# Beyond the Headlines: How New Zealand media construct Pasifika peoples in crime narratives

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# Abstract

Media institutions play a significant role in shaping audiences' understanding of certain events, issues and social groups (Bull, 2017; Gilhurst, 2010). This study aims to critically examine the portrayal of Pacific peoples in crime narratives in Aotearoa New Zealand media. The research incorporates a comparative component by looking at mainstream media platforms such as New Zealand Herald and Radio New Zealand, against Pacific-led forums such as E-Tangata and Pacific Media Network. In doing so, this study will analyse the use of language and identify any demographic and linguistic characteristics across the two media discourses.

Three distinct time periods were selected, focusing on early, to mid, and most recent media coverage of Pacific peoples in crime reporting. This study seeks to explore and answer the following question; How do mainstream and Pacific-led media differ in their representation of Pacific peoples in crime reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand?

The research also draws on critical theory, labelling theory, and cultivation theory, to critically examine the relationship between media, power and public perception. Nationally, there are several studies which have studied the phenomenon of Māori and Pasifika peoples in mainstream media in areas such as healthcare, politics, and crime (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Loto et al., 2006; Maydell, 2018; Moewaka Barnes & McCreanor, 2019; Nairn et a., 2011). However, there is minimal investigation in comparing mainstream with alternative-led forums. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the scarce gap in existing literature.

Based off 173 analysed articles over three distinct time periods. Content analysis data was coded across and categorised as such; headlines, offence type, age, ethnic labels, victim vs. offender narratives, spatial areas, and descriptors. Critical discourse was then used to examine the language within these categories.

The findings within this study indicated that both media forums narrated and portrayed Pacific peoples through distinct discursive frameworks. Mainstream stories were constructed through a deficit-based narrative tending to place blame on the community, and heightening the severity of offences and victim-based narratives. However, Pacific-led

tended to focus on community issues regarding criminality adding critique to areas of systemic failures. This research therefore argues the importance in reflecting on representation of Pacific peoples in distinct media environments, and critically understanding why forums such as alternative-led media, may inherit disparate ideological, cultural and institutional positions which cater for Pacific peoples as opposed to mainstream.

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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), nor used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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| | 21/10/2026 |
| Signature | Date |

# Artificial Intelligence Declaration

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| ***Specify the chapter number(s) in your research proposal/research component where AI was used.*** | |
| **Chapter number(s):** | **Chapter 3 (Research Design & Methodology) & Chapter 4 (Results)** |
| ***Briefly explain why the AI tool was used (e.g., idea generation, summarization, data analysis, image creation, etc.).*** | |
| **Purpose of AI Use:** | AI was used to help generate data variables (e.g. key terms) & with layout structure |
| ***Clearly state the AI tools used.*** | |
| **AI Tool(s) Used:** | **CO Pilot** |
| ***Prompts or queries entered into the AI tool (only the instructive portion of the prompt is required). Include all relevant variations.*** | |
| **Prompts Used:** | **Could you help generate more extensive 'offence' terms…**<br>**What would you recommend is the better layout for my results…** |
| ***A summary or description of the AI-generated output. (Optional: attach output in an appendix.)*** | |
| **Output Received:** | CO Pilot produced a substantial amount of key terms, and even produced some conviction terms.<br><br>For the design layout of the results chapter, the primary researcher wanted to examine what the best effective way for the chapter was. Due to the heavy content in this chapter, the researcher wanted to make sure the flow of the results layout was effective. |
| ***Describe how the AI output was used, edited, or transformed.*** | |
| **Post-AI Processing Methods:** | With the amount of key terms CO Pilot produced, and any terms which were not already included, in the pre-determined list were weighed for its effectiveness, and then selected if the primary researcher saw it best fit.<br><br>The results layout was slightly tweaked to show specific findings first, recommended by CO Pilot. |

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| ***By signing you are confirming that the AI use stated in the table(s) above are accurate and follow AUT's recommended guidelines detailed in the AI Hub and Postgraduate Handbook.*** | | | |
| **Student Name:** | **Daisy Mahoni** | **Signature:** | **Date:** **21/07/26** |

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Philippians 4: 6-7.
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I hope that this research inspires future Pasifika students to persevere in their own aspirations, and that no matter your chosen field, find peace in knowing you are chasing something worthwhile. Take this as your sign to let your younger self see the greatness you possess.

A message to those who exist between the margins: Be comfortable being uncomfortable.
Do things afraid, do it even if you do not know what comes after. Most importantly, do it for those who came before you, do it for your people, do it for you.
Continue to be a voice for the voiceless.

To my Pasifika community, this is for you.

Mālo ‘Aupito

# Chapter 1 Introduction

The intersection of race in media institutions has been widely recognised as playing a central role in shaping the public's understanding of Indigenous groups. With the rapid growth of media organisations across the world, there is no doubt that media can function as a powerful tool over the public sphere in influencing their perceptions of the criminal justice system and its central actors (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Cottle, 2000; Loto et al., 2006). Moreover, consuming high levels of media has been argued to influence an individual's conception of reality and shift their beliefs and attitudes towards key issues and narratives (Bull, 2017; Gilchrist, 2010; McCreanor et al., 2014). When crime narratives become intertwined with skewed representations of ethnic groups, it can foster distorted images of them. These narratives persist because audiences continue to engage and reproduce them through their media consumption patterns.

Across Aotearoa New Zealand media, there has been a large debate on the exploitation of Māori and Pasifika peoples in media crime reporting, framing these ethnic groups as socially deviant and inherently criminal (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Webb & Deckert, 2023; Loto et al., 2006; Podvoiskis, 2012; Pukeiti, 2022; Yan et al., 2023). This phenomenon does not only stem from historical links in New Zealand but also reflects wider international Indigenous communities, where media platforms have long produced narratives that have systemically marginalised them, whilst maintaining dominant cultural perceptions of reality (Pietikanien, 2003; Porter & Hannan, 2023).

## 1.1 Purpose of this study

The purpose of this study was to analyse the representation of Pasifika peoples, in crime media across both prevalent and alternative national media platforms. The chosen mainstream media outlets for this study are New Zealand Herald (NZH), and Radio New Zealand (RNZ). For alternative forums the researcher intends to incorporate Pacific Media Network (PMN) and E – Tangata. The researcher's motivation for this topic emerges from undergraduate studies regarding crime narratives in the media, and how often vulnerable groups and/or minorities are less inclined to voice their opinions as opposed to what is considered the

majority such as Pālangi journalists, and New Zealand Police (Adebanwi, 2004; Hodgetts et al., 2005; Barnes & McCreanor, 2023). This was important to explore as the primary researcher identifies as Pasifika descent, and has seen an extensive volume of past literature which argues that New Zealand media forums, have continued to make distinctions between 'us – Palangi (white) vs them – Māori and Pasifika' (Borell, 2006; Cottle, 2000; Nairn et al., 2009; Samasoni, 1990; Spoonley & Butcher 2009).

Given that the research explores a vast range of mainstream and alternative-led media, this standpoint adds a critical layer of reflection when analysing representation of Pacific identity and cultural significance. The researcher's positionality as a Pasifika woman is a vital part for this research, as their cultural background was a strong motivation for addressing the specified research topic, in particular how Pacific peoples are narrated and reflected in mainstream media. In addition, the primary researcher has previous criminology interest, having undertook undergraduate studies in this field, with specific areas which investigated ethnic groups in the media, vulnerable groups in the justice system, and the effects of colonisation in the criminal sector across Aotearoa, New Zealand. These academic interests further added motivation to researching this scarce area of scholarship. However, with this positionality the need to address reflexivity is vital, as these personal motives can influence the interpretation of findings.

Mass media constitutes as a public forum for communication, filled with alternating ideas, opinions and voices, and whilst its sole role is to transmit information, it can also limit the scope of minority identity. In this case, the representation of Māori and Pasifika peoples in crime stories (Pietikanien, 2003; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005). The emergence of alternative media such as PMN and E – Tangata have given voice to these vulnerable groups incorporating cultural significance and media procedures. The researcher aims to shed light on the differences between the media forums and hope to reveal potential similarities or differences in how both media platforms construct crime stories revolved around Pasifika peoples.

The use of terms such as *Pacific* and *Pasifika* have been referred to interchangeably throughout this study. Although these terms do carry different meanings, for instance *Pasifika* or *Pasefika* are spelling variations more commonly used by Pacific peoples themselves, and fit under the umbrella term to describe individuals with relevance to their descent or heritage.

However, terms such as *Pacific Islanders* or *Pacific peoples* have been sanctioned as more prominent terms by the Ministry of Pacific peoples within New Zealand (The Ministry of Pacific Peoples, 2021). For the purpose of this study, and the distinction made, the primary researcher has chosen to adopt this interchangeable mechanism in order to encapsulate a broader range of Pacific peoples currently living in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Whilst, also allowing flexibility in terminology across academic scholarship and media sources used within this study.

## 1.2 Thesis Overview

Despite the growing emergence of Indigenous-led media internationally and in Aotearoa, there remains limited research comparing prevalent and alternative national media platforms. Therefore, this research still adds to existing literature of crime media and race however, is broadening the scope of looking beyond just mainstream forums.

Chapter 2 outlines the literature review for this thesis. It begins by outlining the role and purpose of media, specifically mass media in contemporary New Zealand, with a particular focus on how areas such as discourse, power and knowledge play a pivotal role in the production of meaning in news institutions. It further discusses the use of racialised media practices in Aotearoa, New Zealand to analyse how notions such as othering, stereotyping, ethnic tagging, gatekeeping and the homogeneous grouping of Māori and Pasifika peoples, have historically overtime constructed mainstream reporting of ethnic minorities. Furthermore, the chapter will explore international portrayals of Indigenous groups in media, and examine intersectional factors of Pasifika offenders, providing social contexts into their offending. Finally, this literature review will explore historical and contemporary representations of Māori and Pasifika in New Zealand mainstream media. Together these sections establish the conceptual and historical foundations of this study, and provide a basis for the central research question: **How do mainstream and Pacific-led media differ in their representation of Pacific peoples in crime reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand?**

**Chapter 3 – Research Design & Methodology**

Chapter 3 discusses the research design and adopted methodology. This research stems from a transformative worldview, which is concerned with marginalised groups and the social constraints placed onto them. Moreover, transformative worldview is drawn from an

advocacy and participatory standpoint, prompting that this research is cognisant of the portrayals of ethnic minorities, namely Pasifika peoples in New Zealand crime media and wishes to advocate for change in their depictions. This research is supported by these theoretical frameworks; critical theory, labelling theory and cultivation theory. Labelling theory focuses on how individuals internalise and adhere to the labels placed onto them (Bradley & Walters, 2019). Cultivation theory focuses on how people perceive media and the implications media have on people (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). This study utilises content analysis to present findings and draws on critical discourse analysis to critically examine the role and use of language.

**Chapter 4 – Findings**

Chapter 4 presents the data collection and results from the 173 articles analysed across the mainstream and alternative – led media discourses. The findings vary across a range of demographic and linguistic data, such as offences, victim or offender narrative, descriptors of offenders, age range/median, location of offence, and article type such as; police brief, opinion, or report. In addition, some findings were compared to official statistics such as Statistics New Zealand and the New Zealand Police.

**Chapter 5 – Discussion**

Chapter 5 critically examines the findings presented in Chapter 4. The chapter firstly discusses the research question and objectives, and then explores the findings in relation to relevant theoretical frameworks. Areas such as racialised media practices (othering, ethnic tagging and homogenisation) previously examined in Chapter 2 are explored, to show how these portrayals in news platforms play a significant role in shaping an individual's perception of real-life social groups, specifically Māori and Pasifika peoples.

**Chapter 6 – Conclusion**

Chapter 6 aims to draw on a conclusion regarding the portrayal of Pasifika peoples in this comparative study. Moreover, this chapter will also reflect on areas where future research is needed.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review will first explore the role of mass media and its purpose, covering these subtopics: discourse, power, and knowledge. It will also explore the use of racialised media practices in Aotearoa New Zealand, addressing the following practices; othering and stereotyping, ethnic tagging and homogenization of Māori and Pasifika peoples. Finally, this review will examine from an international standpoint Indigenous representation in media, and then from a national view will look at both the historical and contemporary ties of Māori and Pasifika peoples, in mainstream media within New Zealand.

## 2.1 Media as a system of Power and Knowledge

Media institutions operate as a powerful discourse that shapes how knowledge is curated, interpreted, and perceived (Miller, 1990). Through its control over narratives, visibility, and positioning, media platforms are used to inform the public of circulating events and issues across both a global and national scale (Harding, 2006; McCausland, 2004). Moreover, media platforms shape what becomes publicly credible, where the use of language defines what constitutes as 'truth' and authorises some, whilst excluding others to maintain coherence and authority in its own ongoing narrative (Bryman, 2008; Miller, 1990). Simultaneously, media forums may reflect broader social, political and economic power structures (Gilchrist, 2010; Bull, 2017; Van Dijk, 2016). This is what deems media as systems of knowledge, where forums simply do not just relay information, but may construct narratives that are conceived to be relevant, frames how information is understood, and channels which voices to be expressed (Bull 2017; Loto et al, 2006; Pietikanien, 2003; Podvoiskis, 2012). The use of media has evolved tremendously, with it being produced and manufactured at a very high rate. This has led the public to access media at their fingertips.

Drawing on Micheal Foucault's conception of discourse as a system that governs what knowledge can be spoken, thought, and known, has led to a wide body of scholarship to argue that media does not simply transmit information, but is actively constructing *systems of truth* that help influence the public's understanding to the world which we live in (Hall 1997; Miller 1990; Herman & Chomsky's 1988). Through media processes and practices such as selection, framing, and repetition, media institutions may favour narratives and ways of

knowing, thereby reinforcing dominant social, political and cultural hierarchies. In addition, media has been argued to not be positioned as neutral, however, it is encoded with ideological assumptions that position certain identities, events, and viewpoints as legitimate while marginalising others (Garditkiotis et al., 2004; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005). Critical discourse theorists such as Fairclough also extend this theory by showing how linguistic and visual choices in media texts reproduce structural power relations, embedding them into everyday common sense (Bryman, 2008; Fairclough, 1995).

This institutional power is also highlighted in Herman & Chomsky's 1988 propaganda model. Which illustrates how structural, economic and political constraints shape what forms of knowledge are sanctioned or excluded. According to this model, mass media works as a competing news outlet trying to gain market share over every other contending news company. Secondly, these news forums must attract potential shareholders and advertisers, who effectively become their main income providers. Finally, sanctioned organisations such as police, generate information onto mass media, which creates 'compelling material' for these news forums (Herman & Chomsky, 2010). The general idea of media is that its communication can provide a general basis for social identities, allowing ones-self to understand not only who they are, but the world around them, this includes the identities of other individuals, social groups and ethnicities, in this case the representation of Māori and Pasifika peoples in news outlets (Anderson, 1991; Cottle, 2000).

The concept of media being a system of knowledge and power, also stems from the idea that media is fulfilled by two sets of processes known as feedback control and distribution control. Research by Donohue et al., (1973), states that mass communication models rely on feedback control as a regulatory fourth estate, acting as a unofficial section of government. In practice, this is where the media may provide information when subsystems such as social institutions require accountability or correction. Moreover, the term 'fourth estate' or 'watch – dog' is a traditional media conception where the press are both monitoring power and contributing to the stability of wider social systems (Donohue et al., 1973; McQuail, 1977). Distribution control in contrast refers to the 'maintenance function' through controlled circulation or selective withholding of information (Donohue et al., 1973). This control process acts as the editorial aspect, determining where certain messages and narratives disseminate, how extensively they spread, and the manner which they are presented. Whilst this process may censor and withhold certain information to be released, distribution control

may also carry out other mechanisms such as gatekeeping, news selection and framing (McQuail, 1977; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). Together these processes elicit that media systems do not simply transmit information but shape the flow, visibility and meaning of knowledge within society (Hodgetts et al., 2005; Pietikaninen, 2003). Therefore media plays a pivotal role into how individuals may understand certain events, issues and institutions, but further, how social order is maintained across society.

## 2.2 Racialised Media practices in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Media representation of ethnic minorities in Aotearoa New Zealand has long been shaped by racialised media practices, that over time may have influenced how Māori and Pasifika groups are perceived by the public discourse. This argument is concerned around the idea that media is not transparent, and however, media representation has real effects on the communities that are regarded (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Spoonley, 1990). New Zealand studies have long reflected that ethnic groups such as Māori and Pasifika peoples, have been categorised as Other (Borell, 2006; Kupu Taea, 2008; Loto et al., 2006;'Ofa Kolo, 1990). This media practice tends to focus on minorities, non – white and immigrants in an overtly more negative, and more inclined to be framed through a deficit based narrative (Cottle, 2000; Dyer, 1997). These patterns reflect broader institutional biases within media organisations, as seen by Maharey, (1990) when media platforms present themselves as objective, audiences tend to be more inclined to trust them as a reliable and credible source of knowledge about other ethnic and social groups. Furthermore, the public's belief in mainstream media also stems from the idea that they are an authoritative discourse, this belief then becomes amplified through the media's repeated circulation of a particular view, enabling dominant discourses to then become naturalised and viewed as the objective truth (Cottle, 2000; Couldry, 2000; Hall 1997; Zelizer, 2004).

Mainstream discourses often are constructed particularly through dominant cultural groups, in this instance Palangi (white) people in Aotearoa. According to mainstream discourse New Zealand Herald, they state that their objective is to 'inform and explain news worth knowing' as well as 'New Zealanders can rely on us for need-to-know, latest and breaking news.'(NZME, n.d.). However, research suggests that much of mainstream's content is in fact

centrally focused around a Palangi worldview and intended towards Palangi audiences (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012). This critique is supported around the distinctions between how Palangi and Pacific peoples are represented through the media, and whose voices are effectively heard and seen more in mainstream discourses (Dyer, 1997; Ross, 2019; Walker, 2002). Moreover, when the public inherit mainstream ideologies about particular social groups, the scope of Palangi discourse becomes increasingly limited, one in which Palangi are rarely sensationalised in crime narratives, as opposed to Māori and Pasifika peoples (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Farr, 2019). These mainstream ideologies are constructed through the use of racialised media practices, such as othering, ethnic tagging and homogenisation.

### 2.2.1 Othering and Stereotyping

Mass media's imagery of immigrants, non-whites and those generally categorised as minorities, has been negative and blatantly racist (Nairn et al., 2009; Spoonley & Butcher, 2009). This negative imagery has often been elicited through the discursive practice of Othering. Othering refers to when dominant groups such as Palangi people sustain themselves as the 'norm' within society, whilst deeming other social groups and cultures as inferior others, often in need of change (Farr, 2019; McCreanor et al., 2014). Overtime mainstream media discourses in New Zealand have been argued to uphold historical links of colonial superiority (Wall, 1997; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005). The notion of colonial superiority positions minorities such as Māori and Pasifika peoples as uncivilized, in comparison to Palangi as the civilized, insinuating that these social groups must adapt to the naturalised ways of a Palangi lifestyle (Farr, 2019). This form of superiority can be looked at in multiple ways, such as the construction of othering, stereotyping, silencing, and more discursive effects in mainstream discourses.

Furthermore, this negative representation in mainstream media as Loto et al., (2006) argues minority groups are systematically disadvantaged, where their voices are frequently silenced and instead majority perspectives are used to define their issues and deem relevance to these groups. The discursive practice of othering is further seen when mainstream media routinely marginalise minority storytelling and representation, as Rankine et al., (2014), states when these discourses adopt a 'dominant common sense' that renders minority worldviews as less legitimate or credible (Dowing & Husband, 2005; Rankine et al., 2014). Examples of othering in mainstream media has deemed Pasifika peoples as 'unmotivated, criminal others

(Loto et al., 2006). Additionally, a study by Allen & Bruce (2017), examined how media portrayed South Auckland which is a predominantly Pacific area in Aotearoa. Across the 388 news articles analysed they concluded that media, becomes a 'crafty instrument for domination' where they reinforce negative understandings of South Auckland as 'brown and abnormal' (Allen & Bruce, p.238). These examples tie back to the construction that power is develop through societal normality, that when ethnic groups such as Pasifika people do not conform to, they are continuously viewed as different (Hodgetts et al., 2005).

Significantly, there has been discussion into how mainstream media forums have produced more broader forms of othering where Eurocentric voices are heard and where the process of discursive de-racialisation can be implemented. Reeves (1983), defines this practice when media discourses speak on racialisation whilst avoiding and mentioning racial descriptors (Reeves, 1983; Spoonley & Butcher, 2009). It then becomes possible for media forums to continue to produce racial arguments however, in a more careful discourse even when racial descriptors are not present. The practice of othering is then sustained in media discourses to position minorities such as Māori and Pasifika people as culturally deviant, whilst maintaining the appearance of neutrality (Van Dijk, 1993). In contrast, mainstream media and police relationships have been argued to inherit similar beliefs of ethnic groups. Their partnership has overtime began to mirror and classify abnormal social groups as 'outsiders' which is considered an advantage in their partnership, allowing for more skewed narratives of Māori and Pasifika peoples (Taylor, 2008).

New Zealand has been defined as a multicultural country, home to over 160 ethnicity groups across the nation (Stats, 2018). However, despite this diversity, mainstream media continues to play a dominant role in upholding a particular negative imagery regarding immigrants, and this generates an imbalance between these social relations (Riches, 2014). In addition, as Nairn et al., (2011) argues that because New Zealand's prominent culture is that of Palangi, their accustoms, values and worldviews are positioned as the societal default. Otherisation in dominant media has been deemed as a 'scapegoat' where ethnic minorities are portrayed in shallow and decontextualizing ways. That through these portrayals, they are extracted from their social disadvantages and their voices become minismised in order to contest these dominant narratives (Boyd & Carter, 2010). Anything that may deviate from this European superiority is marked as different therefore, becomes more newsworthy (Nairn et al., 2011). This '*them vs us*' distinction privileges Pākehā perspectives across the media, whilst

minimising the voice and representation of Māori and Pacific peoples across a broader scope (Cosgrove & Bruce, 2005; Loto et al., 2006). The term mainstream is often associated to Pākehā relations, that mainstream outlets claim to speak for all New Zealanders, yet their ideologies are formatted by Pākehā relations and catered for Pākehā audiences (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2012; Noorzai, 2014).

### 2.2.2 Ethnic Tagging and Criminalisation

Ethnic tagging in media practices refers to when news stories explicitly state an individual's race or cultural background, this is typically seen in crime stories and often within a negative light (McCreanor et al., 2014). Race labelled crime reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand has long been argued to shift the general public's perception regarding Māori and Pasifika peoples in crime narratives. Moreover, because these ethnic groups are four times more often to have their ethnicity explicitly portrayed in crime stories as opposed to Palangi people (Hook, 2009; Spoonley, 1989). Studies in Australia have also stated that news media have historically portrayed Aboriginal people in the criminal sphere, and that by constructing criminality as a social problem often at the expense of particular groups such as Aboriginal people, positioning how media tend to frequently depict police as a neutral and authoritative bureaucracy (Budarick & King, 2008). This positioning therefore reinforces the notion that ethnic minorities are socially deviant and criminal, and moves away from positioning crime as a systemic issue, limiting media coverage for other areas such as Indigenous ambitions and aspirations (Sercombe, 1995).

This dynamic is not unique in Aotearoa, where mainstream media of Indigenous people as criminal, further benefits the relationships between media and police. This then becomes a way for media to redirect reader's attention away from institutional failures, and instead focuses on depicting Indigenous groups through decontextualising ways (Thompson, 1954). This depiction was argued to have persisted in the television show Police Ten-7. Podvoiskis investigated the phenomenon of Māori and Pacific peoples in Police Ten 7 and reported that 82% of all violent offences were depicted by Māori and Pasifika (Podvoiskis, 2012). The shows name 10-7 was coined by their codes to represent 'police on sight' – and its contents within the show represented police attending to call outs across New Zealand, showcasing their multifaceted role in the criminal field (Podvoiskis, 2012). Another Police Ten 7 study by Yan et al., (2023) also concluded that between 2011 – 2021 both Māori and Pasifika peoples

were commonly represented through physically aggressive and violent crimes (64.29%), in comparison to counter parties such as Pakeha (28.57%).

This association has also been seen in overseas contexts, where ethnic minorities are disproportionately framed as suspects in crime shows, thus generating the link between ethnicity mention and crime (Monk-Turner et al., 2007; Prosise & Johnson, 2009). According to Department of Corrections, Māori make up 52.6% of the total prison population and Pacific peoples 12.2% (Department of Corrections, n.d.). Although Pacific peoples do not make up a substantial amount of the prison population, they are however, continuously decontextualised in physically violent crimes (Deckert et al., 2023). The association of ethnicity and physical assault is not uncommon, but however, depicts how the media continue to link these two variables together, representing the historical reality that crime media in New Zealand continues to position Māori and Pasifika peoples through criminal attributes (Bieleski & Quince, 2021; Dyer, 1997).

### 2.2.3 Gatekeeping of Pacific voices and representation in media forums

Gatekeeping is the process mechanisms where media organisations produce, select, filter and disseminate information for the public to obtain (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). In short, the role of gatekeeping is where particular information is showcased and other forms are rejected, this is dependent on what is considered as the 'objective truth', in order to maintain coherence in the dominant narrative, which reflective of a Pālangi discourse. As noted by Raela (2017), stories produced by journalists are 'reflective of our society' however, there is a scarce representation of Pacific journalists in Aotearoa, insinuating that Pālangi discourse are left to make sense of Pasifika identity and culture (Raela, 2017).

