated to participants' clinical work as psychotherapists. Although some participants made reference to their work with clients, there was not enough data to support the creation of themes to represent these experiences, except for the sub theme specifically related to working with Māori clients. Evidence suggests that there is merit for considering the experience of being an immigrant or 'being not from here' as a separate contextual variable that affects therapist who have made that transition (Karni et al., 2013). As Gedo and Gehrie (2010) point out, psychotherapy, being an intimate form of communication would inevitably need to rely on shared cultural meanings. Hence immigrant psychotherapists, especially those who have been born and socialized in a different cultural context, would face technical challenges of a greater magnitude than non-immigrant psychotherapists (Akhtar, 2006). In the New Zealand context, the increase in ethnic-cultural diversity due to immigration would not only mean an increase in the diversity of the clientele, but also an increase in the cultural diversity of psychotherapy trainees. There is hence important incentive for future research to be focused in this area.

Findings in the current study represents an amalgamation of the perspectives and experiences of four ethnically diverse psychotherapists, who each self-identified as an

ethnic minority in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, the current study sample did not include any Chinese psychotherapists which may be a noteworthy gap. Majority of Asians in New Zealand identify as Chinese, currently the third largest and fastest growing population group (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Throughout New Zealand's history, Chinese immigrants have been the target of anti-racial campaigns specifically aimed at preventing their entry into New Zealand. Chinese immigration has been vociferously resisted by both Pakeha and Māori in the past (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). There are hence important historical antecedents that have shaped and continue to shape the way Chinese immigrants are perceived and treated in Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, a Chinese participant's point of view and experience may have added important variation to the themes identified in the current study.

Finally, each of the three main themes identified in this study in many ways represented a cultural/experiential sphere on its own. This is reflected in the findings, where participants' responses and experiences were largely characteristic to the attitudes and pressures encountered within each sphere –mainstream culture, indigenous culture, and biculturalism. There is a growing body of research related to the first main theme identified in the current study, focused on the transitional experience of immigrants and ethnic-minorities, and their experiences of acculturating to mainstream New Zealand culture. On the other hand, my research for the purpose of this dissertation led me to conclude that immigrants' experiences and perspectives in relation to indigenous culture and biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand have been largely overlooked as topics of empirical inquiry. This is a significant gap in the current research literature pertaining to cultural diversity and race relations in New Zealand. Findings of this study indicated that ethnic minorities and indigenous Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand implicitly share many cultural spaces, and each group can contribute meaningfully to the other. Further as discussed, immigrants, who have chosen Aotearoa New Zealand as their new adopted

country are inevitably implicated in New Zealand's bicultural discourse, whether or not they feel directly impacted by biculturalism. Exploring their perspectives and experiences can motivate them to become better informed and politically aware, and may empower them to negotiate a more meaningful position for non-indigenous ethnic minorities in an (officially) bicultural society.

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## Appendix A

### Glossary

#### Māori words and concepts as used in this dissertation:

Tikanga (Māori)	correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol -the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context.
Marae	Courtyard - the open area in front of the <i>wharenuī</i> , where formal greetings and discussions take place
Powhiri	Welcome ceremony on a Marae
Pepeha	to say, exclaim, be the subject of a saying (in the passive, i.e. <i>pepehatia</i> ).
Waiata	( <i>verb</i> ) to sing; ( <i>noun</i> ) song, chant or psalm
Manaakitanga	( <i>noun</i> ) hospitality, kindness, generosity, support - the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others.

#### Reference:

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**Appendix B: Participant Consent Form****Consent Form**

*Project title: The ‘other-other’ perspective: The lived experience of non-Māori ethnic minority psychotherapists practicing in the bi-cultural context of Aotearoa, New Zealand*

*Project Supervisor: Dr Stephen Appel*

*Researcher: Mihili Salpitikorala*

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 31/07/2013.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research.

- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes
- No

Participant's signature:

.....

.....

Participant's name:

.....

.....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

.....

.....

.....

Date:

***Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on **type the date** on which the final approval was granted AUTEK Reference number **type the AUTEK reference number*****

*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.*

## Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet

# Participant



# Information Sheet

**Date Information Sheet Produced:**

29<sup>th</sup> July 2013

**Project Title**

The 'other-other' perspective: The lived experience of non-Māori ethnic minority psychotherapists practicing in the bi-cultural context of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

**An Invitation**

You are invited to take part in a research project exploring the lived experience of non-Māori ethnic minority psychotherapists practicing in the bi-cultural context of New Zealand. My name is Mihili Salpitikorala, and I am undertaking this research study for my Masters in Psychotherapy Dissertation. Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary, and should you choose to participate you may also choose to withdraw your participation at any time during the process. You will not be identified in any writing up of the findings.

**What is the purpose of this research?**

There is a shortage of research exploring the subjective experiences of ethnic-minority therapists, and there are currently no published studies pertaining to this area of research within the bi-cultural context of New Zealand. I hope that the information gained in this study will help give voice to the experiences of non-indigenous ethnic-minority psychotherapists practicing in New Zealand, and also contribute towards expanding current knowledge and understanding regarding issues of ethnic-cultural diversity. You may also find that participating in the research will provide you with an opportunity for self-reflection around this topic. The final research output will be in the form of a dissertation. The dissertation will be available for access in hard copy and digital format through the AUT University library.