A thesis study by Ross (2017) also found that at the time, Pacific peoples made up 7% of the total New Zealand population, they made up a measly 2% of the nation's journalists. This suggests that our media narratives of Pasifika peoples reflect the assumptions of Pālangi people. Similarly, Samisoni's (1990) research further supported this notion, that mainstream media tended to be unjust and harmful in their representation of Pasifika peoples. It is not to say that all representation of Pacific peoples are inherently bad, however, Pacific peoples are rarely given the opportunity to voice their own stories, reflecting the use of gatekeeping in New Zealand media platforms. This scarcity in storytelling, positions Pacific peoples to be

limited in finding their own scope of self-identity within mass media, and however, they find themselves required to fit into what is socially expected of them (Couldry & Curran, 2002; Hodgetts, Cullen & Radley, 2005; Husband, 2005; Loto et al., 2006; Moala, 2005).

### 2.2.4 Homogenisation of Māori and Pasifika

Homogenisation is concerned with certain elements that share the same similarities and or nature. In this study the homogenous grouping of Māori and Pasifika peoples in media narratives needs to be examined. Whilst there is an extensive historical review on the racialisation and criminalisation of Māori, and a growing emergence of Pasifika experiences in media, a commonality has between these two social groups is how existing literature has either intentionally or unintentionally homogenously grouped both Māori and Pasifika peoples together, categorizing these two distinct groups into one (Yan et al., 2023). Whilst this distinct grouping may be justified through similar lived experiences, disparities and marginalisation, it inevitably removes the cultural significance and identities between these two social groups. The following section of this literature review aims to show the historical links of both Māori and Pasifika peoples separately. Although this research aims to specifically examine Pasifika peoples in mainstream media, the need to review past literature of these distinct groups remains important. By examining their portrayals, it will hopefully allow for greater discrepancies and clarity to arise, acknowledging cultural, historical and social context significance.

## 2.3 International portrayal of Indigenous groups in media

Indigenous peoples in overseas media portrayal have been depicted through a skewed narrative, where the convention of race becomes a catalyst for potential problems and conflicts in society (McCausland, 2004). This skewed narrative has been built on the construction of media populism, where mainstream media platforms inherit an ‘objective truth’ where exclusionary attitudes are at the forefront for social groups who are abnormal, minimising their scope to look into their complexities and instead exploits and decontextualises them through forms of polarisation and nationalism (De Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017; Wodak, 2015). Furthermore, research by Maydell et al., (2022) reinstates that when there is no strong political movement or force driving public debate, the media can act as an entity in reproducing ‘disjointed grievances’ from the public, turning their

frustrations into unified populist messages. Through this media may overtly use language that appeals to concepts such as 'the people', 'human rights', and 'freedom' (Maydell et al., 2022; Moffitt, 2017). Such portrayals of Indigenous peoples in mainstream media have produced narratives where crises and illegality intersect (Akdenizli et al., 2008).

Curating such narratives in media can be reflected in our neighbouring country Australia, particularly in the reports concerning Indigenous deaths in custody. As seen in Cunneen's (2018) study, prior to the construction of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), there was rising concern from investigative journalism and the public, in terms of the treatment and deaths of Aboriginal peoples in police custody. The case of John Pat was one of these examples; In September of 1983, John Pat, a 16-year-old Aboringinal boy was involved in a street brawl between off duty police officers and a group of Aborigines. The brawl led to John to suffer serious injuries, with local witnesses testifying the off-duty officers quite violent nature, allegedly kicking John Pat in head. Upon the John's arrest he was taken into custody where he later died (Johnston, 1991; Olive, 2012). The royal commission investigated the coverage of this story in Australia and concluded that the association of Indigenous peoples in media often exploited two different narratives. The first being to ignore or minimise the scope of Indigenous voice in mass media and secondly, positioning Indigenous peoples as the 'problem' shifting the narrative to how abnormal groups such as Indigenous peoples to assimilate to cultural norms (Cunneen, 2018; Johnston, 1991; Wootten, 1991).

Furthermore, around the same time John Pat's case was receiving recognition in media a study by Sercombe (1995), investigated the phenomenon of youth in Western Australia print. Through his research he concluded that a substantial number of reports were related to crime, and how significantly, the face of crime was young Indigenous peoples. Similarly, Mickler (1992) also examined Aboringinal youth in Western Australia media and concluded that whilst the RCIADIC was shedding light onto the victimisations of youth Aborigines such as John Pat, the print media had instead shifted their focus on portraying youth crime as an Aboriginal problem, thus generating dramatic youth crime data and tip offs across Western Australia in the 1990s (Mickler, 1992; Sercombe, 1995).

Other international studies also suggest the same phenomenon of Indigenous peoples in heightened crime narratives. As seen in Canada research by Tennant, (1990) highlighted that

Indigenous peoples through ‘white newspapers’ were depicted as violent and unpredictable. Moreover, it is believed mainstream inherit a ‘man-bites-dog' approach in their crime stories regarding Indigenous peoples, typically focusing on abnormal and atypical events which can foster a certain perception onto this social group (Callanan, 2012). A case study by Clark (2014) examined the portrayal of Indigenous peoples across three mainstream Canadian platforms. Through their comparative study, it concluded that these forums provided little to no use of historic contexts when depicting Indigenous groups in the media. Clark’s (2014) research also highlighted the coverage of Chelsea Yellowbird, an Indigenous woman who was shot in an Indigenous community. The crime report had depicted the incident as a ‘gang - related’ which plagued the Indigenous community as a problem, shifting their focusing away from the incident and instead focused on fixing the ‘troubled community’ (Clark, 2014 p.51). Similarly, researchers suggest that Canadian mainstream media for many generations now, have framed Indigenous groups through a pessimistic lens, where their Eurocentric framework has heightened the themes of socio-economic disparities, addiction and abuse, violence, and poverty within the Indigenous community (Fleras, 2011; Johnson, 2011; Miller, 2008).

Depictions of minority groups in mass media overseas has long been argued to devalue and mis-interpret these social groups distinct identities (Callanan, 2012; Chermak, 2014; Dixon, 2008; Camp & Heatherton, 2023). The repeated association of identifying Indigenous peoples, minority groups, and immigrants as potential suspects in crime media has consequently overtime, led to the public to inherit these constructions to be true. Thus, attesting to why this research is important to cover, and shedding light on the ways mainstream vs. Pacific-led discourses construct crime reporting.

## 2.4 Intersectionality of Pasifika offenders (structural and social explanations)

Intersectionality adapted by Crenshaw (1989) is a critical framework that examines how the overlapping social categorisations of race, class, and gender interact and form unique forms of discrimination, privilege and disadvantage towards certain social groups. In relation to Māori and Pacific offenders, these intersecting variables may help in understanding the disproportionate effects that these vulnerable groups tend to face. Although, this research

intends to look into Pacific peoples in crime stories, investigating the phenonmenon of Pacific offenders is beneficial to fully understand the complex issues around this ethnic group and criminality.

Research by Quince (2010) examined the intersectionality of Māori women incarcerated, and through their study stated 5 potential contributing factors such as state care abuse, intimate partner violence (IPV), poverty, insecure housing and intergenerational trauma (Qunice, 2010, p.105). Some of these factors may be faced at a higher rate towards other social groups for example, IPV is commonly experienced by Māori and Pasifika females than males, this is because recent statistics indicate that over 57.6% of Māori women have faced IPV as well as 32.4% of Pasifika women, whereas only about 10% of Māori men have reported incidents regarding IPV in New Zealand (Fanslow et al., 2023; Quince, 2010). By adopting an intersectional lens within this section of the review, it not only acknowledges the unique combination of contextual variables, but it also highlights the exclusion of minorities in prominent discourse – leading to their self-images to be continuously depicted *by Pākehā and for Pākehā* in New Zealand media (Loto et al., 2006).

When specifically examining Pacific peoples in crime, research by Ioane & Lambie (2016) state that risks factors that have led to criminal behaviour are substance abuse, behavioural problems, antisocial peers, low socioeconomic communities, and low educational attainment (Ioane et al., 2014). These examples suggest that young Pacific peoples often find themselves in severe situations especially in the sense of intergenerational cycles of hardships and struggle. When it comes to socio-economic disparities Pacific communities face a vast range of issues such as poverty, housing instability and overcrowding and family harm. Moreover, access to functional resources for educational purposes, and employability inevitably impact the Pacific community and are contributing factors to offending behaviours (Maguin & Loeber, 1996; Ioane, Lambie & Percival, 2013). These examples although, may suggest a deficit-based lens in regard to the present research, intersectionality is a vital component to investigate. The rationale behind this was to highlight significant areas which may foreground surrounding circumstances such as social, political and economic factors regarding Pacific peoples and how these intersect in the criminal system. Moreover, the researcher wanted to analyse if these circumstances were reflective in media publications if applicable.

## 2.5 Historical links of Māori in New Zealand mainstream media

Early portrayals of Māori in mass media can be dated back to the overarching theme of colonisation, where Māori have been seen, or rather condemned, to assimilate to dominant cultural norms in Aotearoa (Ballara, 1986; McCreanor, 1977; Wall, 1997; Webb & Deckert, 2023). This form of assimilation again draws on how mainstream platforms construct minorities in a negative light, that are viewed as a societal risk, classifying Māori as uncivilised savages and brutish (Bull, 2017; Cunneen & Tauri, 2016; Gilchrist, 2010; McCausland, 2004). Moreover, Māori in mainstream crime narratives have been reported to represent an 'unconscious bias' because they play a significant role in curating negative associations of Māori as inherently criminal (Cunneen, 2018).

A study by McCreanor et al., (2014) investigated the association of Māori in crime stories between the years of 2007 – 2008. Their analysis found how mass media plays a significant role in maintaining social order and control. Their study found that the mass growth in mainstream media has fundamentally led these platforms to sustain a colonial ideology. Furthermore, through their investigation, over 1,621 articles had an association with Māori, with over 12% of their findings relating to crime items. Of those crime items, 84 of them labelled Māori as criminals and perpetrators of crime (McCreanor et al., 2014). They concluded that Māori were depicted in constant need of surveillance, control and cultural assimilation, again, reinforcing the idea that there is power in discourse, where Māori are expected to inherit the 'dominant' culture which is Pākehā.

This finding was also prevalent in Wall's (1997) investigation where Māori were portrayed through four categorisations; Māori as the comic other, Māori as the primitive natural athlete, Māori as a radical activist and quintessential Māori (Farr, 2019; Wall, 1997). These categorisations again persist in the dominant assimilation of media, narrowing down the complex identity of Māori to just four distinctions. It suggests that when Māori are associated in positive portrayals, they must fit within the category of 'primitive athlete' instead of across broader identities and experiences. Additionally, it represents how mass media are reinforcing ethnic minorities as inferior others, where Māori in media are reflected through an ever-persistent use of colonial lens and attitude, that their coverage is limited through conventional narratives produced by Palangi counterparts (Ballara, 1986; Nairn et al., 2011).

The construction of Māori in mass media has been reported to portray them through stereotypical ways (Moewaka Barnes & McCreanor, 2019). Previous scholarship that has also investigated the phenomenon of Māori in New Zealand crime media discourses, have also seen a pattern in the use of language, with notable mention on '*criminal others, suspects, inherently criminal, dangerous, aggressive, and violent'* (Bull, 2017; Devadas 2013; McGregor, 2017; Yan, R et al., 2023). These examples embody rather negative and dehumanising depictions which decontextualises this social group. It is then plausible to assume that the more the general public inherit these negative narratives, the more likely they are to create a distorted image of Māori in association to crime stories in Aotearoa New Zealand. McGovern (2011) states the relationship between New Zealand media and police further adds to the superficial reporting of unwarranted police perspectives in crime stories.

## 2.6 Historical links of Pasifika peoples in New Zealand mainstream media

Pacific people and early forms of media representation can be linked back to the Dawn Raids. The Dawn Raids were a government sanction of 'crackdowns' during the mid 1970s (1974 – 1976), where the New Zealand Police were ordered to forcefully enter Pasifika homes during the early mornings – typically during 'dawn' hours and demand proof of residency (New Zealand History, n.d.; Spoonley, 2012; Yan et al., 2023). For context, Pacific migration in New Zealand began to rise in the 1960s, when the government had demanded for an increase in labour workers during an industrial period in Aotearoa (Frenso-Calleja, 2016). Pacific peoples took this as an opportunity to uproot themselves and establish their roots in New Zealand known as the 'land of milk and h(m)oney' (Anae, 2006). However, Pacific peoples would face shortcomings once arrived in New Zealand, as Frenso-Calleja (2016) argues were met with 'exclusionary practices' which limited Pasifika peoples to face the same housing and employment opportunities as New Zealanders. This constructed the first early signs of stereotyping of Pacific Islanders, categorised as gullible 'coconuts' and 'fresh off the boat' (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Frenso-Calleja, 2016).

It was not until the 1970s when migration began to decline, however, there was an heighten increase in negative perceptions of Pasifika peoples in New Zealand. They were deemed a

social threat and bad for the economy (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012). This became the catalyst for the Dawn raid crackdowns. The raids were a sign of retaliation from the New Zealand government that once opened their doors to these 'unskilled labourers' to enter (Anae, 2012). The movement was widely publicized across the nation which according to 'Ofa Kolo (1990) led to the association of the coined terms '*overstayers, illegal immigrants and job stealers'* towards the Pasifika community in New Zealand (Prebble, n.d.; Spoonley, 2012; 'Ofa Kolo, 1990). The Dawn Raids was a pivotal moment in history for Pacific peoples in New Zealand media as they were not only decontextualized, but where their voices and identity was almost invisible in mainstream platforms, which further constructed stereotypes and project the ideals of the dominant Pākehā group (Anae, 2012; Samasoni, 1990).

Another example of Pacific peoples in decontextualized constructions was seen in the 1988 Otara incident which occurred in the South Auckland suburb. The incident took place during the morning of the Saturday flea market, where a Tongan man was stabbed and killed by a group of Samoan youth (Auckland Libraries n.d.; 'Ofa Kolo, 1990). The incident received a high volume of media coverage; however, what is important to note was not the volume of articles published but more so the level of attraction the event had gotten over the next few months. Through mainstream publications the incident was reported as "Samoan searching for pride "or Tongan men "planning own attack." It is what sparked the overuse of ethnic tagging, which was prominent across 80% of the published across mainstream platforms. There was also heighten speculation and blame of potential gang affiliation and 'inter-conflict' between the two ethnicities, which situated the case to be viewed as an internal problem reflected through the Pasifika communities involved ('Ofa Kolo, 1990; Stuff NZ, 2018).

Furthermore, Loto et al., (2006) conducted a similar analysis to McCreanor et al., (2014) 'Māori in media', however, in the context of Pasifika peoples in New Zealand media. From their analysis which explored 65 news articles over a 3-month period, Pasifika peoples were labelled in a bleak and negative attribute totaling 92% of all story narratives. Additionally, only 31% were portrayed in a positive manner, most of which only highlighted individuals who were the exception to report on, which touched on forms of 'tokenistic Pacific peoples' (Loto et al., 2006, p.106). Moreover, 87% of the 65 news reports made explicit distinctions of Pacific peoples as a separate group from the 'collective' society, which Loto et al.,

(2006) framed as a form of 'stigma' where Pacific peoples do not get the privilege to be directly address and were however, more commonly mentioned in third person – such as 'them', 'they' and 'those.' (Loto et al., 2006, p.107). These findings add to the notion of labelling Pasifika peoples as problematic and disadvantaged as they do not fit within the normality of society, and it is evident through these mainstream news articles. In addition, it seems certain geographical places in New Zealand have a direct link to marginalized groups, areas that have been deemed as 'crime hubs' by both police officials and mass media discourses.

Allen & Bruce (2017) studied the phenomenon of South Auckland and its close ties to the Pasifika community in New Zealand print media. Moreover, their analysis argued that media representation of South Auckland was through the "Pākehā assumption" and that these reports of Pasifika peoples in this location framed them into a place of 'Otherness' – which presumed their dominant discourse as the 'truth' (Allen & Bruce, 2017, 232). Through their findings it concluded that across the 388 articles analyzed, over 38% of the reports focused on *Crime relations* and 13% on *Accidents*, although most of the articles focused on crime related content, the other higher percentage of topics covered were *Community Support and Development* (Allen & Bruce, 2017, 232). These findings overtly suggest that these mainstream forums do not represent an 'equal' discourse, as they frame Pacific peoples in South Auckland in need of additional aid from welfare services for both financial and social support. Moreover, the continuation of crime related content associated with Pacific peoples is again evident in this study. As previously stated, when crime reports focus on the hub of South Auckland which is statistically a non Pākehā dominated area (29%), in comparison to Pacific peoples (40%) mainstream media then plays an influential role to how these suburbs are perceived, which is often misrepresented and misunderstood in a negative light (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Nakhid, 2012; 'Ofa Kolo, 1990).

These representations again suggest that Pacific peoples have been decontextualised in New Zealand mainstream media. It highlights that through their limited identity scope in media; they are instead narrated through the ideals of Palangi discourse. Collectively, these studies not only represent Pacific peoples through crime stories but that they also touch on broader social contextual areas which frame the Pacific community through disadvantage and spatial marginalisation. Findings from Allen & Bruce (2017) and Loto et al., (2006) further highlight the role of mainstream discourses in producing and curating a perceived image of

Pacific peoples in media. Moreover, a Master's thesis by Murray Riches in 2014 also investigated the role of dominant discourses in constructing media reports of crime and criminality in Aotearoa New Zealand. It aimed to explore how dominant discourses such as New Zealand Herald and Waikato Times had framed crime reports, and through their analysis discovered two recurring themes. The first theme was positioning criminal offenders as 'underserving criminalised others.' And secondly, the endorsement of a retributive stance in response to criminal offending. Riches' (2014) study highlighted the need to challenge dominant discourses, because it helps in uncovering mainstream ideologies and assumptions integrated into media texts. These narratives can have serious effects and impacts on the public who were accessing these crime stories because they become 'naturalised' by these dominant institutions.

However, there still remains a scarcity in the comparison of Pacific peoples across mainstream and Pacific-led crime forums. By exploring this phenomenon it may hopefully outline if there are any differences between the forums and if mainstream still persist in framing ethnic groups in such a light. In doing so, this study expands off existing literature by examining the use of language and broader discursive practices in media. Examining these variables may help in understanding racialised crime reports reproduced in Aotearoa New Zealand.

# Chapter 3 Research Design and Methodology

Chapter 3 is intended to present the research design and methodology. This research engages with a transformative worldview, whilst incorporating an advocacy and participatory standpoint. This research aims to advocate for a change in the representation of Māori and Pasifika peoples in crime media in Aotearoa. Moreover, this research is supported under a range of theoretical frameworks; critical theory, labelling theory, and cultivation theory. Critical theory also known as critical theory perspectives (CTP), focuses on challenging systems of power and the constraints they place onto vulnerable communities, namely Māori and Pasifika people's representation in media (Fay, 1987). Labelling theory is concerned with how individuals interact and accommodate the labels placed onto them (Farrington & Murray, 2013). Cultivation theory refers to the exposure of media and how it can shape an individual's perception of reality (Gerber & Gross, 1976; Shrum, 2017). This study applies a critical discourse analysis; a qualitative research method uses to examine the role of language. Finally, this chapter will address any potential limitations regarding the methodology process.

## 3.1 Research Design

### 3.1.1 Researcher Worldview (Transformative Advocacy Knowledge Claims)

This research engages with a transformative worldview, which is drawn from advocacy/participatory Knowledge Claims (Creswell & Creswell, 2003). Emerging in the late 1980s to 1990s, a group of individuals began to challenge present postpositivist perspectives they believed overlooked the realities of marginalised communities, and issues regarding social justice, discrimination and oppression (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Research which generally draws on from advocacy and claims, it is concerned with creating change regarding the intended research group. Within this study, the primary researcher advocates for change in the portrayal of Pasifika peoples in crime media in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Additionally, the researcher's Pasifika identity adds strong value to the intended study. This positionality is important to discuss as it provides a nuanced understanding of the researcher's motivations and biases that are core foundations of why this research project was initially conducted. By

engaging with this cultural standpoint, it will shape how the research is interpreted and may provide valuable insights into the Pasifika community and their worldviews.
This study acknowledges the importance of reflexivity throughout the research process.

### Researcher Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a continuous and critical process that acknowledges the researcher's subjectivity throughout the research process (Lambert et al., 2010; Parahoo, 2006). It recognises how one's social, cultural and personal background influences the research process, including areas such as the framing of questions, and interpretation of data (Palaganas et al., 2017). In relation to this study, the primary researcher's Pasifika identity plays a central role to both the rationale and research design. By acknowledging this positionality, the study emphasises that the researcher's identity and values are integral to the research process. This Pacific standpoint provides a grounded perspective that helps shapes the researcher's motivations and research choices. Furthermore, this research offers unique insights into the Pasifika communities' worldviews, social dynamics and lived experiences/realities which may not be readily accessible to those outside of the community. Reflexivity in this sense becomes a credible tool for transparency, allowing the researcher to engage and address their own biases whilst also maintaining ethical integrity throughout (Lumsden & Winter, 2014). This study acknowledges the importance of reflexivity throughout the research process.

## 3.1.2 Research Theories

### Critical Theory

Critical Theory originated in the 1930s in Western Europe and is concerned with bridging empirical research and philosophical reflection in order to challenge systems of power in society (Celikates & Flynn, 2023). Often researchers who adopt this critical perspective are focused on empowering human beings, especially by the constraints placed onto them by race, gender and class (Creswell & Creswell, 2003; Fay, 1987). Research that is guided by an advocacy position aims to create transformative change and promoting awareness of potential inequities that arise within the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2009; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). With this, the research is situated under a critical epistemological framework recognising that knowledge is socially constructed and can be influenced by dominant discourses (Hall, 1997).

## Labelling Theory

Within critical criminology is an umbrella term that ranges across various theories that challenge traditional 'mainstream' criminological perspectives (find source), within this study the main theoretical perspective used is labelling theory. The positioning of this theoretical perspective is when stereotypes placed onto ethnic social groups can overtime influence how these communities begin to label and identify themselves (Bradley & Walters, 2019; Farrington & Murray, 2013). Moreover, according to scholar Frank Tannenbaum, repeated conflict between vulnerable individuals and mass media increases the chances of further polarization and the continuation of negative labelling (Matsueda 2013). Collectively, the labelling theory is of significance to this study as Loto et al., (2006) states that when 'offenders' are labelled according to their ethnicity, it insinuates the idea that 'ethnicity' is associated with crime and social deviance. In this instance, when offenders are labelled of Pasifika ethnicity it positions this ethnic group into the sphere of criminality.

## Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory is a sociocultural theory which is concerned with how individuals' exposure and perception of media, can influence their attitudes and behaviours (Shrum, 2017). Earlier research developments of cultivation theory had initially focused on people's interaction with television. For example, the world of television has often been criticised for generating far more violent perceptions of the real world than what it actually is, and depending on an individual's everyday experiences, which can intertwine with each other, it generates the effects of cultivation (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Morgan, 1999). In the most simplistic way, the effect of cultivation stems from how much time people spend interacting with media, such as television, social media, print etc, and the beliefs these recipients obtain about the real world through their media consumption (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). In this instance, if an individual is repeatedly exposed to media coverage that depicts that Pacific islanders who live in South Auckland are inherently criminal, the reader may begin to accept these portrayals as a reliable depiction of the real world, even when these notions may not be supported with evidence. It illustrates how prolonged exposure to media can begin to cultivate skewed portrayals about particular social groups.

## 3.1.3 Research Methods

### Content Analysis

Content Analysis is a qualitative research method that examines and categorises textual data to uncover recurring patterns, inferences, characteristics, and trends within data (Bryman, 2016; Wamboldt, 1992). Content analysis is multifaceted and can be used across a wide range of communication content. It aims to systematically identify and measure patterns within a specific phenomenon, and facilitate them into measurable categories by analysing underlying intention, context, and meaning (Berelson, 1952; Krippendorff, 1980). Within this study, the researcher incorporated both conventional and directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Conventional content analysis is used when categories emerge during the data coding process, often in areas where existing literature is limited (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002).

Directed analysis incorporates a predetermined framework derived from existing theory and literature, which assists in determining key variables, tools, and concepts (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Research which is often guided by a directed approach has a better structure than conventional approach. Within this study, the researcher has incorporated a predetermined coding framework used in a previous media analysis regarding representation of minorities in crime narratives. This will be discussed in the following section. The sole role of content analysis within this study was to systematically identify thematic categories across the three datasets. By breaking down the raw data into subcategories provided a structured basis for critical discourse analysis to take place. The use of critical discourse analysis was incorporated to examine how the relationship between language and discourse construct crime narratives of Pasifika peoples.

### Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) focuses on the fine detail of language use across a range of public forums; in this research it is explicitly examining mainstream and alternative media discourses. The qualitative research method examines how language can play a critical role in maintaining and challenging power dynamic within discourses such as media, insinuating the idea that the social world is constructed through communication (Fairclough, 2023). Rooted within a constructionist ontological, CDA opposes the idea that the social world is not a single objective reality, however it is constructed by multiple communicative exchanges,

acknowledging the subjective role that is formed through human interactions (Bryman, 2008; Fairclough, 1995). Moreover, Fairhurst and Putnam (2004) highlight that discourses become selective in the way they structure and normalize understandings of the world. Therefore, this methodology examines the construction of what is being narrated, who is representing the authoritative/empowered, and who is being marginalised and excluded from the narrative. Collectively, this research method examines the power role that language can uphold as it can coerce an individual's interpretation because language should not be viewed as a neutral device (Potter, 1997).

Furthermore, CDA critically examines the power language holds as it can coerce an individual's interpretation because language cannot be viewed as a *neutral device* (Bryman, 2008). Furthermore, discourses play a crucial part in shaping perceptions of reality, as according to King (2012) *"…language is a social practice… via a number of mechanisms; including linguistic choices, inferences, dialogue and silence."* (King, 2012, p. 9-10). As a whole, CDA recognises the role that language plays in manufacturing certain perceptions of reality as normal or neutral whilst critically examining the use of language in media discourses it can help identify underlying ideologies which may continue to exert dominant narratives of Pasifika in crime related content. Critical Discourse Analysis will be useful for this research project as it will critically examine the language use within both mainstream and alternative discourses in New Zealand. This comparison will therefore help identify any similarities, discrepancies, and variations across these media discourses. Other variables which may be considered is who these forums are catering for, and how they may reinforce certain practices into their publications (Fairclough, 2013).

In addition, CDA will help deconstruct the use of language within the intended media forums which will help critique the underlying ideologies embedded within the written texts and may generate certain narratives and stereotypes regarding Pacific peoples in New Zealand. Investigating print media will determine if the New Zealand media may reinforce systemic biases through various forms of media techniques and methods such as language (e.g. adjectives, phrases & metaphors), grammar, syntax, social, historical and background context. By analysing these examples, it will provide an in-depth analysis of how mainstream and Pasifika led media format their crime stories of Pasifika peoples. By analysing language, it will identify if these media forums continue to construct a certain portrayal of these social groups (such as positive or negative). CDA will also help identify

if the portrayal of Pasifika peoples in print media continue to reinforce or elicit negative or criminal attributes. Making these distinctions will be sufficient in analysing if contemporary New Zealand media continue to reinforce or challenge social inequalities regarding Pasifika peoples.

## 3.2 Research Objectives

**Research question:** How do mainstream and Pacific-led media differ in their representation of Pacific peoples in crime reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand?

This study implores a transformative worldview, which means the primary researcher advocates for change in the portrayal of Pacific peoples in crime narratives. The research question therefore is broken down into more measurable components when analysing the data.

1) Examine whether mainstream and Pacific-led differ in the severity and types of crime associated with Pacific peoples
2) Examine how spatial areas of crime are constructed in the media platforms, and analyse if Pacific peoples are referenced to specific locations
3) Examine the language and labels used to construct Pacific peoples in mainstream and Pacific-led crime reporting
4) Compare whether crime media stories of Pacific peoples tend to focus on victim or offender narratives
5) What themes and or subthemes persisted throughout both media forums

### Inclusion criteria

Before exploring coding, variables and tools used within the research, it is important to highlight how articles were included or excluded in this project.

Articles were analysed based off the following inclusion criteria:

1) Articles must be published within or in close range of the selected time periods (2008, 2016 – 2019, and 2024 – 2025)
2) The articles used must be published from the specified media platforms
   Mainstream: New Zealand Herald, Radio New Zealand
   Pacific-led: Pacific Media Network & E-Tangata

3) The articles must focus on crime stories and criminal justice matters
4) There must be explicit reference to Pacific peoples or Pacific ethnicity either through individually or as the community being discussed.

All articles were identified through the predetermined key term section (refer to 3.4) and put against the inclusion criteria to review their eligibility in the research project. Moreover, articles which did not make the inclusion criteria were excluded due to the following reasons.

### Exclusion criteria

Articles were excluded in this research based of the exclusion criteria:

1) Articles failed to meet the selected time periods
2) Duplicates of the same articles were found
3) If articles did not focus on areas of crime or criminal justice
4) There was no references made back to Pacific peoples and communities
5) If articles did not provide enough textual content for analysis (for example : articles were 200 words).
6) If articles did not include any predetermined key terms

## 3.3 Coding tools, variables, definitions and reliability

**News Article Databases**

In terms of data collection, this study has used two New Zealand database services as well as manual entry. The primary database which was used in this research was Factiva, as it is accessible in obtaining news articles from institutions such as New Zealand Herald and Radio New Zealand. These forums will represent the mainstream (dominant) perspective in New Zealand media.

**Manual entry: Pacific led media outlets**

In terms of accessing Pacific-led media in New Zealand, the use of manual entry is necessary. When the initial idea of this study was proposed, the primary researcher was made aware by their primary applicant that it would be difficult to collect alternative Pasifika news articles as opposed to having readily access to mainstream news databases in New Zealand. Manual

entry was used across both Pacific media network (PMN) and E – Tangata platforms. The primary researcher used key terms in the search bar across both Pacific media discourses to find relevant articles. Moreover, it is fortunate that these news websites date their publication, allowing the primary researcher to find accurate articles within the time periods.

**Key terms**

The selection of key terms is a crucial point in the data collection process, as it will determine the relevance and scope of the media articles which will be gathered for the analysis. Moreover, the proposed research question is critically examining how Pasifika peoples are represented in crime media across mainstream and Pacific-led media discourses. By incorporating these predetermined key terms into this research, it will ensure that the data remains consistent across both media platforms. Therefore, the inclusion of a rather extensive list of key terms will ensure that the data collected will reflect a crime–related context as well as an ethnic focus, making a direct link back to the research question.

In addition, there was a chance that without sufficient key terms the data will be at a high volume, so to combat this issue the following categories were established: ethnicity, assault and offence type, and conviction. Formatting the key terms under these categories, it not only helps reduce the volume of data, but strengthens the comparative design of the research by focusing on the same key terms across mainstream and Pacific-led media forums. Ultimately, the use of these key terms ensured that the data reflected the types of stories where ethnicity and criminal discourse intersect, aiming to understand if there are present similarities and differences in the respective media forums. It is important to mention that the primary researcher will be examining both the title of the news articles as well as the content within; this will allow the research to be examined both from a face value and a comprehensive analysis of the articles.

**Ethnicity**

By examining the use of ethnicity in crime stories in both media forums will help compare if there are any visible discrepancies in the way both mainstream or alternative media discourses position and mention ethnicity in relation to criminal activities and behaviour. Ethnicity was coded in use of ethnic labels (e.g. Pasifika and/or Pacific Islander), and offender or victim section (e.g. the offender was described as Pacific Islander). If in any case

ethnicity was not explicitly stated, the researcher would put ‘n/a’ – not applicable to eliminate any unnecessary data. The ethnic groups used in this research are stated below.

1) Images may be provided in the articles and can significantly help with identifying the ethnicity of the suspect/offender in question (Are they of darker or lighter skin tone? /Are there present tattoos OR visuals that represent a specific culture?)
2) Are the names provided show a cultural link (e.g. Tongan, Samoan, Fijian descent etc.)
3) Does the publisher emphasise or narrate their ethnicity within the articles (e.g. John Doe is of Tongan descent)

Race: Pasifika OR Pacific OR Pacific Islander OR Islander OR Islander community OR Pacific descent OR Polynesian.
Ethnicity groups: Tongan OR Samoan OR Fijian OR Niuean OR Kiribati OR Vanuatuan.

**Offence Type**

Offence types and conviction key terms were selected to show a range of past or present offences and charges against Pasifika offenders. These key terms were selected across minor/petty crimes (e.g. punch, brawl, theft) to quite violent offences (e.g. manslaughter, domestic violence, stabbing), to show if there were any differences in the types of offences reported.

*Assault OR Assaulted*
*Attack OR Attacked OR Attacking*
*Violent OR Violence*
*Brutal OR Vicious*
*Gang OR Gang related OR Affiliated with Gang(s)*
*Incident OR Altercation OR Conflict*
*Brawl OR Fight OR Fighting*
*Punch OR Hit OR Struck OR Beating*
*Domestic Violence OR Family Harm OR Abuse*
*Murder OR Manslaughter OR Killing OR Homicide OR Fatal OR Death*
*Stabbed OR Stabbing*
*Weapon OR Knife*

*Robbery OR Theft OR Steal OR Stolen*

**Conviction**

*Convicted OR Conviction*

*Charged OR Imprisoned OR Imprisonment*

*Sentence OR Sentenced OR Sentencing*

*Guilty OR Innocent*

*Pleaded Guilty OR Not Guilty OR Found Guilty*

*Crime OR Criminal.*

*Arrest OR Arrested*

*Detained OR In Custody*

*Parole OR Probation*

**Time Periods**

To identify any potential trends and patterns within the data analysis, three time periods were selected for this study to see if it would add further critical insight. Through these intervals they show a range of early – mid and recent periods of media coverage regarding Pasifika peoples.

First time frame: 2008 (Pilot)

Second time frame: 2016 – 2019

Third time frame: 2024 – 2025

**Microsoft Excel**

*Microsoft Excel – Data Collection Software*

Once sufficient data has been collected, the need to integrate a data software is crucial for safekeeping and data categorization. The software to be used is Microsoft Excel, although used to mainly store numerical data, this software spreadsheet can also be used for qualitative data analysis. By using excel, it will help with coding and categorizing specific texts and themes found in the news articles.

# 3.4 Data Collection

**Article ID**

Each article was assigned a unique Article ID to ensure consistency throughout the coding process. The ID was functioned as an index point, linking the article to its own coded variables. Across the four media platforms the Article IDs were referred to as;

New Zealand Herald (NZH – 2008 #001)

Radio New Zealand (RNZ – 2024 #001)

Pacific Media Network (PMN – 24/25 #001)

E – Tangata (ET – 24/25 #001)

**Language (Tone)**

Language was coded into variables such as 'positive, neutral, or negative, sympathetic or concerned.' In determining the overall language and tone of the articles, the primary coder had analysed the use of selected key terms, for example if the article had more than 5 selected key terms, the article will be ruled out as negative (for example; stabbed, heinous, killing, brutal and convicted).

**Ethnic labels**

Ethnic labels were coded according to whether they were explicitly referenced within the articles. In some instances where Pacific ethnicity was not mentioned, the coder simply applied 'n/a' and excluded the article from the refined datasets.

**Article Type**

Article type was coded according to the primary focus and format of each individual news item. Each article was categorised as police brief/column, editorial, opinion, and report. These were based on what the narrative structure was and the depth regarding the article.

**Author**

Author was coded by two variables: (1) Being the media platform – i.e. New Zealand Herald or Pacific media network etc., and (2) the individual author and/or publisher. Articles which did not provide a named reporter were coded as 'n/a' (not applicable).

**Headline**

Headlines were coded according to their tone, as similar to *language* coding variables, headlines were categorised as positive, neutral, negative, and sensational reflecting how the story was positioned and the overall narrative emphasis.

**Theme(s)**

Themes were coded analytically, using an inductive approach. Rather than just applying a fix set of theme categories, the coder identified core and dominant ideas within each article.

**Victim or offender narrative (Yes, No, Both or n/a)**

Victim and offender narratives were coded as a binary variable, situating if the articles either explicitly focused on a victim centred approach or vice versa. Articles were coded as 'yes' when there was a clear narrative between the two variables, 'no' when it was absent and 'n/a' when there was no visible use of a victim or offender narrative structure. In some instances, articles that did focus on both a victim and offender narrative, the coder would apply 'both' however, would state which was clearly more present.

**Pacific offender (Yes or No)**

Pacific offender was coded as a binary variable (yes or no), in the instance that a Pacific offender was made present in the article. Coding was only applied when the articles had provided ethnic identification of the suspect, otherwise if no identification was possible the coder marked the article as 'n/a.'

**Age range (if applicable)**

Age range was coded using the approximate age stated within the article, or when descriptive 'age' terms (i.e. teens or early 20s), were provided and were coded into an equivalent age range category. Articles which did not provide any age information were simply coded as 'n/a.'

**Location of crime**

Location of crime was coded when the articles had identified an exact location. In some instances where spatial information was not provided, they were coded as 'n/a.'

## 3.4.1 Data Collection Retrieval

**Factiva Data Collection**

Mainstream articles were accessed through the Factiva database due to its extensive archiving and coverage of New Zealand media forums, particularly for storing New Zealand Herald and Radio New Zealand. The researcher wants to emphasise the role of transparency throughout the data collection process. The initial Factiva search had incorporated a very large use of key terms ranging from ethnicity, offence type, conviction type, geographical locations and finally, the proposed time periods (2008 - 2010, 2014 – 2016 and finally, 2020 – 2022). When entering the first proposed time period of 2008 – 2010 the primary researcher obtained a large dataset range of over 45,000 published results, which was an unmanageable volume to analyse. It should also be mentioned that prior to the primary researcher's knowledge, the 45,000 results that were retrieved through Factiva did not equate to 45,000 individual articles, but however, this figure reflected the number of times the key words/terms were used within the data batch.

To refine the dataset, a few methodological adjustments were made. Factiva's advanced search criteria was utilised by separating key terms into the 'All of these words' and 'At least one of these words' fields. The ethnicity key terms were placed in the latter category, which ensured that all data that was collected had at least referenced Pasifika identity, minimising the chance of irrelevant articles to surface. Moreover, when accessing Pacific-led websites from the first time periods 2008 – 2010 data was quite scarce. It was then decided that changing the first time period to only examine mainstream data was made. Through these refinements it substantially reduced the original 2008 – 2010 dataset from 45,00 to a more manageable 2008 data pool of 505 results. The raw 2008 dataset consisted of 98 individual articles, including 6 duplicates. Although the 505 Factiva results do not reflect the exact number of individual articles, the primary researcher wants to emphasise that the decision to shorten the time frame was solely based on the minimal data collection from Pacific-led platforms, and time constraints placed on a master's thesis.

This led to the initial time periods to change to the following:
Time period 1 – 2008
Time period 2 – 2016 – 2019
Time period 3 – 2024 – 2025

Moreover, during the application of the inclusion criteria (refer to 3.6), the 2008 dataset was further refined to 37 articles, which was therefore used in this pilot phase of the research. All retrieved articles were downloaded in full, and when exporting the data from Factiva, the searched key words appeared in bold italics, which increased efficiency during the analysing process. More importantly, the researcher did not selectively sample articles within the data pool based on its sensationalism or perceived severity. Instead, each article was meticulously reviewed against the research criteria to ensure consistency and relevance to the research. Finally, to retain and keep all data organised Microsoft Excel was used to record all relevant data variables, this included both excluded articles and those kept for the final data pool.

**Pacific Media Network & E – Tangata Websites**

Upon accessing Pacific-led media outlets the primary researcher was able to identify the scarcity of media archives in comparison to mainstream databases such as Factiva. When retrieving articles from the Pacific websites, the researcher was met with limited digital preservation of archived publications from earlier time periods such as the early 2000s. The Pacific-led media platforms did not have a date range selection tab, which made it difficult to have find exact articles from the set time periods. On the other hand, there was no selection tab for key terms, which led the researcher to manually enter each exact key terms into the search bar. However, rather than just treating this as a methodological weakness, this study wants to take a more reflexive approach and analyse Pacific-led media material which is accessible, meaning that the datasets across Pacific-led was of small quantity than mainstream, moreover, the researcher would choose articles as close to the time periods when applicable.

In terms of transitioning from this *weakness,* the primary researcher and advisor had decided to slightly alter the time periods due to a low data pool range in Pacific – led forums. Overall, it was visible to see that Pacific – led media forums do not share the same longitude as mainstream media archiving because of the available resources given onto mainstream over a long period of time. It was not until the early to mid 2000s that the emergence of Pasifika-led media became more apparent and accessible. By broadening the second period (2016 – 2019) it ensured a more sufficient cross-over comparison by utilising the E – Tangata website to have sufficient data across the two Pacific-led discourses. This led to the second time period 2016 – 2019 to focus solely on E -Tangata articles, accumulating to n=19 articles and the third time period 2024 – 2025 n=31 articles.

## 3.5 Limitations

The dataset comprises of 173 articles across all four media platforms (New Zealand Herald, Radio NZ, Pacific Media Network and E-Tangata). However, the distribution of articles across the media forums is uneven, and overall mainstream media are heavily represented in the data sample. The primary researcher wants to state that the data was more obtainable in mainstream as opposed to Pacific-led, leading to a larger dataset. With the use of predetermined key terms, Pacific-led media did not have provide specific terms as well as, the feature of boldening the key terms when downloading the articles. This led to the coder to have potentially miss some terms, and for mainstream data to overall represent a higher use of key terms. There is also limitations within content analysis as a research method, such as subjectivity in the coding. Although this research aims to maintain objectivity, the large volume of articles analysed can represent potential bias's in the data analysis process, this is why the researcher recommends the need for an extra coder to help with validity, although the researcher is aware of master's thesis restraints (Bryman, 2016).

Microsoft excel was used to potentially minimize human error, there were a few limitations in terms of coding variables and formatting. In some instances, the primary coder was unable to access the 'recommended charts' option due to a data cap placed in excel, this meant the coder had to manually enter data into a chart, which could have had potential miscalculations. Moreover, where age range was unable to be accurately determined, it greatly affected the reliability of age count across the data as there was a large quantity that was unidentifiable. Critical Discourse Analysis has been criticized for its high degree of subjectivity, which may pose as a limitation in revealing the researcher's potential biases and assumptions regarding mainstream media discourses (Bryman, 2008; King, 2012).

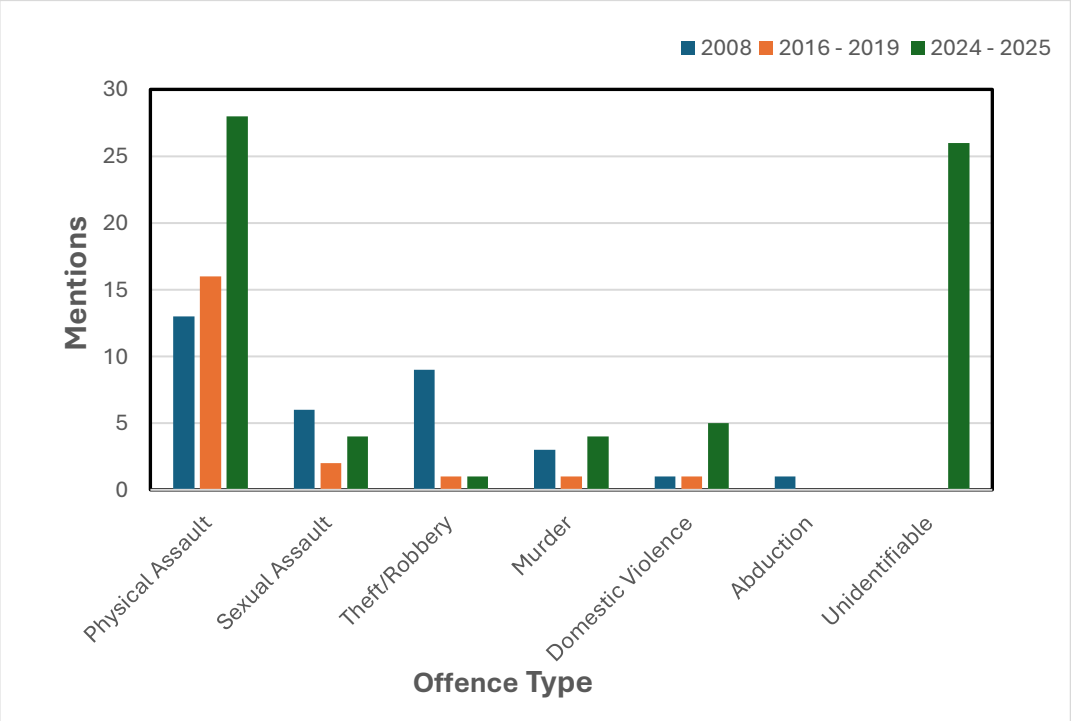
# Chapter 4 Results

Chapter 4 is split into two findings sections. The first section will explore the thematic categories produced through Microsoft Excel (see Chapter 3 for more detail). The second section focuses on the use of language across the articles, incorporating the use of Critical Discourse Analysis. In this section it will explore the use of key terms and themes across the data, thus revealing the overall tone of the articles. A total of 173 news articles were analysed, with 122 articles from mainstream platforms (New Zealand Herald & Radio New Zealand) and 51 from Pacific-led platforms (E-Tangata & Pacific Media Network).

## 4.1 Thematic Categories

This section examines the thematic categories produced from Microsoft Excel, areas covered are article type, offence type, ethnicity mentions, victim v. offender narratives, age range, location of crime, and descriptors of offenders.

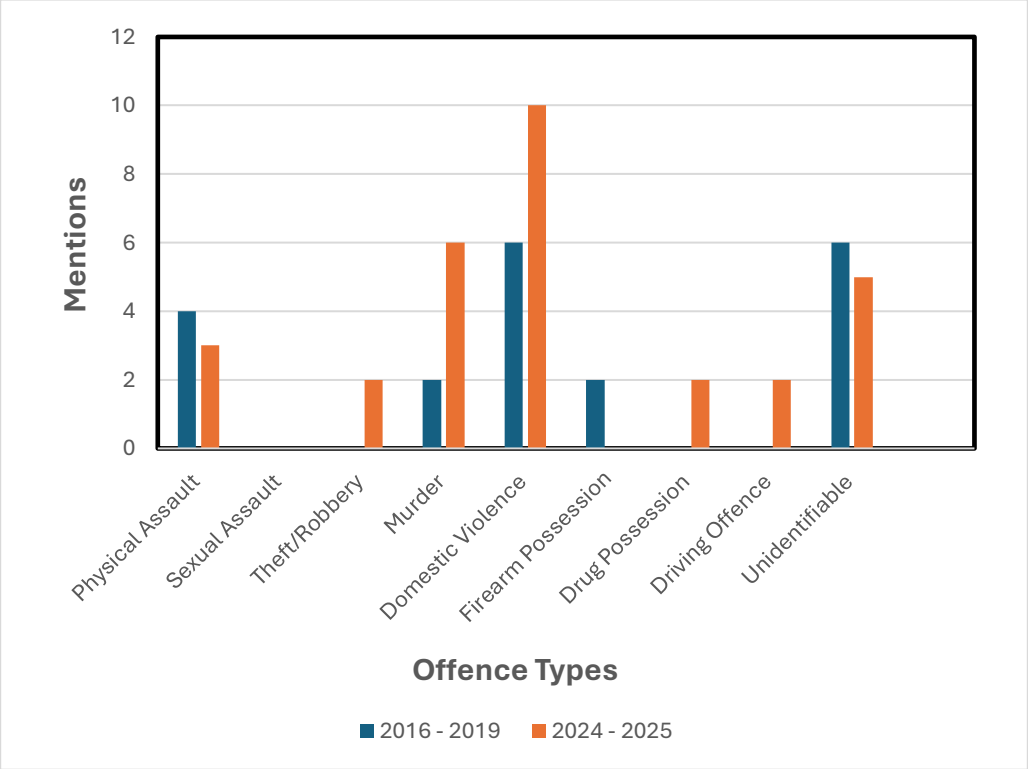
Figure 1- Offence Type By Mention




Note. The total mentions of 'offence type' across the time periods had varied, in some instances articles had covered a combination of offences. For example, although the 2016 – 2019 time-period only analysed 19 articles, the number of offences mentioned within each article varied. The total recorded offence types n=121. Physical assault n=57, Sexual assault n=12, Theft n=11, Murder n=8, Domestic violence n=7, Abduction n=1, and Unidentifiable n=26.

Figure 1 shows the total amount of offence types across the mainstream data. Physical assault accounted for 46% of total offence types, Sexual assault made up for 9%, as well as Theft and robbery 9%. Murder made up 6%, Domestic violence 5%, Abduction 0.8%, and 21% for unidentifiable offences.

Figure 2 - Offence Type by Mention (Pacific-led)




Note. Figure 2. shows the total number of offence types in Pacific-led media n=50. Physical assault n=7, Theft n=2, Murder n=8, Domestic violence n=16, Firearm possession n=2, Drug possession n=2, Driving offence n=2, and Unidentifiable n=11.

As seen in Figure 1, the total number of offences were recorded from the Pacific-led datasets. Physical assaults accounted for 14% of all offence types, Murder 16%, Domestic violence being the most prevalent making up 32% of all offences. All remaining offences such as firearm and drug possessions, driving offences all accumulated to 4% of total offence types and unidentifiable offences made a total of 11%. The coder has noted that some articles did not provide a clear offence type but however focused on core themes regarding criminality for example; "*I'm concerned that if we see more Pacific whānau going into our prisons and being incarcerated under this new Sentencing Act, that that will have, over time, a negative*

*effect on our Pacific mokopuna and their well-being." "As of March 2024, figures show that 11.6 per cent of the prison population identifies as Pacific while 52.4 per cent are Māori."*
These themes were coded as 'unidentifiable.'