### **How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?**

You are being invited to participate in this research as you are a psychotherapist who self identifies as a non-Māori ethnic minority in New Zealand. You would have been identified by word of mouth by someone who knew about the study and thought you might be interested. You would also have been identified as you have responded to a general invitation issued to psychotherapists, by e-mail via the local branch of NZAP, or via an advertisement in the NZAP newsletter.

### **What will happen in this research?**

The study involves interviews with psychotherapists. These interviews will be audio recorded. If you choose to take part, you will be asked to spend between 60 and 90 minutes being interviewed about your lived, everyday experience as a non-Māori ethnic-minority psychotherapist practicing in New Zealand. You may choose to discontinue your participation at any time.

### **What are the discomforts and risks?**

Experiences related to ethnic-cultural identity can be deeply personal. Hence you may experience some discomfort or vulnerability when discussing this topic.

### **How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?**

You may choose to have the recorder turned off at any point during the interview and withdraw from the interview/research process at any time. You may find it helpful to discuss your experience in clinical supervision, and you can also utilise the services of a counsellor at the AUT Health, Counselling and Wellbeing Centre which also offers counselling to research participants. The centre can be contacted on (09) 921 9999 ext 9998 (Akoranga Campus) and (09) 921 9999 ext 9992 (Wellesley Campus).

### **What are the benefits?**

Participation in this research will give you an opportunity to reflect on your experiences as a non-Māori ethnic minority in New Zealand and the impact this identification has had on your practice as a psychotherapist. This may add to your personal and professional development. The findings will be beneficial to the psychotherapy profession, in terms of creating awareness around the subjective experience of non-Māori ethnic-minority psychotherapists, and deepening existing knowledge and understanding regarding the impact of ethnic-cultural variables on therapy. I will also benefit from this research, as it will add to my understanding as a psychotherapist, and the completion of this study will enable me to obtain my Masters in Psychotherapy.

### **How will my privacy be protected?**

Your audio recorded interview will be transcribed only by me. Only I and my dissertation supervisor will have access to the data. Your identity will be kept confidential by the use of a pseudonym. Any potentially identifying information will be excluded from the final report as well as from any verbal presentations of the material. Identifying demographics with participant identification numbers will be stored separately from the research data, as will signed consent

forms. All material involved in the research will be secured in a locked filing cabinet and destroyed after six years.

**What are the costs of participating in this research?**

The only cost involved in you participating in this research is your time. As indicated earlier, if you choose to take part, this will involve an interview of up to 90 minutes. I will meet you for the interview at a place of your choosing.

**What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?**

I would find it helpful if you could let me know within a month whether or not you wish to participate in the research.

**How do I agree to participate in this research?**

You will need to complete the consent form included with the Participant Information Sheet to participate in this research.

**Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?**

I will post or e-mail you a copy of the summary of the research findings if you would like to receive this information. This could take up to a year after you have been interviewed.

**What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Stephen Appel, Stephen.appel@aut.ac.nz Ph (09) 921 9999 ext 7199

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Kate O'Connor, [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz) , 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

**Researcher Contact Details:** Mihili Salpitikoralala, [mihili\\_sk@yahoo.com](mailto:mihili_sk@yahoo.com), Ph 021 0744 626

**Project Supervisor Contact Details:** Dr Stephen Appel, [Stephen.appel@aut.ac.nz](mailto:Stephen.appel@aut.ac.nz) Ph (09) 921 9999 ext 7199

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *5<sup>th</sup> September 2013*, AUTEK Reference number

**Appendix D: Recruitment Email and Advertisement****Invitation to Participate in a Research Study**

You are invited to participate in a research study exploring the **lived experience of non-Māori ethnic-minority psychotherapists practicing in the bi-cultural context of Aotearoa, New Zealand.**

My name is Mihili Salpitikorala, and I am conducting this study for my Master of Psychotherapy Dissertation. If you meet the following criteria and would like to participate, please contact me at [mihili\\_sk@yahoo.com](mailto:mihili_sk@yahoo.com) or on 021 0744626.

*Participants will need to meet the following criteria:*

- (1) Self identify as a non-Māori ethnic minority psychotherapist in New Zealand
- (2) Be willing to participate in a 60-90 minute, face to face, audio taped interview at a location of your choosing

## Appendix E: AUTECH Approval Letter



A U T E C  
S E C R E T A R I A T

5 September 2013

Stephen Appel

Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences

Dear Stephen

Re: Ethics Application **13/223 The 'other-other' perspective: The lived experiences of non-Māori ethnic-minority psychotherapists practicing in the bi-cultural context of Aotearoa, New Zealand.**

Thank you for submitting your application for ethical review. I am pleased to confirm that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTECH) has approved your ethics application for three years until 2 September 2016.

As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to

AUTECH:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 2 September 2016;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 2 September 2016 or on completion of the project;

It is a condition of approval that AUTECH is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTECH approval needs to be sought for any alteration

to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application. AUTEK grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this. If your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply within their.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, we ask that you use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz).

All the very best with your research,



Kate O'Connor

Executive Secretary

**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee**

Cc: Mihili Salpitikorala [mihili\\_sk@yahoo.com](mailto:mihili_sk@yahoo.com)