Table 1. Article Types (Mainstream)

| Article Type | 2008 | 2016 – 2019 | 2024 – 2025 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Police Column/Brief | 17 articles | 8 articles | 8 articles | 33 articles |
| Opinion | 13 articles | 12 articles | 58 articles | 83 articles |
| Police reporter | 7 articles | 0 articles | 0 articles | 7 articles |
| Total (number of articles analysed) | 36 articles | 20 articles | 66 articles | **122 articles** |

Note. The total amount of articles was 122 in mainstream, however across the three time periods the analysed number of articles varied.

Table 1 represents the total article types within the mainstream data. Across the three time periods a total of 122 articles were analysed, leading to opinion-based articles to be more prominent, totalling to 68% of all article types, and police columns and briefs made up 27%. On the rare occasion there was mention of 'police reporters' such as 'Beck Vass'[1] and 'Elizabeth Binning'[2] however, this was only present during the 2008 dataset n=7 (5%).

Table 2. Article Types (Pacific-led)

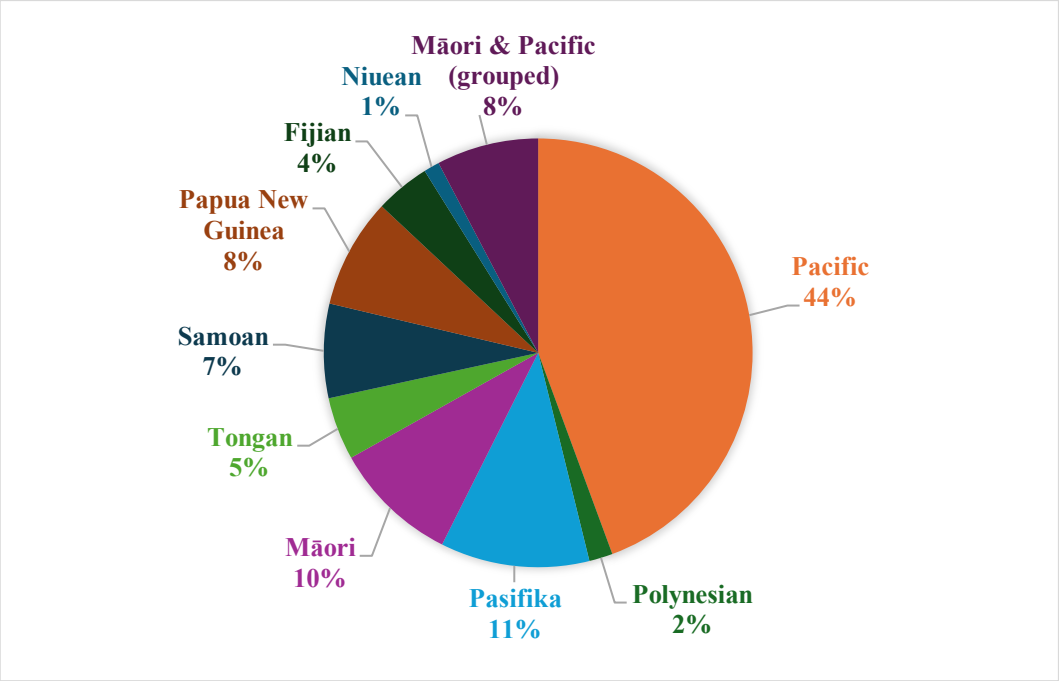
| Article Type | 2016 – 2019 E – Tangata | 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Network | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Opinion | 20 articles | 10 articles | 30 articles |
| Police Column/Brief | 0 articles | 21 articles | 21 articles |
| Total | 20 articles | 31 articles | **51 articles** |

[1] 2008 Factiva Findings – (NZH2008 #024)
[2] 2008 Factiva Findings – (NZH2008 #021)

Note. Table 2 shows the total amount of article types within Pacific-led media, across the two time periods a total of 51 articles were analysed, with a high opinion base article type n=30, as opposed to police columns and briefs n=21.

Table 2 draws on the number of article types in Pasifika-led forums. Opinion based publications accounted for 58.8% of all articles leaving police briefs to make up 41.2%. Article types from the 2016 – 2019 Pacific-led dataset were all opinion-based articles; however, they were split into subcategories within the E-Tangata website. For example, some articles were split into 'Kōrero, Arts, Reflections, and Comment & Analysis.' [3]

Figure 3 - Ethnicity Mentions (Mainstream)

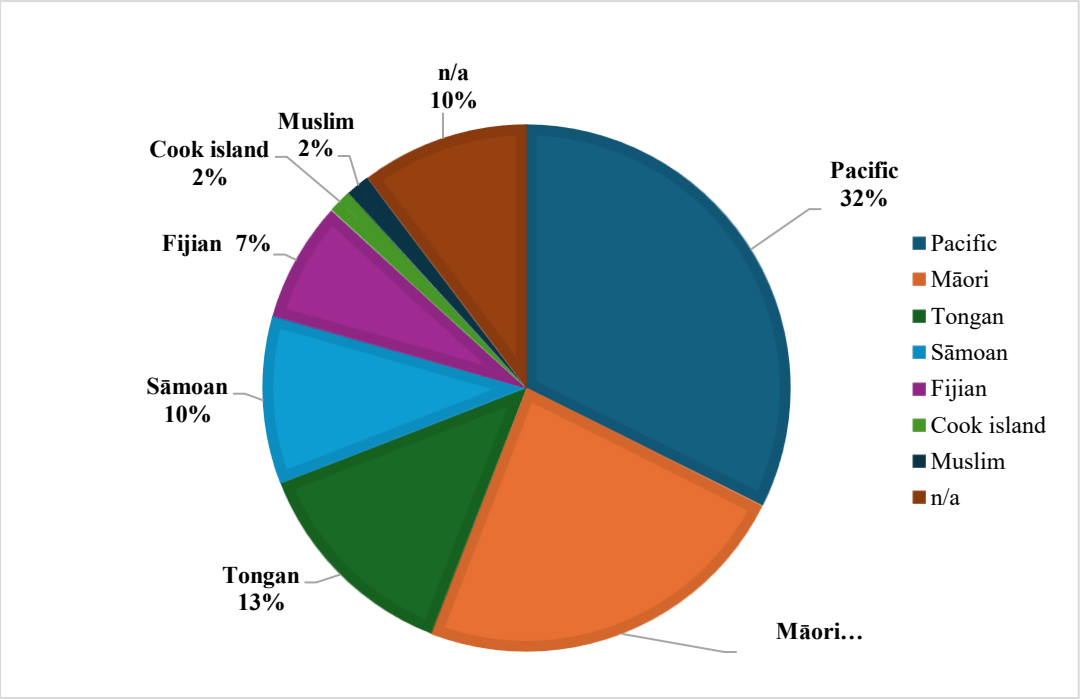



Note. Figure 3 shows the total ethnicity mentions across mainstream media. Total ethnicity mentions recorded n=169. Pacific n=75, Polynesian n=3, Pasifika n=19, Māori n=16, Tongan n=8, Sāmoan n=12, Papua New Guinea n=14, Fijian n=7, Niuean n=2, Māori and Pacific (grouped) n=13.

Figure 3 represents the total mentions of ethnicities across the three-time periods (2008, 2016 – 2019, and 2024 – 2025). The use of Pacific ethnic terms (Pacific, Polynesian and Pasifika) made up 57% of all total ethnic mentions, Māori accounting for 10%, Papua New Guinea 8%, Samoan with 7%, Tongan 5%, Fijian 4%, and Niuean 1%. Moreover, the association of Māori and Pacific peoples grouped was also accounted for, representing 8% of total ethnic mentions. This finding portrayed homogenous grouping of both social groups (see Chapter 2 for more detail regarding this grouping).

[3] E-Tangata Findings (Dataset)

Figure 4 - Ethnicity Mentions (Pacific-led)

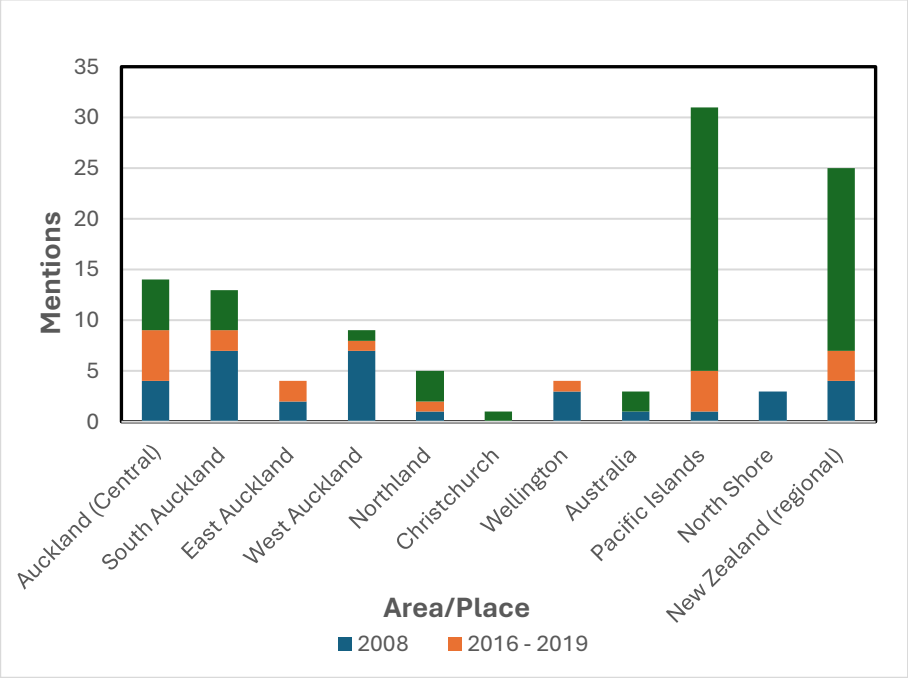



Note. Figure 4. shows the total ethnicity mentions across Pacific-led media. Total ethnicity mentions recorded n=68. Pacific n=22, Māori n=16, Tongan n=9, Samoan n=7, Fijian n=5, Cook Island n=1, Muslim n=1, n/a (unidentifiable) n=7.

Figure 4 shows the total percentages of ethnicity mentions across the two Pacific-led media time periods (2016 – 2019 and 2024 – 2025). Please note that the term 'Pacific' in this figure represents a range of Pacific ethnic terms such as 'Polynesian, Pasifika, and Pacific Islander.' These terms were categorised under Pacific as the value of these terms were no greater than 1. Across the two media platforms, it is visible to see that the ethnic term Pacific was present throughout, accounting for 32% of total ethnicity mentions. In some cases, the use of ethnicity was mentioned as a combination within articles, for example; *"Let's face it — domestic violence isn't a Samoan, Tongan, Māori or Pacific Island problem. It's a human problem. It has no colour."* [4] The data shows that Pacific and Māori were commonly used in the Pasifika-led media platforms, in terms of ethnicity mentions.

[4] 2024 – 2025 E-Tangata Findings (ET#002)

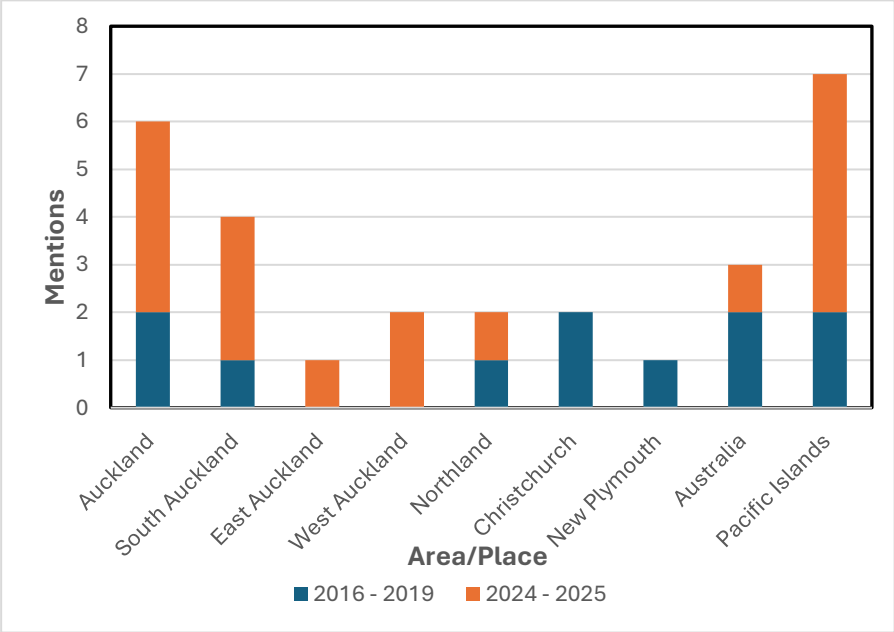
Figure 5 - Spatial Area of Crime (Mainstream)




Note. The total recorded spatial areas were n=112, across the New Zealand region and global context (Pacific Islands, Australia). Pacific Islands n=31, New Zealand (regional context) n=25, Australia n=3, Auckland Central n=14, South Auckland n=13, West Auckland n=9, East Auckland n=4, Northland n=5, North Shore n=3, Wellington n=4, Christchurch n=1.

In Figure 5 the spatial area of crime represents where news articles tended to report crime. A substantial amount of data tended to focus on Auckland based areas in particular, Central Auckland (12%), South Auckland (11%), and West Auckland (8%). However, there was a strong shift in the 2024-2025 dataset that focused on crime and criminality in the Pacific Islands (27%). Furthermore, some articles tended to examine criminality across New Zealand as a region, making up 22% of total spatial area

Figure 6 - Spatial Area of Crime (Pacific-led)




Note. The total recorded spatial areas were n=28. Auckland n=6, South Auckland n=4, East Auckland n=1, West Auckland n=2, Northland n=2, Christchurch n=2, New Plymouth n=1, Australia n=3, and Pacific Islands n=7.

Figure 6 shows that the Pacific Islands was frequently referenced making up 25% of total spatial areas. Auckland made up 21%, followed by South Auckland 14% and Australia 10%. The remaining variables such as West Auckland, Northland and Christchurch made up 7% equal, East Auckland and New Plymouth totalling to 3%.

Table 3. Age Range (Mainstream)

| Age range | 2008 | 2016 – 2019 | 2024 – 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Youth – early 20s (15 – 24) | 10 | 3 | 3 |
| Mid to late 20s (25 – 29) | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Early to late 30s | 9 | 3 | 3 |
| 40+ years old | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Unidentifiable | 11 | 13 | 52 |

Note. A large proportion of articles did not provide any age information for some offenders, so these cases were simply coded as 'unidentifiable.' No. of total age ranges n=124.

As seen in Table 3. There was a substantial amount of mainstream data that lacked in age information; which accounted for 61.3% of unidentifiable data. However, a small minority of articles did produce some age ranges. Youth-early 20s category was evident totalling to

12.9%, Mid – to late 20s 7.3%, Early to late 30s 12.1% and 40+ years old 6.5%. Although there was a lack of age data it is clear that with the identifiable age clusters that mainstream tended to frame Pacific offenders within a young age range.

Table 4. Age Range (Pacific-led)

| Age range | 2016 – 2019 | 2024 – 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Youth – early 20s (15 – 24) | 1 | 1 |
| Mid to late 20s (25 – 29) | 0 | 1 |
| Early to late 30s | 0 | 6 |
| 40+ years old | 1 | 5 |
| Unidentifiable | 17 | 17 |

Note. A large proportion of articles did not provide any age information for some offenders, so these cases were simply coded as 'unidentifiable.' No. of total age ranges in Pacific-led n=49.

Table 4 outlines the age ranges within Pacific-led platforms. Again, as similar to Table 3. there was a lack of age data accounting for 69.4% of unidentifiable age data. Youth-early 20s making up 4.1%, Mid-to late 20s 2.0%, both Early to late 30s and 40+ years old made up 12.2% each. In contrast to mainstream age clusters, Pacific-led platforms tended to frame Pacific offenders within an older age range, typically between 30 to 40 years old. These two findings may suggest that both media forums may focus on different aspects of offender identity.

Table 5. Victim v. Offender Narratives (Mainstream)

| Narrative Type: | 2008 | 2016 – 2019 | 2024 – 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Victim | 6 | 9 | 23 |
| Offender | 11 | 4 | 7 |
| Both | 11 | 2 | 7 |
| Unidentifiable | 6 | 4 | 27 |

Note. Total number of victim vs. offender narratives n=117. The category 'Both' defines an equal amount of both victim and offender related narratives within one article.

As seen in Table 5 it explores the phenomenon of victim vs. offender focused narratives. Across the mainstream data, victim-centred narratives dominated making up 32.5% of all total narratives. Offender-centred narratives 18%, Both 17.1% and Unidentifiable 31.6%.

Table 6. Victim vs. Offender Narratives (Pacific-led)

| Narrative Type: | 2016 – 2019 | 2024 – 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Victim | 4 | 11 |
| Offender | 5 | 9 |
| Both | 1 | 9 |
| Unidentifiable | 8 | 4 |

Note. Total number of narratives n=51. Victim focused n=15, Offender n=14, Both n=10, and Unidentifiable n=12.

Within Table 6. It represents a significantly smaller pool of victim vs. offender narratives. Victim centred narratives made up 29.4% of total narratives, with Offender-centred narratives 27.5%, Both 19.6% and 23.5% for Unidentifiable.

# 4.2 Use of Language

This section of the findings is where the incorporation of critical discourse analysis takes place. It aims to present the key terms, key themes and over language use across both media platforms. For the key terms tables they have been visualised to represent a **'heat map'** through Microsoft excel. The colour scheme green, yellow and red, was chosen to represent different scales in the use of key terms. Green represents minimal-to no use of key terms, dark green marking n=0 mentions, yellow showcases moderate to medium use of the key terms ranging from n=3 to n=10, and finally red shows key terms frequently referenced n=34.

Table 7. Action-oriented Key Terms (Mainstream)

| Key Terms | 2008 | 2016 - 2019 | 2024 - 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Assault | 10.00 | 9.00 | 10.00 |
| Assaulted | 7.00 | 6.00 | 2.00 |
| Violent | 4.00 | 5.00 | 13.00 |
| Violence | 7.00 | 8.00 | 34.00 |
| Brutal | 4.00 | 3.00 | 10.00 |
| Vicious | 4.00 | 1.00 | 3.00 |
| Attack | 11.00 | 4.00 | 3.00 |
| Attacked | 8.00 | 7.00 | 2.00 |
| Fight | 6.00 | 5.00 | 6.00 |
| Fighting | 4.00 | 2.00 | 5.00 |
| Punch | 2.00 | 2.00 | 3.00 |
| Hit | 6.00 | 3.00 | 7.00 |
| Beating | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Domestic Violence | 3.00 | 2.00 | 8.00 |
| Abuse | 8.00 | 0.00 | 17.00 |

**Note.** Table 7 shows the total amount of action-oriented key terms n=270 in the mainstream findings. In the 2008 column the total use of key terms n=86, 2016 – 2019 n=59 and 2024 – 2025 n=125. The coder also refers to the time periods as 'columns.'

As seen in Table 7. the key terms displayed are a combination of the most referenced terms in the action-oriented language, across the three time periods there is a quite vast use of violent and aggressive language. Key terms which were moderately referenced within all three was Assault n=29, Assaulted n=15, Violence n=49, and Fight n=17. When specifically examining each column the third time period (2024 – 2025), had a considerable amount of key terms n=125, this was due to the larger dataset n=66, and it is visible to see that within this period, there is a shift into harm-centred narratives such as Murder n=34, Killed n=36, and Abuse n=17.

Table 8. Use of Crime-Related Key Terms (Mainstream)

| Key Terms | 2008 | 2016 - 2019 | 2024 – 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Murder | 7.00 | 2.00 | 6.00 |
| Killed | 8.00 | 0.00 | 36.00 |
| Killing | 4.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 |
| Homicide | 9.00 | 2.00 | 12.00 |
| Death | 5.00 | 1.00 | 6.00 |
| Weapon | 1.00 | 0.00 | 29.00 |
| Weapons | 9.00 | 0.00 | 2.00 |
| Armed | 7.00 | 1.00 | 0.00 |
| Robbery | 6.00 | 1.00 | 0.00 |
| Stolen | 5.00 | 2.00 | 8.00 |
| Gang | 5.00 | 2.00 | 8.00 |

**Note.** Table 8 was created to represent 'crime related terms' these were separated from 'action-oriented' as the represent other aspects of crime within the articles. The total crime – related terms were n=187.

Table 8. is critical in showcasing key crime – related terms. The total terms in each column was Column 1 n=66, Column 2 n=12, Column n=109. Furthermore, key terms which did persist in column one (2008) such as Attack n=11, Killed n= 8. These terms were not as frequently referenced and almost disappear in columns 2 and 3. When visually analysing the table, it is clear to see that columns 1 and 3 represent more moderate to heavy usage of key terms, and column 2 has very minimal reference to any severity or outcome regarding the crime stories analysed.

Table 9. Use of Conviction Key Terms (Mainstream)

| Key Terms | 2008 | 2016 - 2019 | 2024 -2025 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Convicted | 2.00 | 0.00 | 2.00 |
| Conviction | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 |
| Arrested | 3.00 | 5.00 | 11.00 |
| Sentenced | 5.00 | 2.00 | 7.00 |
| Crime | 20.00 | 8.00 | 18.00 |
| Criminal | 3.00 | 2.00 | 5.00 |
| Court | 18.00 | 10.00 | 39.00 |
| Trial | 6.00 | 2.00 | 6.00 |
| Incident | 19.00 | 10.00 | 11.00 |
| Judge | 3.00 | 3.00 | 18.00 |
| Police | 45.00 | 30.00 | 60.00 |
| Investigation | 1.00 | 1.00 | 12.00 |
| Inquiry | 4.00 | 1.00 | 7.00 |
| Custody | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.00 |
| Remanded | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Charged | 5.00 | 11.00 | 9.00 |
| Prison | 9.00 | 24.00 | 13.00 |
| Jail | 3.00 | 6.00 | 1.00 |

**Note.** Table 9 shows the conviction key terms; collectively the total amount was n=527. Column 1 n=165, Column 2 n=134 and Column 3 n=228.

Table 9 represents the conviction component of key terms used. The greatest use of key terms is visible in column three totalling to 43% of all referenced terms, Column 1 makes up 31% a Column 2 25%. Although the term ‘Police’ does not necessarily relate to conviction terminology the coder had placed it in this section to show the heavy reliance on police in terms of institutional reference within these crime reports in mainstream media, police was referenced over n=60 times, followed by Crime n=46, Prison n=46 and Incident n=40. When examining column three more extensively the results show indicate an increase in use of judicial and institutional key terms such as Court n=39, Judge n=18, Investigation n=12 and Arrested n=11. This result could indicate that Pacific peoples in crime stories during 2024 – 2025 were frequently narrated in court as opposed to Columns 1 and 2.

Table 10. Use of Action-Oriented Key Terms (Pacific-led)

| Key Terms | **2016 - 2019** | **2024 - 2025** |
|---|---|---|
| Assault | 8.00 | 5.00 |
| Assaulted | 6.00 | 1.00 |
| Violent | 4.00 | 4.00 |
| Violence | 10.00 | 25.00 |
| Attack | 11.00 | 6.00 |
| Attacked | 2.00 | 4.00 |
| Fight | 24.00 | 1.00 |
| Fighting | 25.00 | 0.00 |
| Hit | 8.00 | 2.00 |
| Threat | 4.00 | 3.00 |
| Threatened | 2.00 | 3.00 |
| Beating | 1.00 | 2.00 |
| Domestic Violence | 20.00 | 5.00 |
| Family Violence | 6.00 | 42.00 |
| Abuse | 40.00 | 51.00 |

Note. Table 10 shows the total of action-oriented terms in Pacific-led media n=325. Column 1 was referenced n=171 and column 2 n=154.

As seen in Table 10, it outlines the total references of action-oriented words. In Column 1 key terms that stood out was Fight n=24, Fighting n=25, Domestic Violence n=20 and Abuse n=40. In Column 2 however, there was more references to Violence n=25, Family Violence n=42 and Abuse n=51. Moreover, by utilising the heat map it is clear to see that action-oriented words were referenced more in Column 1 which is the 2016 – 2019 time period.

Table 11. Use of Crime-Related Key Terms (Pacific-led)

| Key Terms | 2016 - 2019 | 2024 - 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Murder | 6.00 | 4.00 |
| Killing | 6.00 | 2.00 |
| Kill | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Killed | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Homicide | 0.00 | 10.00 |
| Death | 4.00 | 25.00 |
| Fatal | 0.00 | 4.00 |
| Stabbing | 1.00 | 10.00 |
| Theft | 4.00 | 0.00 |
| Stolen | 4.00 | 0.00 |
| Gang | 5.00 | 8.00 |

Note. Table 11 represents the total of crime – related terms n=101. Column 1 n=34 and Column 2 n=67.

Table 11 presents the most frequently used crime key terms across the Pacific forums. As seen in Column one terms such as Murder n=6 and Killing n=6 was prominent as opposed to Column 2. The heat map helps indicate that the key terms are dispersed at random, and that there was no pattern which reoccurred however, terms such as *Kill* and *Killed* are equally referenced across both Columns. In Column 2 it is visible that Death n=25 was frequently mentioned.

Table 12. Use of Conviction Key Terms (Pacific-led)

| Key Terms | 2016 - 2019 | 2024 - 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Convicted | 3.00 | 1.00 |
| Conviction | 1.00 | 14.00 |
| Charged | 3.00 | 9.00 |
| Arrested | 1.00 | 12.00 |
| Sentence | 5.00 | 3.00 |
| Sentenced | 7.00 | 12.00 |
| Guilty | 6.00 | 7.00 |
| Innocent | 3.00 | 0.00 |
| Crime | 42.00 | 15.00 |
| Criminal | 13.00 | 3.00 |
| Court | 6.00 | 19.00 |
| Trial | 3.00 | 5.00 |
| Incident | 5.00 | 24.00 |
| Police | 19.00 | 52.00 |
| Investigation | 2.00 | 15.00 |
| Custody | 1.00 | 9.00 |
| Remanded | 1.00 | 3.00 |
| Charged | 3.00 | 11.00 |
| Prison | 35.00 | 17.00 |
| Jail | 5.00 | 1.00 |

Note. Table 12 expands on the total use of conviction terms n=413. Column 1 n=171, and Column 2 n=242.

Table 12 presents the total mentions of conviction type terms. In Column 1 common mentions of Criminal n=13, Police n=19, Prison n=35 and Crime n=42. It is clear that the heat map indicates most references to key conviction terms was overall in Column 2, with a high use of Crime n=15, Investigation n=15, Prison n=17, Incident n=24 and Police n=52.

# 4.3 Themes and subthemes

The following section presents dominant themes identified through mainstream and Pacific-led headlines. Headlines are the first point of contact that readers interact with when accessing a story by media platforms. Therefore, they are essential in providing context into how these stories are presented and what the stories will entail. Although headlines may be quite brief, they do give a general indicator of what readers can expect when accessing articles. Moreover, the three time periods were incorporated all together to show the continuation of these specific themes across the datasets.

## Themes & subthemes (Mainstream)

**Theme 1: Crime**

CRIME SCENE [5]

CRIME: ' Teenagers assaulted by man in white hoodie' [6]

'Never mind the facts, look at the crime waves' [7]

Crime on the rise in South Auckland: 'Honestly speaking it is scary' [8]

'Passenger abuses, punches driver' [9]

The theme of crime was frequently used to outline areas of offence types and behaviour. This was explicitly seen through references towards the crime and/or offence, criminal activity and behaviour, and finally broader areas regarding rising crime. The prominence in this theme was the general repetition and referral to the term 'crime' as it situates the basis of the stories involving Pacific peoples. In time period 1 (2008), rather than highlighting areas of systemic injustices and broader socio-economic issues in criminality, the headlines frequently foregrounded crime as the most relevant aspect in their stories. In time period 2 however, crime is foregrounded as representing a 'crime rise' in the suburbs of South Auckland. This situates the theme of crime as an internal problem and that communities within these areas need policy change and intervention.

[5] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#035)
[6] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#006)
[7] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#047)
[8] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (RNZ#009)
[9] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#035)

**Theme 2: Police Presence**

'The police are renewing calls for calm following another brawl in South Auckland between Pacific rugby league fans.' [10]

'Police hit city streets to combat violence' [11]

'The shark tattoo that gave away police impersonator'[12]

'OTAHUHU Counties Manukau police are still on the hunt for Teanewa Joseph Ipo,…'[13]

Headlines which incorporated the theme of police was used across a range of involvement such as investigations, redress, and public order. Its recurrence across the three time periods suggest that Pacific peoples were often discussed in areas of surveillance and policing. Moreover, the use of police voices was more prominent in mainstream as supposed to Pacific-led and in most cases, institutional voices were used more than communal viewpoints.

**Theme 3: Violence**

'Passenger abuses, punches driver'[14]

'Prison guard stabbed in face'[15]

'Animal' hurls woman off bridge' [16]

'Chopped him with a bush knife': A PNG massacre killer says 'revenge' is the only way' [17]

Violence was frequently referred to through emotive language that often heightened the use of brutality and physical harm within the crime stories. These stories often focused on Pacific people in assault related cases, which may have affected the way readers perceive the seriousness of crime and individuals involved. Moreover, violence was situated across a range of low to high rates of violence used. In time period 3 (2024 – 2025), the severity of crime significantly picked up across the Pacific Islands region, which will be discussed in the discussions chapter.

[10] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (RNZ#011)
[11] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (NZH#012)
[12] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#040)
[13] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#015)
[14] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#035)
[15] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#007)
[16] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#017)
[17] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#001)

**Theme 4: Family Violence**

'Woman endured years of abuse from her partner before murder-suicide in Auckland' [18]

'Social worker says Pacific men misinterpreting the Bible to justify domestic violence' [19]

'Domestic violence in Fiji: Women treated 'like a doormat or a dog' [20]

'Murder charge highlights domestic violence in Samoa'[21]

Similar to violence, family violence and harm was often positioned as an internal issue amongst Pacific peoples rather than looking at broader areas that may influence this perception. Family violence often framed Pacific ethnicity at the forefront, heightening the form of 'violence' as a community expectancy.

**Sub-theme: Sympathy**

Victim's family: Help find the killer' [22]

Bloody victim 'left to die' in brutal Panmure carjacking [23]

Mum punched in face for speaking Te Reo What scumbag would do this? [24]

Sympathy was a common theme which identified the general use of language within the articles. In this sense, mainstream platforms often framed victim narratives with heightened emotive language and overall increased the severity of the issue and/or event that occurred.

**Sub-theme: Spatial Descriptors**

*'BEACH HAVEN North Shore police are looking for a gang- affiliated man with..'* [25]

*'Auckland and Counties Manukau police are calling for sightings of...'* [26]

*'CCTV footage shows brutal assault in Glen Eden'* [27]

*'Bloody victim 'left to die' in brutal Panmure carjacking'* [28]

[18] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#009)
[19] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH011)
[20] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#002)
[21] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (RNZ#017)
[22] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#021)
[23] 2016 – 2019 – Factiva Findings (NZH#008)
[24] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (NZH#006)
[25] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#003)
[26] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#070)
[27] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (RNZ#005)
[28] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (NZH#008)

Spatial descriptors were used to show readers where exact crime and offences were committed. However, repeated association of specific areas such as South Auckland can create symbolic associations of specific locations and crime.

**Sub-theme: Ethnic Descriptors**

*'Fijian man who alleged beating by police in court'* [29]

*'Māori men more likely to be stopped, tasered, prosecuted by police due to 'bias' and 'structural racism'* [30]

*Fijian MP: Violence against women and girls 'permeates every dimension of society'* [31]

*'American Samoans urged to be more vigilant in ending domestic violence'* [32]

Finally, ethnic descriptors were identified and showed whether mainstream discourses explicitly stated or excluded mentions of Pacific ethnicity in their crime headlines. As seen in the provided headlines, ethnicity was not frequently mentioned, until exploring the contents of the articles. The use of labelling Pacific peoples in association to crime significantly contributed to the construction of 'othering' and prompted the need for structural or community change.

### 4.3.1 Themes & subthemes (Pacific-led)

Pacific-led themes had similar themes, although there were other subthemes identified.

**Theme 1: Systemic issues and failures**

*'How crime news harms us all'* [33]

*'Dealing with WINZ — 'dehumanising and demoralising'*[34]

*'Pacific lawyers call for more representation as justice gaps persist* [35]

*'Teen fights for the rights of children whose parents are in prison'*[36]

[29] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (RNZ#016)
[30] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#079)
[31] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#033)
[32] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#014)
[33] 2016 – 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#001)
[34] 2016 – 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#011)
[35] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#019)
[36] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Network (PMN#020)

*'Julia Whaipooti: Māorifying prisons isn't the solution to too many Māori in prison'* [37]

Systemic issues were prevalent in Pacific-led discourse, this theme looked at criminality however across a broader scope, touching on areas where Māori and Pacific peoples were at a disadvantage. For example, socio-economic disparities, institutional racism and justice reforms. This scope allowed for further analysis on issues that were not as often published in mainstream forums.

**Theme 2: Family Violence and Community Wellbeing**

*'Eteuati Ete: The things we don't laugh about'*[38]
*'Abuse survivor urges Pacific families to break the cycle of violence this Christmas season'*[39]
*'Tonga taboo: Research explores cultural factors of intimate partner violence'*[40]
*Is Pacific culture driving family violence? A Pacific prevention programme says it's the solution* [41]

In comparison to mainstream platforms, family violence was also prominent in Pacific-led. However, family violence was constructed through a range of areas; prevention, cultural implementation, awareness and community significance. Interestingly Pacific-led had provided a substantial amount of statistical evidence, in terms of family harm in Pacific communities. Through their statistics they acknowledged the need for change in both government policies and community interventions.

**Theme 3: Personal Stories and Lived Experiences**

'I hope telling my story will set me free' [42]
My story, my shame, is tragically common[43]
Breaking the silence on prostitution and rape culture [44]
Bus victim named as Sefo Leger amid outpouring of tributes[45]

[37] 2016 – 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#021)
[38] 2016 – 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#019)
[39] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#021)
[40] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#025)
[41] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#026)
[42] 2016 – 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#006)
[43] 2016 – 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#012)
[44] 2016 – 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#014)
[45] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#001)

‘Bring Luisa home’: Family’s plea after Fijian mother’s death in Auckland apartment’[46]

The theme of personal statements was prevalent through Pacific-led articles, these stories were often constructed through a sympathetic approach where Pacific individuals were able to speak their truth. In some cases where the individual was a ‘offender’ their stories were not just defined through their wrongs, but had shed light on broader issues that led them into criminal activity.

**Theme 4: Crime and Criminal Justice**

‘Fijian man charged after violent stabbing in Sydney’s inner city’ [47]
‘Man charged with the rape and sexual assault of a Virgin Australia flight crew member’ [48]
‘Two seasonal workers found dead at Bay of Plenty orchard’ [49]
‘Police: Man dies after late-night shooting in Manurewa, homicide investigation underway’ [50]

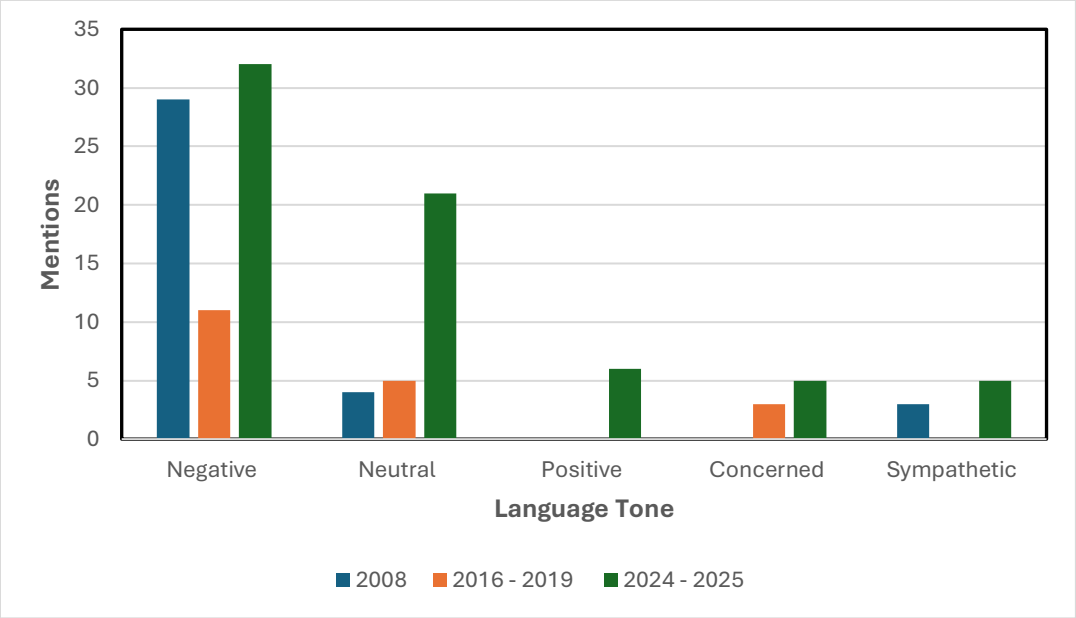
The theme of crime was still seen in Pacific-led forums, with mention towards specific crime across a national and international scale. Furthermore, these headlines are useful in seeing the plain language used in Pacific-led, with framing the use of ‘crime’ in a factual manner. The incorporation of ethnicity in these crime stories was almost invisible, and instead crime was constructed to inform readers of an event that occurred without dramatising the language.

## 4.4 Language Tone

The final findings section analysed both key terms and key themes in unison, to determine the overall language tone across both media platforms. Each article was categorised according to its dominant language tone, this was based off the overall use of affective cues that were present in ether the headlines or body text. Articles were categorised as followed; Neutral, Negative, Positive, Sympathetic or Concerned. These categories reflect the overall tone rather than isolated quotations and phrases, moreover, tone was determined through primary coder’s evaluative judgement.

[46] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#008)
[47] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#029)
[48] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#030)
[49] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#012)
[50] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#011)

Figure 7 - Language Tone (Mainstream)

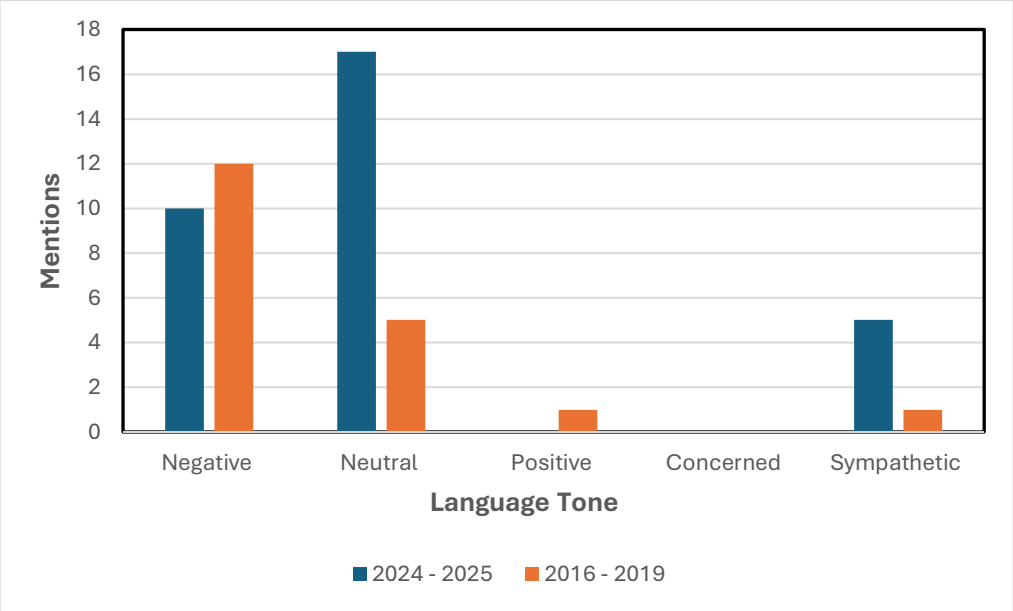



**Note.** Figure 7 refers to the total number of language tone across the three datasets n=124. Negative n=72, neutral n=30, positive n=6, concerned n=8 and sympathetic n=8.

Figure 7 represents the overall language tone across mainstream, it is evident that negative tone was prominent totalling to 58% of language tone. These negative stories often focused on the severity of crime, decontextualising offenders and particular areas of crime. Neutral made up 24%, and these narratives presented themselves as factual and rather straightforward without emphasising the extent of particular people and events but instead remained informative than interpretive. Positive tone was not commonly coded across the data and only represented 4% of language tone. These portrayals had either credited Pacific individuals and communities which represented improvement, support and social change. Therefore, positive portrayals were defined when language highlighted people, events and culture in a positive light.

Finally concerned and sympathetic tone accounted for 6% each, and was accredited when journalists used emotive language. Sympathetic tone was mostly focused on victim or communal narratives which heightened an empathetic viewpoint, often eliciting readers to feel sorry and sympathise with them. Concerned tone was used when articles expressed worry, harm, or risk about individuals or events. This tone did not often blame individuals but rather focused on the seriousness of the issue and potential factors to mitigate it from happening again.

Figure 8 - Language Tone (Pacific-led)




**Note.** Figure 8 represents the total number of language tone n=51. Negative tone n=22, neutral n=22, positive n=1, concerned n=0 and sympathetic n=6.

Figure 8. shows the total distribution of language tone across the Pacific-led data. Neutral and negative language were the most prevalent tones across the articles totalling to 43% each. Neutral focused on factual information regarding issues of imprisonment, rehabilitation and cultural implementation programmes. Negative tone highlighted areas of offending with particular reference to physical harm, other articles emphasised the disproportionate rate of Māori and Pacific peoples in the prison system. Sympathetic tone was again seen in victim related narratives, however, in some cases Pacific offenders were seen portraying a redemptive arch and seen to admit and acknowledge their wrong doings, this tone accounted for 11% of total language tone. Positive tone similar to mainstream was not commonly associated only and was depicted in 1 article across the data.

# Chapter 5 Discussion

This research examined the representation of Pasifika peoples in New Zealand crime media. The research sought to discover any potential differences in the portrayal of Pasifika peoples across both mainstream and Pacific-led forums, particularly in the use of language, framing, and crime narratives regarding this social group. Additionally, the research was situated over three time periods; 2008, 2016 – 2019, and 2024 – 2025, in order to uncover whether any patterns of representation in discourse differed, persisted, or shifted over time.

This chapter will focus on examining the findings as found in Chapter 4. Drawing on the content analysis of the three time periods, critical insights and explanations will be revealed through a comprehensive analysis concerning the findings. Additionally, the use of critical discourse analysis examined the use of language within the key terms and positioning of headlines. The incorporation of existing literature and relevant theoretical frameworks will also be included. This will assist in answering the research question and presenting further questions which may have surfaced within the study. Finally, any recommendations and suggestions for future research will be provided at the end.

## 5.1 Research Question and Objectives

"How do mainstream and Pacific-led media differ in their representation of Pacific peoples in crime reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand?" Through the incorporation of content analysis and critical discourse analysis, in analysing the 173 articles a number of results in terms of similarities and differences in the crime reporting of Pasifika peoples was evident. The researcher will also explore this study's research objectives and answer them accordingly:

1) Examine whether mainstream and Pacific-led differ in the severity and types of crime associated with Pacific peoples
2) Examine how spatial areas of crime are constructed in the media platforms, and analyse if Pacific peoples are referenced to specific locations
3) Compare whether crime media stories of Pacific peoples tend to focus on victim or offender narratives?
4) What themes and or subthemes persisted throughout both media forums

## Objective 1: Offence types and severity of crime

1) Examine whether mainstream and Pacific-led differ in the severity and types of crime associated with Pacific peoples.

The first key finding was that of offence types, in particular the differences in what offences were prominent across both media forums. Mainstream forums often focused on physical assault cases (46%) as opposed to Pacific-led forums (14%).[51] The association of Pacific peoples in physical assault crimes can signify a form of ethnic tagging and what mass media discourses deem as 'newsworthy.' (Cottle, 2000; Nairn, et al., 2011). For example, Pacific peoples only make up 12.2% of the total New Zealand prison population, however, continue to be disproportionately represented in violent crimes, particularly in domestic and family violence (Deckert et al., 2023; Department of Corrections, 2025; Ioane et al., 2016). Examples of this association was evident in descriptors of offenders and potential suspects;

"…three high-profile murders in one ugly week in South Auckland in which the ethnicity of the victims (Asian) and that of the perpetrators (allegedly **Pacific** Islanders or Māori) became the focus." [52]

"A Samoan man who chased a neighbour with a machete has been allowed to stay in New Zealand- because his son suffers severe autism and would miss out on specialised care." [53]

"Fidow, who is of Pacific Islands descent became triggered and let his emotions get the better of him, when he knocked out an opponent during post-match handshakes, and says he was racially abused during a game at Stadium Taranaki." [54]

Such reporting of ethnicity reflects Bull's (2017) argument, in how media tend to focus on identifying the heritage of minorities such as Māori and Pacific Islander offenders, whilst limiting the identification of other social groups, thus constructing a distorted perception of Pacific peoples in relation to criminality. It further reveals the process of racialisation, whereby particular crime is linked to specific ethnic groups through repeated media

[51] Refer to Figure 1 & 2.
[52] 2008 Factiva Findings – (NZH#006)
[53] 2008 Factiva Findings – (NZH#031)
[54] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings – (NZH#025)

exploitation (Hall et al.,1978; Husband, 2005). Moreover, the routine association of using ethnicity in crime media coverage constructs Pacific identity relevant to understanding criminal behaviour, even if in some cases ethnicity is irrelevant. It is important to note that this where scholars have argued prompt mass media to create narratives of 'inherit criminals.' Inherit criminals refer to the prejudiced belief that ethnic minorities are naturally and biologically suspectable to committing crimes as opposed to other dominant social groups (Hughes et al., 2019; Harding, 2006). By continuing to position Pacific peoples in physically violent offences in media discourses, it could potentially lead to the public to associate Pacific identity to these crimes, as other offences that were prominent in mainstream findings was sexual assault and theft (9%), murder (6%), all offences, which to an extent all exploit the use of physical assault.[55]

In contrast to Pacific-led discourses, Pacific peoples still persisted in physical assault offences (14%), the most prominent being domestic/family violence (32%)[56]. Interestingly, the construction of domestic violence was built upon systemic failures and ways for the Pacific community to prevent it from entering households. There was specific mention to domestic violence cases however, this was limited to n=4 articles. Moreover, Pacific-led discourses acknowledged the role of culture and how it plays a crucial role in why the Pacific community may not seek help and instead face the abuse.

"A report from Pasefika Proud shows Pacific people are 44 per cent more likely to experience physical or psychological family violence." [57]

"Pacific children in New Zealand are twice as likely as Pākehā children to be hit at home, and many families stay silent because of shame and cultural pressure." [58]

[…"commonly Pacific peoples have strong ties to religious beliefs and faith which also carries a stigmatisation of divorce. What follows is the notion that keeping the family together is key and that "parents should work through that." [59]

[55] Refer to Figure 1.
[56] Refer to Figure 2.
[57] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (#021)
[58] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (#022)
[59] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (#024)

"We grew up in a generation where hitting kids was accepted and dad and I had our run-ins — some pretty major."[60]

The examples express a concern on cultural and familial ties, the stigma that getting hit or facing abuse by family is a normality. Moreover, Ligaliga (2021) states the problem of domestic violence in the Pacific is widely regarded as taboo, as for many generations now, its complex foundation has been built and 'woven' in Pacific society. This taboo subject is seen as part of Pacific life, and that there is no singular cause or catalyst for domestic violence, because it is so deeply rooted in power and masculinity (Ligaliga, 2021). Furthermore, domestic violence for Pacific peoples is so convoluted, that it is constructed through several factors that contribute to this stigma (Anderson, 1991; Crichton-Hill, 2001; Seddon, 1993). By framing the issues of domestic and family harm in the Pacific-led articles it helps uncover community responsibilities, preventive measures, and intergenerational effects. Another prominent offence type present in Pacific-led was Murder (16%). Rather than framing all the murder incidents as extreme isolated acts, they were instead positioned in broader social contexts touching on the effects of family and relational harm. This framing emphasised the importance of causation in Pacific-led media and ignored the need to heighten the severity of these cases. It further situates how some stories in Pacific-led media disrupt the association of racialised media practices and instead offer a counternarrative for why criminal activity may persist within the Pasifika community.

In contrast to mainstream media, domestic violence only represented 5% of total offences, and murder making up 6%.[61] However, these articles often focused more on the use of extreme verbal or physical violence through the use of emotive descriptors. "Once he threw a chair at Losa, another time a milk bottle." "Losa would say to me, 'The neighbours, the neighbours.' I would just walk outside and say, `F*** the neighbours." [62] "Fanene is accused of holding his ex-wife against her will, and beating her and her sister with a pipe and stick."[63] "I hit my partner because it's my right." [64] These statements again support the argument that Pacific peoples are more likely to resort to violence, and in this instance readers may associate family violence towards the Pacific community (Deckert, Busby-Pukeiti & Tauri,

[60] 2016 – 20219 E-Tangata Findings (#011)
[61] Refer to Figure 1.
[62] 2008 Factiva Findings – (NZH#001)
[63] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings – (RNZ#014)
[64] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings – (NZH#011)

2023; Ioane & Lambie, 2016). Rather than contextualising harm within structural factors, mainstream at times focused their family violence narratives on the intensity of the incident, which elicit this negative attribute of Pacific peoples. Moreover, this framing positions how mainstream foregrounds their own understanding of domestic and family harm issues, that they feel the need to situate these incidents as individualised indiscretions. This framing also to an extent, relates to the othering concept of 'one-dimensional identities' according to Riches (2014) where journalists deprive readers of 'deeper realities' of an individual's truth about their experiences. However, what is instead presented to the audience is a superficial account of the incident, which leaves readers to apply moral judgement to the crime content which they consume (Riches, 2014, p.42).

A second key finding within this objective was the use of ethnic labels. In mainstream reporting Pacific ethnic labels accounted for 57% of total mentions, in comparison to Pacific-led (32%). [65] There was also specific reference to individual Pacific identities, but what differed across the two media platforms was the association of homogenous grouping in mainstream. To briefly reinstate, homogenous grouping also known as 'ability' grouping, is when distinct groups are categorised as *one*, which obscures their distinct cultural identities. This practice has been largely debated to ignore cultural differences and lower self-esteem (Matika et al., 2021). This grouping was more present in time period 1 and 2 and referenced across n=13 articles. This is when crime narratives were identifying potential suspects within their reports "The offender is described as a Māori or Pacific Islander." [66]

There are several factors that can explain this grouping. First, when offenders are 'unidentifiable' in articles but provide additional variables, such as key witness accounts and mugshots provided, journalists and editors may default to categorising these social groups into one. Second, mainstream reporting often relies on police data, and through these reports they have historically grouped Māori and Pasifika peoples together for administrative convenience (Gargett, 2005; McCreanor et al., 2014). However, regardless of their intent, this grouping overtly corresponds to ethnic tagging. This is where dominant media groups are actively engaging in narratives that concern ethnic minorities, and through their repeated association as a collective this 'homogenous' label may encourage readers to associate Māori

[65] Refer to Figures 3 & 4.
[66] 2008 Factiva Findings – (NZH#003)

and Paciifc peoples as more suspectable to criminality. Similar to Van Dijk (1987) study, ethnic stereotyping plays a crucial role in limiting the scope of individual cultural representation in media, for example specifically looking into Māori in criminality. Moreover, by grouping these cultures together it not only minimises their representation in media, but disrupts the need to present culturally driven implementations into media practices and in the justice system.

Additionally, article types were examined to show the variation of categories which crime reports were published in. This finding relates to objective 1 as at aims to show the predominant article types represented the makeup and framing of the crime stories, these were sorted across opinion, police columns, and police reporters. A similarity across the two media platforms was that they were both prominent in using opinion-based articles, with mainstream making up 68% of total articles and Pacific-led (58%). [67] This finding suggests that crime stories were predominantly constructed through commentary and interpretation, with general reliance on police briefs provided.

This is significant to comment on as opinion pieces allow journalists to comment on issues surrounding the offence itself such as systemic issues, evaluations and statistical evidence. This view is seen in Jewkes (2015) study which states that 'news' is socially constructed, and that stories produced reflect a journalists view of society, thus voicing their interpretations into their narratives. Conversely, Zelizer (2004) states that journalists cannot claim to know 'everything' that happens in society, and that dependent on their view of certain events and social groups, readers may inherit distorted images in regard to what is published. In this sense, crime reports that do rely on opinion-based views indicate that journalists within both mainstream and Pacific-led forums, may have provided broader interpretations of the crime rather than just providing surface level analysis.

To summarise the findings and correlation to objective 1, it represents that mainstream did differ in some offence type aspects in comparison to Pacific-led. Pasifika peoples were frequently centred in more physical and violent assaults in mainstream media whereas, Pacific-led focused on the negative effects of domestic violence in Pacific communities, and broader structures regarding the makeup of Paciifc criminality. Moreover, this objective

[67] Refer to Tables 1 & 2.

helped in uncovering that both media forums have distinct ideologies in their crime reporting, which significantly adds to the construction of how Pacific peoples are imagined and interpreted in crime narratives.

## Objective 2: Spatial areas of crime

2) Examine how spatial areas of crime are constructed in both media platforms and analyse if Pacific peoples are referenced to specific locations.

Spatial areas of crime varied across a range of national and international areas. A similarity across both media platforms was the association of the Pacific Islands, with mainstream referencing to 27% and Pacific-led 25% overall [68]. However, mainstream's referral to the Pacific Islands had skyrocketed in the 2024 – 2025 dataset n=26, this finding did probe some questions, which is discussed below. Other prominent locations covered was Auckland, in particular Central Auckland (12%), South Auckland (11%), and West Auckland (8%). [69]Mainstream stories which did focus their crime reporting on the Pacific Islands, had frequently referenced countries such as Papua New Guinea, Soloman Islands. Additionally, the data provided a clear duality framing of Pacific peoples either in Auckland, New Zealand (31%) or the wider Pacific region (27%) when crime or criminality had occurred. [70]

Domestic representation

However, the findings above did not persist in earlier time periods. In the 2008 dataset where crime was at the forefront of national depictions, the articles had positioned Pacific peoples through standard portrayal of potential and suspected offenders. These articles often framed Pacific peoples as violent and dangerous, and dependent on the area of crime it seemed to play a role in their criminality. The first narrative was seen more consistently in time period one - 2008. These were often through the association of the offence and area of crime combined (refer to 4.3 themes). In some instances when area of crime was mentioned ethnicity soon followed, for example;

[68] Refer to Figures 5 & 6.
[69] Refer to Figures 5 & 6.
[70] Refer to Figures 5 & 6.

"MANUKAU Where is Siaosi Akauola? The 40-year-old, also known as George or **Tongan** George, has breached his bail conditions on charges of dealing methamphetamine." [71]

"GREY LYNN A man who tried to abduct two girls near Richmond Rd Primary School on Sunday, November 8, has been described as Māori or **Pacific Islander."** [72]

"PAPATOETOE On Tuesday last week, a teller at the ASB Bank in Papatoetoe was threatened by a **Māori or Pacific** man with a pistol and made to hand over cash from the till."[73]

These associations tended to position the location of crime with blunt references to ethnicity, it suggests that the certain areas of crime were intentionally or unintentionally racialised in media stories. Moreover, within the findings there was particular reference to both Central Auckland (12%) and South Auckland suburbs (11%). When comparing official New Zealand police data in relation to these findings, violent offences in 2008 occurred 17.9% in South Auckland, and 9.5% in Central Auckland (NZ Police, 2009). Additionally, Pasifika peoples were disproportionately represented in violent offending, representing 13% of total violent crimes in 2008 (NZ Police, 2008). These statistics help in understanding the relationship between media institutions and police, where media are in active engagement with police to produce these constructions of Pasifika peoples and criminality. When specifically, examining South Auckland, they have been deemed to face a higher chance of disproportionate impacts such as socio-economic status, lower education achievement, poor board and community funding, and perceived higher crime rates (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Ioane et al., 2016).

The representation of Pacific peoples in both crime media and official police statistics, foregrounds how overtime readers can cultivate a belief of where crime is situated and potential offender demographics. The need to emphasise area of crime followed by ethnic descriptors, may indicate how media were projecting a specific narrative regarding violent crimes and offender profiles. This exposure can likely they begin to construct a distorted image of both the mentioned social group(s) and locations (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).

[71] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#085)
[72] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#072)
[73] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#004)

Additionally, offences portrayed in these areas may raise concerns to the public that there is a need for surveillance or increase in police presence, which refers to the idea of media populism. This is when dominant discourses to their advantage, may simplify articles which involve Māori and Pacific peoples in predominantly 'brown' areas. The coined term 'brown' areas have been argued to elicit the idea of dangerous and prevalent to violence and crime (Borell, 2006; Loto et al., 2006; Fitzpatrick, 2013).

In time period 3 (2024 – 2025) there had seem to be a shift in the way Pacific peoples were discussed domestically, often focused on criminality and its effects across a broader scope, such as social and economic factors the community as a whole was facing. These findings emphasised an increase of community advisors and wider public services to emphasise structural inequality, social disparities such as employability, housing instability, and deportation risks in New Zealand. Moreover, themes of healthcare issues, cultural implementation and community contribution also persisted. Through these findings it framed Pacific peoples in need of government and policy change.

"Unemployment data just released by Stats NZ shows an overall rise from 3.4 percent in March 2023 to 4.3 percent in March 2024. The data showing the fastest rises for women, Māori and Pacific peoples." [74]

"NZ Police data showed that of the 1169 homicides in New Zealan between 2007 and 2022, 34 percent of victim were women, with a particular increase in Pacific women." [75]

"He said Māori and Pasifika youth in Auckland are overrepresented in the statistics of high school leavers who come out of high school and there's quite high number of people who go straight into welfare." [76]

By creating this simplification, it suggests that the crime and issues within the area are an internal issue, promptly blaming Pacific peoples as the 'problem' in need of change (Maydell, 2018). Articles which inherited this narrative often disregarded broader social-economic factors, and concerns that affected these specific locations in New Zealand.

[74] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#046)
[75] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#027)
[76] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#012)

Notably, this argument relates to the construction of media populism which represents what Pakeha relations situate as 'news-worthy' and can affect how audiences interact with crime reporting (Raela, 2017; Ross, 2025). The only examples of 'positive inclusion' across from the mainstream data was in article RNZ#009 titled *'Crime on the rise in South Auckland: 'Honestly speaking it is scary'* [77] The article framed the context of assaults and 'gun violence' an increasing issue in 2019, across South Auckland. The article had included general reference to community advisors such as the late Efeso Collins, who was advocating for change needed from police and government relations. This depiction greatly represented the voices of key figures within the community, who were actively pushing for social change and acknowledged the faults within their community.

International representation

International references of the Pacific Islands had drastically changed in tone regarding Pacific peoples. These portrayals often focused on the severity of crime, points of conflict, domestic violence rates, and sensationalised forms of violence. A prominent topic within the Pacific-led articles was the association of 'tribal wars.' These references were consistently referenced in mainstream data. Where often, they focused on the violence between Pacific villages within their own countries. A considerable number of articles often framed the violence through severe use of physical force with emphasis on massacre numbers in killings within the wars. Through these depictions it was overtly constructing the Pacific Islands in a volatile and inhumane state, moreover, such portrayals position Pacific peoples in areas which commonly retreat to violence and are in constant need of external services and intervention. This situates a difference in the way Pacific peoples are reported in a domestic setting as opposed to international portrayals.

*"Voices in the Tok Pisin language on the video said they planned to eat the victim, with one man making licking motions as they displayed a severed foot, sparking furor in the country over alleged cannibalism."* [78]

*"Papua New Guinea is reeling from the separate killings of two women in acts of extreme violence last week, prompting renewed calls for urgent action to address the country's epidemic of gender-based violence."*[79]

[77] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (RNZ#009)
[78] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings NZH#031
[79] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#032)

The international representation almost created this framing of 'distancing' where Pacific peoples in Aotearoa were reported as more "capable" but in need of public sector stability. However, international portrayals were situated under narratives of barbaric and violent nature, incapable of maintaining civilisation. This distinction thus reproduces a form 'othering' where national depictions of Pacific peoples are more "humanised" as opposed to Pacific island depictions, and instead their stories are framed through colonial hegemony ideologies (Wall, 1997; Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005).

## Objective 3: Victim vs. offender narratives

3) Compare whether crime media stories of Pacific peoples tend to focus on victim or offender narratives?

Victim Narratives

The use of victim and offender narratives within this research was to highlight how the media platforms constructed crime stories through these narratives. Overall, across both media platforms victim centred narratives persisted totalling to 32% of total narratives in mainstream, and 29% in Pacific-led.[80] However, the positioning of both victim-centred narratives differed. In mainstream findings the construction of victim-based narratives often positioned victims through the lens of an 'ideal' victim; typically, where the media identify the severity of their assault, often showcasing their vulnerability which provokes sympathy and compassion from readers (Christie, 1986; Greer, 2007). The following examples reflect how mainstream projected this ideal victim lens in their crime reports:

"The family of a woman who was brutally bashed and dragged from her car are speaking out to ensure it doesn't happen to anyone else. Chee Phua, 33, believes his mother was targeted because she is small, in her 60s and Asian." [81]

[80] Refer to Tables 5 & 6.
[81] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (NZH#008)

“The mother-of-four, who lives in Howick, said a man then swore and yelled at her, questioning why a “palagi” would use such words. Ms Maiden admits she responded, telling the man to “f*** off.” He then punched her several times." [82]

"The 80-year-old grandmother died in hospital on Saturday, three days after she was left unconscious in the bedroom of her Manurewa family home following a vicious beating." [83]

It is through these examples that there is evident use of framing ‘vulnerable’ people in these victim narratives, with strong references to elderly people and women (Christie,1986). When analysing these quotations, they are intentionally heightened by the use of lexical choices, to allow readers to sympathise with these victims. Moreover, the victims are seen as weak and blameless, that through the use of descriptive terms ‘mother’, ‘grandmother’, and other descriptive variables such as age, and wellbeing. It constructs these narratives to indulge in emotional engagement, and positions Pasifika offenders as inherently violent and dangerous. As Carrabine and colleagues (2004) suggest, that when stories meet the criteria of vulnerable people within a crime, other victims such as young men, homeless and marginalised communities do not receive the same media exposure, because they are deemed as not attracting as much coverage.

Additionally, a study by Reiner et al., (2003) stated that mainstream crime media commonly portray ‘violent crimes’ and however, tend to focus on the sole event and those involved, rather than providing general patterns and broader issues around criminality. When victim narratives are shared in these crime stories, they focus on the sensationalism of the incident inflicted onto the victim (Marsh & Melville, 2019). Furthermore, lexical terms such as *brutally, bashed, punched, and attacked* are use as intensifiers, which add force to the incident taken place. This finding again foregrounds Pacific peoples as physically aggressive and to resort to violence. When combining vulnerability and lexical terms in these victim narratives, it can relate back to the theoretical framework of cultivation theory. This is due to the fact that local media institutions can play a powerful role in shaping reader’s perceptions of crime, such as ‘moral panics’, fear, and perceived constructions of potential suspects (Thompson, 1998). The role of media is to inform the public of current events, however,

[82] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (NZH#006)
[83] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#021)

when dominant media forums continue to heighten violent crimes and use victim accounts to their discretion, it limits the scope of alternative-led media to contest these narratives. Thus, when readers are continuously exposed with dominant narratives which construct society as scary and bad, it is believed to shift their thinking in terms of crime and criminality and heighten their anxieties levels of the world we live in (Jewkes, 2004; Potter, 1986).

In comparison to Pacific-led forums, the positioning of victim narratives differed and instead there was a tendency to narrate on speaking out and speaking their truth. Some other victim narratives focused on providing redemptive stories of offenders who had been wronged by systemic failures. "Justin Taia may be a menace to society, but we shouldn't forget he's a product of it too. He was fed to the system as a child, and then returned to it as an adult who'd been smashed apart — a violent offender who is also a brutalised victim." [84]
"A nephew from Tonga described Leger as a "gentle giant" and a "loving father" on social media. Friends also remembered him as "humble, big-hearted, and always ready to help anyone in need".[85] A key finding within these examples was that Pacific-led media associated victim narratives alongside broader social issues and aspects. That instead of just framing 'ideal' victims as seen in mainstream, these narratives instead highlighted issues which delved into structural and cultural issues. In some cases, Pacific-led forums had allowed for victims to retell their own truths, and these incorporated the themes of family and cultural expectations. These victim narratives in comparison to mainstream had humanised the incident, by not overtly condemning the offender, or heightening the crime itself.

**Offender narratives**

Offender narratives made up 18% of total mainstream narratives, and 27.5% in Pacific-led. [86]
In mainstream, offender narratives often emphasised the physicality and descriptive characteristics concerning the potential suspect. These narratives foregrounded the following depictions;

"A well dressed "predator" posed as a trunacy officer to lure a 15 year old girl shoolgirl into his car – then drove to her Waitakere City home and sexually asssaulted her." [87]

[84] 2016 – 2019 – E-Tangata Findings (ET#006)
[85] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#001)
[86] Refer to Tables 5 & 6.
[87] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#024)

“BEACH HAVEN North Shore police are looking for a gang- affiliated man with ``pronounced ears and nose'' who they believe was involved in a stabbing which narrowly missed a major artery in a man's neck.” [88]

“After his racially charged tirade, the man unleashed a vicious punch to Trehan’s face that left him requiring hospital treatment and urgent dental care for a dislodged tooth.”[89]

“Police are hunting a “bloody animal” who punched a 63-year-old cyclist off her bike and then hurled her off a 3m bridge.” [90]

“Voices in the Tok Pisin language on the video said they planned to eat the victim, with one offender making ‘licking’ motions as they displayed a severed foot, sparking furor in the country over alleged cannibalism.” [91]

These statements helped in understanding how mainstream tended to position Pacific offenders through descriptive features and put emphasis on the severity of the offence. This finding although more consistent in time period 1 (2008), it foregrounded how mainstream used linguistic terms to identify offenders such as ‘predator’ , ‘animal’ , ‘gang-affiliated’, ‘vicious’ and ‘cannibalism’ all of which are qualities which represent abnormal behaviours, positioning Pacific offenders to lack social coherence (Blackman & Walkerdine, 2001). Furthermore, offenders in mass media are more likely to be represented in narratives which exploit their marginalisation and limit the scope of providing broader social factors in understanding their offending behaviours (Jewkes, 2013; Smith & Stewart, 1997). This positioning further adds to the notion of placing blame onto the offender themselves and through these constructions, offenders are seen as nothing more than a product of their own environment. It is then that these findings align with the use of labelling theory. Where the role of media in bringing attention to such cases, may serve as a reflection to how the Pacific community can inherit and perceive themselves. As Arnold & Jordan (1996) argue that when mass media continue to construct an image of ‘criminality’ and produce expected offending

[88] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#003)
[89] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#0035)
[90] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#017)
[91] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#031)

characteristics, it moves beyond the surface level of describing them and however can produce said offenders. Additionally, when offenders are constantly labelled in violent behaviour, these images gain social legitimacy, which Tunufa'i (2017) states can motivate people to prove this notion (Tunufa'i, 2017 p.175).

In relation to offender narratives, age range also plays a pivotal role as a narrative cue. Across both media platforms the results provided stark differences. Mainstream platforms often regarded Pacific peoples in crime narratives as quite young, suggesting the association of Pacific youth and criminality.

"Police described the offenders as fair-skinned Māori or Pacific Islanders, one aged between 25 and 30 and about 1.8m tall, the other in his late teens and wearing a tan-coloured hooded sweatshirt." [92]

"Described as Māori or Pacific Islander, in his late teens to mid- 20s." [93]

However, there was a substantial amount of age data which could not be identified, but overall youth ages persisted in mainstream 12% as opposed to 4% in Pacific-led.[94] This finding relates back to past research which states that Pacific youth in New Zealand are more likely to commit a crime that is violent as their first offence (Ioane et al., 2016).

Pacific-led offender narratives were presented through more neutral and factual depictions. In most cases the articles generally stated the offender and the offence without emphasis on emotive language or use of sensationalism. Moreover, Pacific-led offenders were often referred to through institutional actors, such as 'police' which shifted the narratives away from criminality to instead focus on the offence itself than applying linguistic effects to decontextualise the Pacific community.

[92] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (NZH#018)
[93] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#072)
[94] Refer to Tables 3 & 4.

"... This kind of violence in New Zealand made the shooting "newsworthy" event. It received extensive coverage, with particular focus on the background of the offender, his criminal history, and the fact that he was on home-detention at the time of the shooting." [95]

"The woman was arrested in Favona and has since been charged with misconduct in respect of human remains and nine counts of obtaining by deception." [96]

"Police have arrested a patched Mongrel Mob member in connection with arson at a Mangere Bridge funeral home last month." [97]

Through these quotes of offender narratives, they represent a difference in comparison to mainstream. For example, when comparing the 'gang affiliation' from mainstream versus the 'Mongrel mob' reference in Pacific-led, the language is rather neutral and represents how Pacific-led do not contextualise the need of gang association. Moreover, the narratives move away from descriptive characteristics and largely are emphasising the role which the offenders play in the incident. This finding therefore disrupts how mainstream construct offending narratives, where they minimise the incorporation of a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' and represent these offenders in a factual way. Moreover, the role of age also functions as another narrative mechanism. In contrast to age range in mainstream, Pacific-led forums age range was quite older between the ages of 30 – 40 years old totalling to 12% and mainstream only making 6%. [98]These differences may reflect contrasting narrative priorities: mainstream outlets emphasised youth offending as a moral panic trope, while Pacific-led outlets focus on adult offenders to highlight systemic issues rather than youth deviance.

The incorporation of language tone was analysed to depict overall depiction of stories across five categories: positive, neutral, negative, concerned or sympathetic. In mainstream stories, 58% of articles were depicted as negative, and 24% neutral. Pacific-led data highlighted 46% of both negative and neutral depictions within their articles. [99] It was evident that with the use of predetermined key terms in this study, the data which was coming through was going to focus on crime and criminality. Moreover, the data would focus on physical assault cases,

[95] 2016 – 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#001)
[96] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#006)
[97] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#013)
[98] Refer to Tables 3 & 4.
[99] Refer to Figures 7 & 8.

with some terms emphasising violent tendencies.[100] However, in some cases the data provided did produce contextual findings.

## Objective 4: Prominent terms & themes

4) What headline themes and key terms persisted throughout both media forums?

The examination of prominent themes and key terms in Chapter 4 identified that across the two media platforms there were was similar and distinct variables found. [101] This first section will examine the use of themes. Although the themes were categorised dependent on the headlines provided, there was differences in how they were framed. Similarities in themes were Crime, Violence and Family Harm across both media forums.

Use of headlines:

Before examining the prominent themes within the headlines, the primary researcher wanted to explore the use of 'one-dimensional' identities. This mechanism was incorporated through Riches (2014) study, where it investigated the use of descriptive nouns and how it limited the scope of offender identities. Through this study, headlines in mainstream were framed such as: *'Animal hurls woman off bridge'* [102]*, Hunt for robber with slashed neck'* [103]*, 'Attack on great-gran stuns family'* [104] *'The shark tattoo that gave away police impersonator'* [105] *'Brutal killings...'*[106]. These headlines were positioned to explore the severity of the incidents and decontextualise the identities of those involved. As stated in objective 1, readers are left to interpret the contents of the headlines, because they lack in 'deeper realities' meaning there is minimal context regarding the experiences of the offender or victim involved, limiting the voices of Pacific peoples (Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005).

The use of one-dimensional headlines in Pacific-led platforms were: *'Concerns rise over sentencing reforms'* [107]*, 'Woman arrested after funeral home probe' 'Fijian man charged after violent stabbing in Sydney'* [108] *'Dealing with WINZ - dehumanising and*

[100] Refer to Chapter 3.
[101] Refer to Section 4.3.
[102] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#017)
[103] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#059)
[104] 2016 – 2019 Factiva Findings (NZH#018)
[105] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#040)
[106] 2024 – 2025 Factiva Findings (NZH#032)
[107] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#004)
[108] 2024 – 2025 Pacific Media Findings (PMN#029)

*demoralising'*[109] Although one-dimensional identity is still applicable in Pacific-led media they do differ in terms of construction. It is visible to see that in two articles, the terms '*violent, dehumanising and demoralising'* were used to emphasise the issue within the stories. Rather than amplifying the identity of the offender through emotive language or descriptors, Pacific-led produced headlines which reported on the incident, without the need to narrate on deviance.

Across mainstream findings four main themes persisted which was Crime, Police presence, Violence and Family Violence. With the theme of crime, it was frequently referenced to show the offence committed and even highlighted Pacific peoples to specific crimes. Overall, crime often positioned Pacific peoples in violent crimes and constructed the descriptive nature of an offender. This finding is better understood with the cultivation theory. Cultivation theory refers how media exposure can play a central role in how an individual can perceive reality (Morgan, 1999). Depending on the media platforms an individual is continuously exposed to, it can have real effects on shaping a person's understanding of the world around them (Shrum, 2017). When media platforms that present themselves as news organisations, it plays a fundamental role in informing and educating the public. The first point of contact to articles is headlines, and when media organisations frame 'crime' stories it leads to readers to be exposed these very constructions. Essentially news platforms act as a social 'watchdog' around core areas of politics, breaking news, entertainment, sport, and culture. In this way, the public use news platforms as a form of staying up to date with current events in society on a daily basis (Cottle, 2003).

The theme and inclusion of police presence was commonly referenced when articles often relied on secondary data to produce crime reports, and descriptions of potential suspects. Moreover, the use of institutional voices was emphasised more in mainstream as opposed to Pacific-led. In some reports, suspects would be "dealt with" or were being "hunted"[110] which overtly reinforced the role of police as protectors of public order and safety, especially in the case Māori or Pasifika peoples were the face of crime. This finding has been widely argued in other media forums especially in police reality television shows (Barnes et al., 2012; Deckert et al., 2023; Doyle, 1998; McCreanor et al., 2014). Publications which did emphasise NZ

[109] 2016 - 2019 E-Tangata Findings (ET#008)
[110] 2008 Factiva Findings (NZH#008)

police presence offered reassurance and resolution, which emphasises the active relationship shared between media and police relations in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The theme of violence was shown through emotive or descriptive language, where journalists heightened or sensationalised the offence or offender. This should not be seen as a shocking finding as the over generations Pacific peoples in New Zealand crime media has been depicted through decontextualised and polarised portrayals (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Loto et al., 2006; 'Ofa Kolo, 1990). Moreover, the present adoption of one-dimensional identities across mainstream data represented how these dominant discourses continue to limit the scope of offenders, and instead foreground violent terms such as 'brutal', 'bashed', 'animal.' Additionally, the theme of family violence in mainstream was similar. Articles which portrayed this theme often placed blame onto the Pacific community, and implied it was a 'normality' in these communities.

Pacific themes consisted of four prominent themes: Systemic issues, Family violence, Personal statements and Crime and Criminal Justice. [111] Systemic issues reflected how Pacific-led articles had broadened the scope of criminality and provided context, in terms of where Māori and Pacific peoples were facing disproportionate effects.[112] This theme highlighted how counternarratives in mainstream media is scarce and often, Pacific voices are limited through a series of depictions that are deemed acceptable in dominant discourse. The Pacific-led articles were framed to shed light on real concerning issues that affect the Pacific communities by Pacific journalists, advocates and advisors. Areas that were touched on was social services and welfare, incarceration effects, and mainstream media depictions. As seen in Pietikianen's (2003) study on Indigenous identity in print, majority groups (Pālangi) were more likely to comment on the issues regarding ethnic groups, instead of by the people who reflected these impacts. It then suggests that to some extent mainstream narratives of Pacific peoples do not always reflect their best interest, and instead position this social group as in need of services (Loto et al., 2006). Pacific-led forums challenged these narratives by providing both community input and statistical evidence.

[111] Refer to Section 4.3
[112] Refer to 4.3 for specific examples.

In relation to systemic issues, family harm was another theme identified, which is a concerning factor in the Pacific community. Family violence overall was represented across both media forums, however, as previously explained in objective 2 Pacific-led shifted the narrative of family harm cases and advocated for preventive measures. Family harm was positioned in Pacific-led to promote community wellbeing, where these platforms acknowledged the incorporation of Pacific methods and strategies, and overall advocated for families to break the stigma of domestic abuse. This where the themes of personal statements and crime followed. A substantial amount of Pacific-led articles were frequently published in first person, allowing for true and vulnerable accounts from Pacific individuals. This theme corresponds to what the objective role of alternative-led media is. Pacific media network state 'our mission is to empower, encourage and nurture Pacific culture identity' (Pacific Media Network, n.d.).

E-Tangata's whakapapa advocates that they are 'dedicated in specialising stories which reflect the heart of what it means to be Māori or Pasifika in Aotearoa' (E-Tangata, n.d.). These Pacific narratives therefore are constructed to reflect Pacific epistemologies, where the represent and reflect the community. Critical theory helps in promoting this shift. Critical theory aims in empowering human beings who are faced with constraints placed onto them, notably race, gender and class (Creswell & Creswell, 2003). Therefore, mainstream discourses often construct crime reporting that negatively impacts ethnic groups, by exploiting discursive language which frames dominant ideologies of crime and criminality (Hodgetts, Cullen & Radley, 2005). However, Pacific-led do more than just present crime stories and statistics, instead they are actively offering an 'alternative' narrative into understanding issues which concern the Pacific community. It speaks volume for why Pacific-led media began to expand as a whole in Aotearoa, and became a place where Pasifika peoples could voice their opinions beyond 'deemed portrayals.' This finding is rather limited due to a dearth in existing literature, but it is important to make note of.

Collectively, the thematic analysis of themes demonstrates that although mainstream and Pacific-led may have shared some similarities in themes discussed, both media platforms differed in framing these underlying themes.

Key terms:

The use of predetermined key terms was to see if media institutions tended to rely on specific crime terms more than others. In this study the key terms were split across three categories: 1) Action-oriented terms 2) Crime-related terms and, 3) Conviction terms. These three distinct categories assisted in identifying discursive tendencies across both media platforms (mainstream and Pacific-led). The key terms support this research as it broke down the complex role of crime and criminality. Moreover, these findings will overall be examined against the research objectives.

In mainstream media common action-oriented words were *assault, violence, violent, attack and attacked, fight and abuse.* [113] In Pacific-led media category 1 terms were *fight, fighting, violence, family and domestic violence, and abuse.* [114] When observing the terms next to each other, it is clear that mainstream media often focused more on the individual action of harm. These key terms align with mainstream crime reports as they foregrounded the offence taken place and descriptive terms of offender behaviour. Pacific-led terms tended to emphasise family and domestic violence, which may align with their purpose to cover important topics concerning the Pasifika community.

In category 2 – crime-related terms mainstream had frequently referenced, *killed, homicide, weapon, stolen, gang.* Pacific-led incorporated prominent terms such as *death, murder, gang and stabbing.* [115] Mainstream media effectively had a higher range of crime-related terms, which tended to narrate Pacific peoples and the use of weapons and public disorder. This was present in the depictions of Pacific offenders in the Pacific Islands. In terms of 'public disorder' general crime reports of Pacific peoples were through the lens of social exclusion which emphasised the presence of colonial hegemony, which highlighted the need for Pacific peoples to adapt to cultural normality in Aotearoa.

Finally, category 3 – conviction terms in mainstream were *police, crime, court, incident, charged, prison, judge and conviction.* Pacific-led utilised terms such as *crime, police, prison, sentenced, incident and conviction.* [116] Conviction terms across both forums did share

[113] Refer to Table 7.
[114] Refer to Table 10.
[115] Refer to Tables 8 & 11.
[116] Refer to Tables 9 & 12.

similarities in terms of institutional framing. This positioning framed Pasifika peoples in media narratives in close proximity to the criminal justice system. However, the differences in these terms was how mainstream framed 'offenders' which emphasised the use institutional voices to speak on their offence, descriptors of offenders, and criminal behaviour. In some cases Pacific-led may have had a higher sentencing resolution, although this was not thoroughly explored within this study. Moreover, in mainstream there was a higher rate of crime reports where police were 'hunting' for a potential Pacific suspects.

## 5.6. Objectivity in media

The primary researcher wanted to make note on the role of objectivity in the media. Objectivity refers to the fundamental journalistic principle where media organisations are seen to be neutral and free from personal bias (McMullan, 2005; McCreanor et al., 2019). When examining the findings, most of the articles were reliant on secondary data from New Zealand Police. This does not necessarily mean the data obtained is incorrect but could refer to a number of journalistic implications and benefits for their own institutions. Moreover, although results do suggest Pacific-led do differ in their crimes stories of Pacific peoples, the overall takeaway from this study is that it is merely impossible for a media organisation to be fully 'objective.' Journalists come from all walks of life, and their own personal biases may have an impact in their opinion pieces. It is instead through their media practices that allow readers to inherit their constructions of reality to be perceived as naturalised (Farr, 2019). Additionally, media institutions cater for the needs and wants of their target audiences, especially for those who are actively engaging in their content. Although the sole role of media may be to 'inform' the public, they are inevitably a dual-product market that needs to sustain audience engagement and economic profitability (Beattie et al., 2024). That being said, dominant media discourses in New Zealand do play a significant role in how readers engage and interact with content, and understand the society we live in.

If New Zealand Herald and Radio New Zealand claim for objectivity, the need to make editorial changes is essential. The incorporation of homogeneous grouping contest their claim of reporting for 'all New Zealanders'(NZME, n.d.; RNZ, 2025). The grouping of Māori and Pasifika peoples as "one" whether unintentionally or intentionally, it continues to reinforce what is classified as 'brown criminality.' This association is damaging on each identity because it removes both cultural and the contextual differences among them. Historically,

mainstream media has constructed narratives produced by Pālangi, for Pālangi, and about Pālangi (Cosgrove & Bruce, 2005, p. 340). Effectively, mainstream media do not always reflect reality, however, are actively constructing their own social understandings of Pasifika peoples, especially through the lens of criminality. The need for more representation of Pacific journalists in these discourses is important especially when there is repeated associations between Pasifika identity and violence, ultimately creating racialised assumptions by the public.

## 5.7 Recommendations

Recommendations for future research is split into two sections, with the first examining the research design and archival limitations. The second recommendations section looks at possible methods for conducting this research in the future.

Section one: Research design

The first recommendation would be to restructure the time periods; this was due to the limitation in accessing earlier Pacific-led news archives. In the initial search for 'Pacific-led' databases there was a very low visibility, which led to the research to be limited to two websites (Pacific Media Network and E-Tangata) and the time periods varied. However, by restructuring the time periods to instead single year categories such as '2016' and '2024', which are accessible in the Pacific-led websites. This recommendation can allow for a more comprehensive comparative analysis across the media platforms. A second suggestion could be to include other alternative-led media discourses. By including other Pacific-led forums in New Zealand, they could further help in understanding Pacific representations and ideologies in media.

Section two: Future research

Possible future research could investigate the representation of both Pasifika peoples and Pālangi across mainstream and alternative-led media forums. This could help in uncovering if there are potential biases in the construction of different ethnic groups in media. It may further attest to the use of racialised media practices in news articles, which are more commonly used in dominant as opposed to alternative-led media platforms. Another recommendation may be to examine the phenomenon of comment sections in mainstream and

Pacific-led platforms. Given the relevance of cultivation theory in this research, comment section could assist in analysing how readers engage and inherit these crime narratives.

# Conclusion

This research set out to explore the potential differences in how New Zealand media constructed Pacific peoples in crime narratives. The analysis explored mainstream forums such as New Zealand Herald and Radio New Zealand, against Pacific-led (alternative) media across three distinct time periods (2008, 2016 – 2019, 2024 – 2025). Through the incorporation of content analysis and critical discourse analysis, the study analysed over 173 articles to help assist in identifying key characteristics such as language, offence types, spatial areas of crime, and narrative positioning. The findings suggested that there are some stark differences to how both media platforms frame Pacific peoples as well as some similarities.

The analysis demonstrated that mainstream had repeated association of Pasifika peoples in violent crimes with particular reference to physical assault. Moreover, ethnic tagging was still referenced, even when ethnicity was irrelevant to the offence, which situated the use of racialised assumptions. A finding which past literature has argued to have disproportionately linked ethnic groups such as Pasifika peoples, in association to specific crimes and criminality (Allen & Bruce, 2017; Bull, 2017, McCreanor et al., 2014; Loto et al., 2006; Riches, 2014). Conversely, Pacific-led media portrayals of ethnic groups in crime often employed a broader scope, covering issues of systemic, community and cultural lens which was tailored to show the disproportionate effects that these communities face in the sphere of criminality in Aotearoa and internationally. This represents that these media forums portray Pacific peoples in distinct ways that represent their own objectives and priorities when it comes to crime reporting. This study adds to existing scholarship by offering one of few Pacific media comparative analyses in New Zealand.

However, this research is limited by the scarcity of Pacific-led data used, and the incorporation of Pacific media practices. The need for future research to expand on other Pacific-led discourses, and analyse audience interpretations could reveal more understandings into how media play an important role as a system of knowledge.

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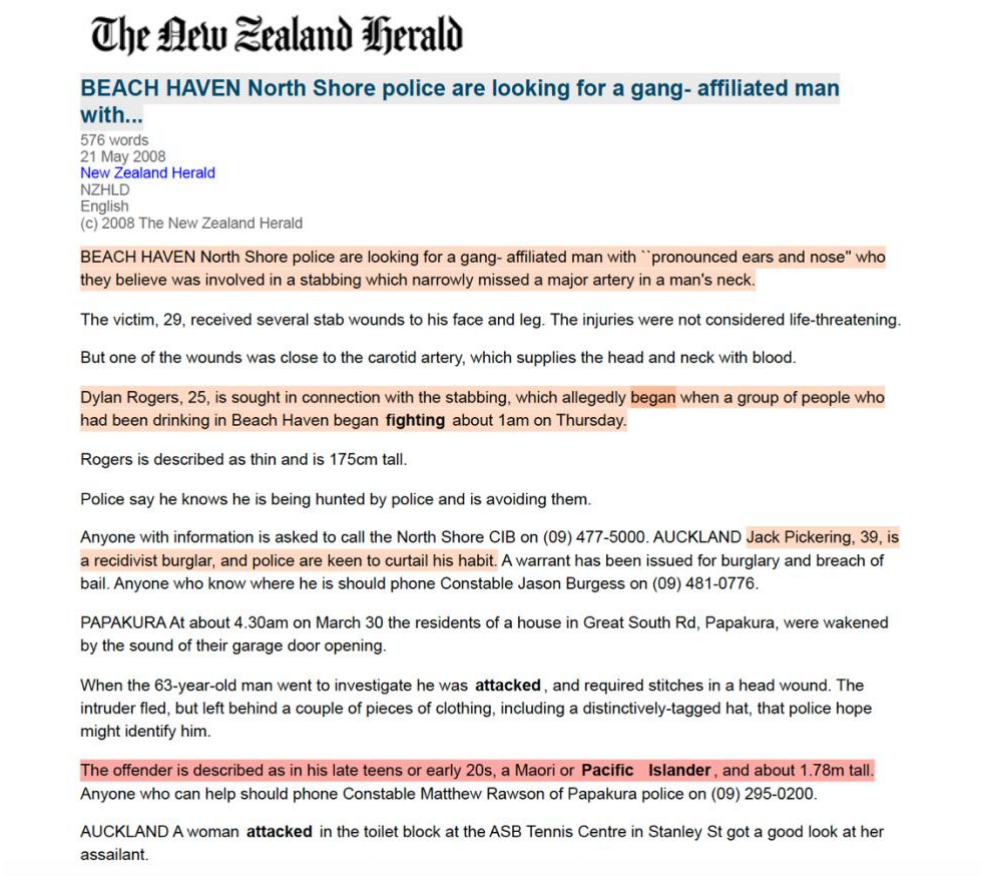
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# Appendices

### Appendix A: Samples of raw articles

*Sample 1. New Zealand Herald articles*



The New Zealand Herald

**BEACH HAVEN North Shore police are looking for a gang- affiliated man with...**

576 words
21 May 2008
New Zealand Herald
NZHLD
English
(c) 2008 The New Zealand Herald

BEACH HAVEN North Shore police are looking for a gang- affiliated man with ``pronounced ears and nose'' who they believe was involved in a stabbing which narrowly missed a major artery in a man's neck.

The victim, 29, received several stab wounds to his face and leg. The injuries were not considered life-threatening.

But one of the wounds was close to the carotid artery, which supplies the head and neck with blood.

Dylan Rogers, 25, is sought in connection with the stabbing, which allegedly began when a group of people who had been drinking in Beach Haven began **fighting** about 1am on Thursday.

Rogers is described as thin and is 175cm tall.

Police say he knows he is being hunted by police and is avoiding them.

Anyone with information is asked to call the North Shore CIB on (09) 477-5000. AUCKLAND Jack Pickering, 39, is a recidivist burglar, and police are keen to curtail his habit. A warrant has been issued for burglary and breach of bail. Anyone who know where he is should phone Constable Jason Burgess on (09) 481-0776.

PAPAKURA At about 4.30am on March 30 the residents of a house in Great South Rd, Papakura, were wakened by the sound of their garage door opening.

When the 63-year-old man went to investigate he was **attacked**, and required stitches in a head wound. The intruder fled, but left behind a couple of pieces of clothing, including a distinctively-tagged hat, that police hope might identify him.

The offender is described as in his late teens or early 20s, a Maori or **Pacific Islander**, and about 1.78m tall. Anyone who can help should phone Constable Matthew Rawson of Papakura police on (09) 295-0200.

AUCKLAND A woman **attacked** in the toilet block at the ASB Tennis Centre in Stanley St got a good look at her assailant.

In both mainstream samples (New Zealand Herald and Radio New Zealand), it is visible to the reader of the **bold** italics regarding the predetermined key terms.

*Sample 2. Radio New Zealand articles*

RADIO
NEW ZEALAND

**The police have released footage of a brutal assault on a 20-year-old man who...**

sbrettkelly

128 words
15 February 2018
Radio New Zealand News
RNZNEW
English
2018 Copyright Radio New Zealand Limited

The police have released footage of a **brutal assault** on a 20-year-old man who was **hit** with a piece of wood as he lay unconscious on the ground last month in west Auckland.

The film shows a **violent fight** between two groups late at night on Tuesday 23rd of January on Oates Rd in Glen Eden.

Detective Sergeant Chris Goldsmith says it was **vicious** and cowardly **attack**, and the victim will need facial reconstructive surgery.

He says the main offender is **Polynesian** with a large afro hairstyle, 1.82 metres tall with a large build.

The second offender is Maori or **Polynesian**, around 1.75 metres, of muscular build.

Radio New Zealand Limited

Document RNZNEW0020180214ee2f0076d

*Sample 3. Pacific Media Network articles*

# Bus victim named as Sefo Leger amid outpouring of tributes

Auckland Police confirm the 59-year-old was killed in the Glen Innes stabbing, a man has been charged, as family and friends share heartfelt tributes online.



Christine Rovoi

PUBLISHED
11 December 2025, 3:25pm

Sponsored By
Fonterra

SHARE

COPY LINK

Police have formally identified the man who died following Monday's fatal stabbing on a bus in East Auckland. He was Sefo Leger of Wai o Taiki Bay.

The 59-year-old was one of two men allegedly stabbed at separate times on a bus travelling from Glen Innes towards Ōrakei that evening.

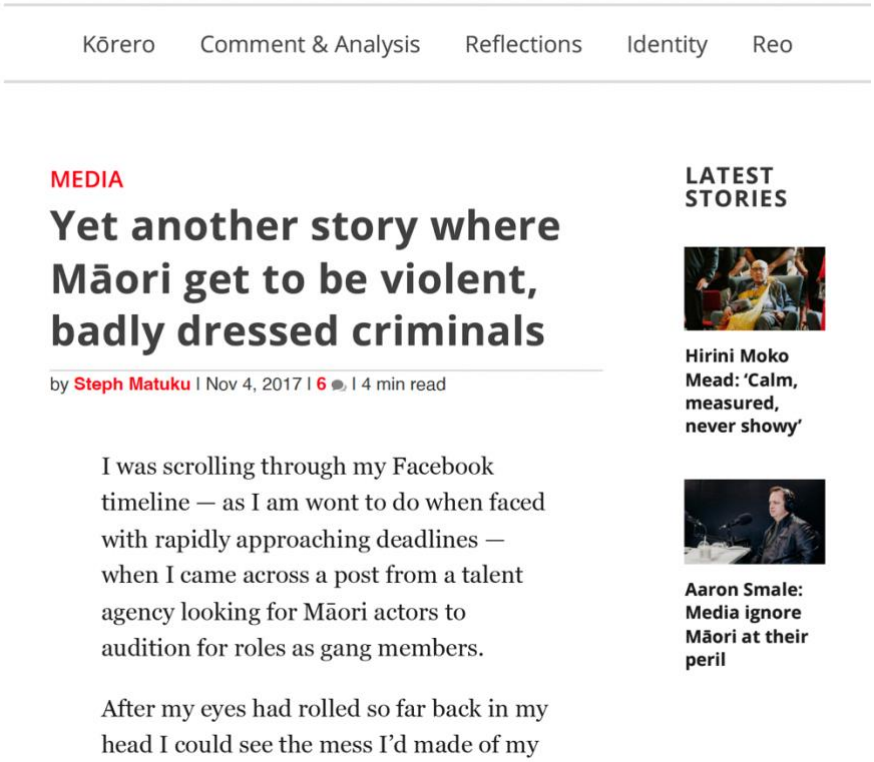
Adrian Pani, 36, has been charged with Leger's murder and grievous assault. He appeared in the Auckland District Court on Wednesday and has been remanded in custody.

**MORE FROM PMN**



LAW & ORDER

*Sample 4. E – Tangata articles*



Kōrero Comment & Analysis Reflections Identity Reo

MEDIA

**Yet another story where Māori get to be violent, badly dressed criminals**

by Steph Matuku | Nov 4, 2017 | 6 | 4 min read

I was scrolling through my Facebook timeline — as I am wont to do when faced with rapidly approaching deadlines — when I came across a post from a talent agency looking for Māori actors to audition for roles as gang members.

After my eyes had rolled so far back in my head I could see the mess I'd made of my

LATEST STORIES



Hirini Moko Mead: 'Calm, measured, never showy'



Aaron Smale: Media ignore Māori at their peril

## Appendix B: Samples of Excel spreadsheets

*Sample 1. Mainstream media Excel spreadsheet*

The thematic categories ranged from columns A – T in excel, with all categories including a heading to indicate its purpose. These categories were copied into both media platforms. Within this study the researcher also made direct links back to the articles by identifying the given article IDs in the footnotes *(column A in the spreadsheet).*



| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Article ID | Source | Media Type | Date | Time Period | Article Type | Author | Headline | |
| 2 | NZH - 2008 #001 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Mar-08 | 1st | Opinion | Simon Collins | Knocking violence on its head' | |
| 3 | NZH - 2008 #003 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | May-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | BEACH HAVEN North Shore police are looking for a gang- affiliated man with..' | 'EACH HAVEN North Shore police |
| 4 | NZH - 2008 #004 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | May-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | 'PAPATOETOE On Tuesday last week, a teller at the ASB Bank in Papatoetoe was...' | "PAPATOE |
| 5 | NZH - 2008 #006 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jul-08 | 1st | Police Brief/Editorial | NZ Police | CRIME: 'Teenagers assaulted by man in white hoodie' | |
| 6 | NZH - 2008 #007 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jul-08 | 1st | Opinion | Stephen Cook | Prison guard stabbed in face' | " |
| 7 | NZH - 2008 #012 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jul-08 | 1st | Journalist | Tapu Misa | Blaming race won't solve crime' | "...three high-profile murders in |
| 8 | NZH - 2008 #013 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jul-08 | 1st | Journalist | Andrew Koubaridis | Anger, damage order of the day' | |
| 9 | NZH - 2008 #015 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Feb-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | OTAHUHU Counties Manukau police are still on the hunt for Teanewa Joseph Ipo,...' | |
| 10 | NZH - 2008 #017 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Mar-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | Animal' hurls woman off bridge | |
| 11 | NZH - 2008 #021 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jun-08 | 1st | Police reporter | Elizabeth Binning (Police reporter) | Victim's family: Help find the killer' | "The 80-year-o |
| 12 | NZH - 2008 #022 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | May-08 | 1st | Police reporter | Elizabeth Binning (Police reporter) | CRIME: Bleeding liquor stor owner told his son not to be a hero | "Lying on the floor and bleed |
| 13 | NZH - 2008 #023 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Feb-08 | 1st | Police reporter | Elizabeth Binning (Police reporter) | Young couple's quick thinking foils slow - witted thug' | |
| 14 | NZH - 2008 #024 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Nov-08 | 1st | Police reporter | Beck Vass (Police reporter) | Predator posed as truancy officer' | |
| 15 | NZH - 2008 #028 | SAME STORY (NZH - 2008) #024 | Mainstream | | | | Elizabeth Binning (Police reporter) | Girl's sex attacker may have scratches | "Police s |
| 16 | NZH - 2008 #030 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Dec-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | OTARA An armed man demanded money from tellers at the BNZ Bank inOrmiston Rd,... | |
| 17 | NZH - 2008 #031 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Mar-08 | 1st | Police reporter | Beck Vass (Police reporter) | Machete attacker wins reprieve from deportation | "A Samoan man who |
| 18 | NZH - 2008 #033 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Mar-08 | 1st | Opinion | N/A | Jake the Muss' - New face for anti-violence drive | |
| 19 | NZH - 2008 #035 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jun-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | CRIME SCENE | |
| 20 | NZH - 2008 #038 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jun-08 | 1st | Opinion | Nick Squires | Pacific expats blame Australia's kava crackdown for rise in violence | |
| 21 | NZH - 2008 #042 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Mar-08 | 1st | Opinion/Statistics | N/A | What research shows' | "DO |
| 22 | NZH - 2008 #045 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jul-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | In Brief Smeared, says ACC claimant | |
| 23 | NZH - 2008 #047 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jun-08 | 1st | Opinion | John Armstrong (Pākehā) | Nevermind the facts, look at the crime waves | "While everyone skirts the i |
| 24 | NZH - 2008 #048 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Nov-08 | 1st | Opinion | Vaimoana Tapaleao | Immigrant allowed to stay despite sex attack | |
| 25 | NZH - 2008 #050 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jul-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | CRIME SCENE | "HENDERSON Po |
| 26 | NZH - 2008 #052 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | May-08 | 1st | Opinion | Kerre McIvor | Palagi's in the Pacific | racist bigots had a field day with |
| 27 | NZH - 2008 #054 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Feb-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | AUCKLAND On February 3 a 19-year-old man was brutally beaten in central Auckland... | "The m |
| 28 | NZH - 2008 #059 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | May-08 | 1st | Crime piece | Beck Vass (Police reporter) | Hunt for robber with slashed neck | |
| 29 | NZH - 2008 #060 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | May-08 | 1st | Opinion | James Ihaka | Learning to lift their game | "The |
| 30 | NZH - 2008 #062 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jul-08 | 1st | Opinion | Brian Rudman | Stirring race pot won't stop crime | |
| 31 | NZH - 2008 #067 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jul-08 | 1st | Police Brief/Editorial | Elizabeth Binning (Police reporter) | Police out to stop two man crime wave | "I think the th |
| 32 | NZH - 2008 #068 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Nov-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | Death treated as suspicious/Aggravated robbery in Wellington | "Aggravated r |
| 33 | NZH - 2008 #070 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Apr-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | Auckland and Counties Manukau police are calling for sightings of... | |
| 34 | NZH - 2008 #072 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Nov-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | OTAHUHU These men (above) were caught on surveillance camera in Mason Ave,... | "GREY LYN |
| 35 | NZH - 2008 #078 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Nov-08 | 1st | Journalist | Claire Rolke | Police Seek Backpack | "POLICE HAVE revealed |
| 36 | NZH - 2008 #079 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Apr-08 | 1st | Police Brief/Editorial | NZ Police | IN BRIEF Bali flights website scam | " |
| 37 | NZH - 2008 #085 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Dec-08 | 1st | Police Column | NZ Police | CRIME SCENE | "MANUKAU When |
| 38 | NZH - 2008 #098 | NZ Herald | Mainstream | Jun-08 | 1st | Police Brief/Editorial | NZ Herald | In the final moments before she died, Manurewa home invasion victim Yin Ping... | "In the final m |

| | J | K | L | M | N | O |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Ethnic Label** | **Theme(s)** | **Offence Type** | **Victim or Offender narrative: (if applicable)** | **Pacific Offender (Y or N)** | **Language/Narrative (overall):** |
| 2 | Polynesian, Pacific | Domestic Violence | Domestic Violence | N/A | Y | Negative |
| 3 | nec Pacific Islander | Violence | Stabbing, Break-in/Robberies/Physical Assault | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 4 | Pacific Islander | Violence | Robbery, Theft, Assault | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 5 | Pacific Islander | Violence, Anger | Physical/Sexual Assault | Both | Y | Negative |
| 6 | Fijian-Indian | Violence, Anger | N/A | Victim | N | Negative |
| 7 | Pacific Islander, Pasifika youth, Pacific Peoples | Hate crime, Socio-economic status | Murder | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 8 | Pacific Island man | Violence & Anger | Physical Assault | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 9 | Pacific Islander | Violence & Anger | Physical Assault | Both | Y | Negative |
| 10 | Māori or Pacific Islander | Violence & Anger | Physical Assault | Both | Y | Negative |
| 11 | Pacific Island man | Seeking Justice | Physical Assault, Theft | Both | Y | Negative / Sympathetic |
| 12 | " Polynesian | Heroism | Physical Assault / Attempted Robbery | Victim | Y | Negative / Sympathetic |
| 13 | Pacific Islander | Violence, Anger | Attempted Theft/Robbery | Both | Y | Negative |
| 14 | Pacific IM12sland man | Safety / Awareness | Physical/Sexual Assault | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 15 | Pacific Islander | Safety / Awareness | Physical/Sexual Assault | Both | Y | Negative |
| 16 | Pacific Islander | Fighting | Physical Assault | Victim | N/A | Negative |
| 17 | Samoan, Tongan / Suspect's full name | Violence & Anger | Physical Assault | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 18 | Pacific Island men | Domestic/Family Violence | Awareness | n/a | N | Neutral |
| 19 | Pacific Islander | Violence | flobbery | Offender | Y | Netural |
| 20 | Pacific Islanders, Tongan | Alcoholism/Awareness | N/A | n/a | N/A | Neutral |
| 21 | Pacific, Tongan, Samoan | Gambling, Domestic Violence, Immunisation, Culture (Community updates/stats) | N/A | n/a | N/A | Netural |
| 22 | Polynesian | Violence | Physical Assault | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 23 | Samoan, Pacific | Voting Elections | Murder | Both | Y | Negative |
| 24 | Samoan | Cultural shame/Trauma | Physical/Sexual Assault | Victim | Y | Netural/Sympathetic |
| 25 | Pacific Islander | Violence/Predator Awareness | Sexual Assault | Both | Y | Negative |
| 26 | on tf. Polynesian, Pacific Islanders | NZ Economy, Racism, Employment | N/A | N/A | N/A | Negative/Bias |
| 27 | Māori or Pacific Islander | NZ Crime assualts | Assualt | Both | Y | Negative |
| 28 | Polynesian | Shop lifting | Assualt | Victim | Y | Negative |
| 29 | Polynesian | Bootcamp/Rehibilitation | Assualt | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 30 | | | | n/a | | Negative |
| 31 | Pacific Islander | "Crime wave" | Robbery /Theft | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 32 | Pacific Islanders | Violence | Aggravated Robbery | Both | Y | Negative |
| 33 | Pacific Islander | Violence | Theft/Robbery | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 34 | Pacific Islander | Violence/Abduction | Attempted Abduction | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 35 | Polynesian | | Sexual Assault | Both | Y | Negative |
| 36 | Polynesian | Violence | Theft/Robbery | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 37 | Polynesian , Tongan | Locating Offender/Breach Bail | | Offender | Y | Negative |
| 38 | Māori or Pacific Islander | | Physical Assault | Victim | | |

| | P | Q | R |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Key word(s)** | **Notable words (excluded from KEY words)** | **Descriptors (of offenders)** |
| 2 | Violent, Fight | Bash | N/A |
| 3 | Gang affiliation, Fighting, Attacked, Assault | | The offender is described as a Māori or Pacific Islander, 1.78m tall. |
| 4 | Assault, Fight, Incident | Altercation | The woman is described as Māori or Pacific Islander, tall and solid. White hoodie with grey jacket over it, blue pants and white shoes. |
| 5 | Vicious, Attacked, Assaulted | Callous, Distraught | He is described as Māori or Pacific Islander. He had short curly hair and was of solid build, with a noticebale double chin. He is 182cm, and had tattoos on his left arm. |
| 6 | Attack, Vicious beating, Attacked, Violence | Antisocial behaviour, Frustration, Volatile | N/A |
| 7 | Domestic Violence, Violence | Hard up "locals", | N/A |
| 8 | Assault, Assaulted, Attack, Domestic Violence, Violence | | "A young Pacific Island man has his case put off until later in the year because he is late for court." |
| 9 | Hit, Attack | | The offender is described as Pacific Islander, 1.7 metres tall, wearing a black hoodie and black trousers. |
| 10 | Vicious attack, Incident | Bloody Animal | He was described as a fat Māori or Pacific Islander, about 193cm (6ft 4in) tall. |
| 11 | Brutal, Attack, Vicious beating, Assault | Unconscious | |
| 12 | Attack/Attacked, Punch, Fight, Hit, | | One slim, 180cm tall' /"the other stockier and slightly shorter' |
| 13 | Violent/Violence, Attacked, Incident | | He was described as Māori or Pacific Islander, 182cm tall and slidily built with a tattoo around his bicep |
| 14 | Attack, Assaulted/Assault, Violated | | Fat or stocky, very short hair, 165cm |
| 15 | Fight, Attacked | Violated | Fat or stocky, very short hair, 165cm |
| 16 | Incident, Assault, Hit | | Police are seeking the identity of the man in the bright yellow t - shirt, described a Pacific Islander. |
| 17 | Assault , Incident, Hit | | N/A |
| 18 | Family Violence, Brutal | | X |
| 19 | Assault, Attacked/Attack | | Described as Māori or Pacific Islander, with thick curly hair |
| 20 | Violence | | N/A |
| 21 | Domestic Violence, Violence | severe violence' | N/A |
| 22 | Assaulted | | Muddy-legged man', 165cm / medium build, scruffy black hair |
| 23 | Brutal, Violent, Fighting | Senseless, Underclass, Killing | N/A |
| 24 | Assaulted | Vicious gossip, Societal gossip, Ridicule | N/A |
| 25 | Assaulted | Hunt | Solid - to - fat Māori or Pacific Islander, with noticeable double chin |
| 26 | Fighting | Ghettoised, 'Underachieving underclass' | N/A |
| 27 | Hit, Assaulted | Accosted | Māori or Pacific Islander, with bushy hair |
| 28 | Attack, Fight, Incident | X | "One was of slim build and was about 180cm tall, and the other was more stocky and slightly shorter." |
| 29 | Assault, Punch, Brutal, Fighting | | N/A |
| 30 | | | |
| 31 | Hit | Brazen | The other man is described as Maori or **Pacific Islander** and is seen in one lot of security footage wearing whitegloves and a black hoodie with white spots on it. |
| 32 | Fight, Attacked, Attackers | Cowardly, Aggravated | Three attackers, whom they described asMaori or **Pacific** Islanders aged in their late teens to 20s. |
| 33 | N/A | N/A | The offender is of Maori or **Pacific Islander** descent, aged about 32. He has a solid build and is about 177cm tall. |
| 34 | N/A | N/A | Described as Maori or**Pacific Islander**, in his late teens to mid- 20s, about 1.78-1.83 (5ft 10in-6ft), medium to solid build, with bushymedium length hair. |
| 35 | Assault /Assaulted, Attack | X | The man, who is described as a short, stocky **Polynesian** about 40-years-old, approached the girl while shewalked along Hobsonville Rd between 12.20pm and 1pm on Tuesday. |
| 36 | N/A | | He is of solid build, about 178cm tall and was wearing distinctive headwear - a winter-style woollen hat with ear covers and tassels hanging down. |
| 37 | Violent | Armed, 'has ties/connections' | One man is described as Maori or **Polynesian**, about 1.83m (6ft), 27-30, and muscular. He wore a dark hoodiewith a circular pattern on the front and grey sleeves. |
| 38 | | | |

| S | T |
|---|---|
| **Age range** | **Location (of crime):** |
| Mid 20s | N/A |
| Teens or early 20s | Auckland (Northshore) |
| 40s | South Auckland |
| 30s - 40s | West Auckland |
| n/a | Wellington (Upper Hutt) |
| n/a | n/a |
| Adolscent | South Auckland |
| N/A | South Auckland |
| 30s | Central Auckland (Remuera) |
| 30 - 40 years old | South Auckland (Manuwera) |
| Late teens to early 20s' | Central Auckland (Three Kings) |
| 29 years old | North Shore |
| 40 years old | West Auckland |
| 40 years old | West Auckland |
| n/a | Auckland CBD |
| 30 years old | n/a |
| n/a | South Auckland |
| Late teens/early 20s | East Auckland |
| N/A | Australia |
| N/A | New Zealand |
| Late 30s | Wellington |
| N/A | n/a |
| 22 years old | New Zealand |
| 30 - 40 years old | West Auckland (Henderson) |
| N/A | Pacific Islands |
| About 20 years old | Central Auckland |
| Late teens/early 20s | West Auckland |
| 14 - 17 years old | New Zealand |
| n/a | New Zealand |
| N/A | East & North Shore Auckland |
| Late teens to early 20s' | Wellington |
| 32 years old | South Auckland (Manukau) |
| Late teens/mid 20s | West Auckland (Grey Lynn) |
| 40 years old | West Auckland |
| 32 years old | Hamilton |
| 27 - 30 years old | South Auckland (Manukau) |
| 30 - 40 years old | |

*Sample 2. Pacific-led Excel spreadsheet*



| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Article ID** | **Source** | **Media Type** | **Date** | **Time Period** | **Article Type** | **Author** | **Headline** | |
| 2 | **PMN - 24/25 #001** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | Dec-25 | 3rd | Police Brief | Christine Rovoi | **Bus victim named as Sefo Leger amidoutpouring of tributes** | *"A nephew from Tonga described Leger as a "gentle giant" and a "lovi* |
| 3 | **PMN - 24/25 #002** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 23-Jun-25 | 3rd | Opinion/Police Brief | RNZ (then re-edited by PMN) | **All Black Caleb Clarke discharged without conviction for dangerous driving** | *"The prosecutor warned that a "role model" l* |
| 4 | **PMN - 24/25 #003** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 28-Mar-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Khalia Strong | **Our people don't forget' Why Pacific and Māori are wary of police in NZ** | *"Research shows Māori and Pacific peopl* |
| 5 | **PMN - 24/25 #004** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 27-Mar-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Khalia Strong | **Concerns rise over sentencing reforms** | *"I'm concerned that if we see more Pacific whānau going into our pris mokopuna and their well-being." "As of March 2024, figu* |
| 6 | **PMN - 24/25 #005** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 23-Jan-25 | 3rd | Police Brief | 'Alakihihifo Vaitala | **Man arrested over crash that killed his children** | *"The crash claimed the lives of his children, a 13-year-old boy an* |
| 7 | **PMN - 24/25 #006** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 23-Oct-24 | 3rd | Police report | NZ Police | **Woman arrested after funeral home probe** | *"The woman was arrested in Favona and has since be* |
| 8 | **PMN - 24/25 #007** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 25-Oct-24 | 3rd | Police report | Christine Rovoi | **Onehunga stabbing: More transport safety officers deployed to deadly bus route** | *"Police say while the alleged attacker was known to them,* |
| 9 | **PMN - 24/25 #008** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 06-Nov-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Christine Rovoi | **'Bring Luisa home': Family's plea after Fijian mother's death in Auckland apartment** | *Thirty-eight-year-old Luisa Qelenisenikau Mate was* |
| 10 | **PMN - 24/25 #009** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 12-Jan-26 | 3rd | Police report/Opinion | Gill Bonnett | **Slavemaster Moeala Tuai to be sentenced** | *ession of his victims' lives and raped one victim, who had been forced to* |
| 11 | **PMN - 24/25 #010** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 10-Jan-26 | 3rd | Police report/Editorial | PMN News | **Police: Man dies after late-night shooting in Manurewa, homicide investigation underway** | *t higher rates of crime and violent offending than some other parts of Au* |
| 12 | **PMN - 24/25 #011** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 08-Jan-26 | 3rd | Opinion/Police Brief | Aui'a Vaimala Leatinu'u | **Two seasonal workers found dead at Bay of Plenty orchard** | *"Police are investigating the deaths of two ni-Vanu* |
| 13 | **PMN - 24/25 #012** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 10-Feb-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Khalia Strong | **Pacific woman's death highlights intimate partner violence crisis** | *"Finau had tried to leave many times during their tumultuous relat* |
| 14 | **PMN - 24/25 #013** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 12-May-25 | 3rd | Opinion/Police Brief | PMN News (editorial) | **Gang members arrested after funeral home arson - police** | *"Police have arrested a patched Mongre* |
| 15 | **PMN - 24/25 #015** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 20-Mar-25 | 3rd | Police Brief | Taelegalolo'u Mary Afemata | **Second Auckland funeral director pleads not guilty in Waikumete Cemetery case** | *"Court documents reveal the cha* |
| 16 | **PMN - 24/25 #016** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 21-Aug-25 | 3rd | Police report/Editorial | Khalia Strong | a | *"Chambers warns that drug cartels are employing increasing* |
| 17 | **PMN - 24/25 #017** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 09-Dec-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Christine Rovoi | **Tonga rugby league officials banned over Katoa concussion incident, NRL says** | *"The investigation has identified a number of serious concerns rega* |
| 18 | **PMN - 24/25 #018** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 23-May-24 | 3rd | Police/Editorial | RNZ Pacific | **Kiwi woman dies in Rarotonga after water-based incident at popular tourist spot** | *"A New Zealand woman* |
| 19 | **PMN - 24/25 #019** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 17-Jul-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Aui'a Vaimala Leatinu'u | **Pacific lawyers call for more representation as justice gaps persist** | *ing its 25-year fight to address the disparities faced by Pacific communit* |
| 20 | **PMN - 24/25 #020** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 07-Jul-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Khalia Strong | **Teen fights for the rights of children whose parents are in prison** | *"Pillars Ka Pou Whakahou, a charity that supports children* |
| 21 | **PMN - 24/25 #021** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 08-Dec-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Khalia Strong | **Abuse survivor urges Pacific families to break the cycle of violence this Christmas season** | *"Police data shows family violence consistently report from Pasefika Proud shows Pacific people are 44 per cent* |
| 22 | **PMN - 24/25 #022** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 20-Nov-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Khalia Strong | **Pacific families urged to speak up: Protecting children from abuse amid challenges** | *"Pacific children in New Zealand are twice as likely as P* |
| 23 | **PMN - 24/25 #023** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 06-Aug-25 | 3rd | Opinion | Aui'a Vaimala Leatinu'u | **Pacific child abuse crisis demands urgent attention, experts warn** | *"Violence against children is still prevalent and widespread in the Paci en.* *Regional Child Protection Situational Analysis - Paci* |
| 24 | **PMN - 24/25 #024** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 18-Oct-24 | 3rd | Opinion | Aui'a Vaimala Leatinu'u | **New law expected to help Pacific family violence victims** | *ific peoples have strong ties to religious beliefs and faith which abocarri* |
| 25 | **PMN - 24/25 #025** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 15-Aug-24 | 3rd | Opinion | Khalia Strong | **Tonga taboo: Research explores cultural factors of intimate partner violence** | *"A 2023 study into intimate partner violence in New Zealand reported* |
| 26 | **PMN - 24/25 #026** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 17-May-24 | 3rd | Opinion | Aui'a Vaimala Leatinu'u | **Is Pacific culture driving family violence? A Pacific prevention programme says it's the solution** | *"A programme that aims to prevent family violence amongst Pacific fan "Additionally, the like maltreatme* |
| 27 | **PMN - 24/25 #027** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 30-Oct-25 | 3rd | Opinion | PMN News | **PMN and Police partner to strengthen Pacific community connection and visibility in NZ** | *"A renewed 20-year partnership between Pacific Media Network and ultimate goal of the partnersh and the Police* |
| 28 | **PMN - 24/25 #028** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 13-Jun-24 | 3rd | Opinion | Aui'a Vaimala Leatinu'u | **After Te Kūiti baby death, NGOs say moreeducation is needed to address NZ's highabuse rates** | *"The boy's father, at the centre of the police investigation, has reported* |
| 29 | **PMN - 24/25 #029** | Pacific Media Network | Pacific - led/Alternative | 07-Nov-25 | 3rd | Police Brief | Christine Rovoi | **Fijian man charged after violent stabbing inSydney's inner city** | *"A 43-year-old Fijian m reports confirm." / "Assistant Superintendent Andr* |

| I | J | K |
|---|---|---|
| **Quotation: (if applicable)** | **Ethnic label** | **Offence Type** |
| *"A nephew from Tonga described Leger as a "gentle giant" and a "loving father" on social media. Friends also remembered him as "humble, big-hearted, and always ready to help anyone in need".* | Tongan | Murder/Stabbing |
| *"The prosecutor warned that a "role model" like Clark getting discharged without conviction could "send the wrong message to the public"* | n/a | Dangerous driving & Fleeing police |
| *"Research shows Māori and Pacific people are more likely to be stopped and searched by police and to experience excessive force."* | Māori/Pacific, Sāmoan, Fijian | n/a |
| *"I'm concerned that if we see more Pacific whānau going into our prisons and being incarcerated under this new Sentencing Act, that that will have, over time, a negative effect on our Pacific mokopuna and their well-being." "As of March 2024, figures show that 11.6 per cent of the prison population identifi es as Pacific while 52.4 per cent are Māori."* | Māori/Pacific | Ram raids/Aggravated robberies |
| *"The crash claimed the lives of his children, a 13-year-old boy and a 10-year-old girl. Bothsustained severe head injuries and were pronounced dead on arrival at Vaiola Hospital."* | Tongan | Reckless driving |
| *"The woman was arrested in Favona and has since been charged with misconduct in respect of human remains and nine counts of obtaining by deception."* | n/a | Misconduct of human remains, 9x obtainin deception |
| *"Police say while the alleged attacker was known to them, the incident was random and there was no altercation before the attack between the man and the victim."* | n/a | Murder/Stabbing , Burglary, Strangulation, Threating to kill |
| *Thirty-eight-year-old Luisa Qelenisenikau Mate was found unresponsive in the complex and her whānau has appealed for help to return her body to Fiji.* | Fijian | Murder, Domestic Violence |
| *ssion of his victims' lives and raped one victim, who had been forced to pay him her wages for four years." / "The jury heard the call Tuai made to Internal Affairs the day after she ran away - and t* | Sāmoan | Sexual Assault |
| *' higher rates of crime and violent offending than some other parts of Auckland..." / "This is a tragic event that will deeply affect the community," she says. "We are working hard to establish the t* | n/a | Murder |
| *"Police are investigating the deaths of two ni-Vanuatu seasonal workers after their bodies were found at a kiwifruit orchard in Pukehina, Bay of Plenty."* | Vanuatu | Assault? |
| *"Finau had tried to leave many times during their tumultuous relationship and told refuge staff she "cannot stop" Latu from contacting her despite police orders and bail conditions."* | Tongan, Pasifika | Murder, Domestic Violence, Pasifika Awareness/Methods, Early Intervention |
| *"Police have arrested a patched Mongrel Mob member in connection with an arson at a Māngere Bridge funeral home last month."* | n/a | Arson (endangering life) |
| *"Court documents reveal the charges stem from $18,370.36 obtained through deception between 2015 and 2023."* | n/a | Deception (2x), Neglecting a legal duty |
| *"Chambers warns that drug cartels are employing increasingly sophisticated methods to target Pacific nations, including the use of submarines to evade law enforcement."* | Pacific | Drug importation |
| *"The investigation has identified a number of serious concerns regarding possible breaches of the NRL Rules and protocols by a number of individuals in the way that Katoa was treated.* | Pacific, Tonga/Tongan | n/a |
| *"A New Zealand woman has died in the Cook Islands while on holiday in a water-based incident."* | Cook Island | n/a |
| *ing its 25-year fight to address the disparities faced by Pacific communities in the criminal justice system."/ "While Pacific people represent nine per cent of the population, they make up 12 per c* | Pacific | n/a |
| *"Pillars Ka Pou Whakahou, a charity that supports children and families of those in prison, estimates that up to 20,000 children in Aotearoa have a parent behind bars."* | n/a | n/a |
| *"Police data shows family violence consistently spikes during the holiday period, and abuseshelters report a higher demand in December." / "A report from Pasefika Proud shows Pacific people are 44 per cent more likely to experience physical or psychological family violence compared to their European counterparts, and Pacific children are 2.5 times more likely to be physically punished."* | Pacific | Domestic Violence / Family Harm |
| *"Pacific children in New Zealand are twice as likely as Pākehā children to be hit at home, andmany families stay silent because of shame and cultural pressure."* | Pacific | Abuse/Domestic Violence |
| *"Violence against children is still prevalent and widespread in the Pacific, as it is in other parts ofthe world," Lazar says. "More investment and attention are needed to address the issue and ensure the children are better protected." / "The STC's Regional Child Protection Situational Analysis - Pacific reveals that violence remains"common and pervasive" in Pacific homes, schools and communities."* | Pacific | Abuse/ Domestic Violence |
| *ific peoples have strong ties to religious beliefs and faith which abocarries a stigmatisation of divorce. What follows is the notion that keeping the family together iskey and that "parents should w* | Pacific | Abuse/ Domestic Violence |
| *"A 2023 study into intimate partner violence in New Zealand reported two out of five Pacific women experience physical, sexual, psychological or economic abuse from a partner throughout their lifetime."* | Tongan, Pacific | Abuse/ Domestic Violence |
| *"A programme that aims to prevent family violence amongst Pacific families through Pacificcultural values has received accreditation from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority(NZQA)." / "Additionally, the likelihood of Pacific children being hospitalised due to assault, neglect, or maltreatment is two times higher than NZ Europeans or other children."* | Pacific | Abuse/ Domestic Violence |
| *"A renewed 20-year partnership between Pacific Media Network and New Zealand Police aimsto boost trust, safety, and communication across Pasifika communities." / "Fanene says the ultimate goal of the partnership is to serve the community, not the institutionsthemselves." / "Mann says PMN and the Police have shared goals of helping Pacific people prosper in Aotearoa."* | Pacific | n/a |
| *"The boy's father, at the centre of the police investigation, has reportedly denied killing his son. Police said the baby suffered "blunt force trauma" and was able to be resuscitated when he was brought to the Te Kūiti Hospital."* | Pacific, Māori, Sāmoan | Abuse / Possible murder? |
| *"A 43-year-old Fijian man has been charged after a violent incident in Sydney's inner city, police reports confirm." / "Assistant Superintendent Andrew Garner told the network that Turaganvili's behaviour was"really violent, completely unacceptable."* | Fijian | Wounding with intent, domestic violence, assault occasioning actual bodily harm, and stalking |

| L | M | N | O |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Theme(s)** | **Victim or Offender narrative: (if applicable)** | **Pacific Offender Identified (Y or N)** | **Language** |
| Community outreach, Grieving | Both (mostly victim) | Yes | Negative/Sad |
| Status/Apperance, Remorse | Offender / Public image | Yes | Netural |
| Over policing, Equality/Racial Profiling, Community Awareness, Indigenous methods | Offender rates/community awareness | Yes (collective) | Netural |
| Sentencing reforms, Disproportionate effects, Youth | Offender | Yes | Netural |
| Grieving, Remorse | Both (mostly offender) | Yes | Netural/Sympathetic |
| Reassurance, Scared/Tapu | Offender | Yes (Māori) | Netural |
| Public safety/Fear, Transport safety | Both | Yes (Kael Leona) | Negative/Sympathetic |
| Family grief, Community support, Domestic violence | Victim | Yes | Sympathetic |
| Slavery | Both (mostly offender) | Yes | Negative |
| | n/a | n/a | Negative |
| | Victim | n/a | Negative |
| Sexual/Domestic violence, Abuse rates in NZ | Both (mostly victim) | Yes (Viliami Latu) | Netural/Sympathetic |
| Gang affiliation, Arson | Offender/Police presence | n/a | Netural (straight forward) |
| Community mistrust | Offender/Police presence | n/a | Netural |
| Community outreach, Law & Order, Pacific regions, Drug rise & Deportation | n/a - Police presence | n/a | Netural |
| Sports player safety, Health/Medical Protocols and Equal treatment | Victim | n/a | Netural/Sympathetic |
| | Victim | | Netural |
| Socio-economic disparities, Pacific lawyers, Workplace discrimination | n/a | n/a | Netural |
| Incarcerated parents, Youth organisations, Promote change | Victim (Youth Awareness) | n/a | Netural |
| Domestic violence, Family harm, Social constraits/barriers, Generational cycle/breakthrough | Both | Yes | Sad |
| Domestic violence, Family harm, Social constraits/barriers, Generational cycle/breakthrough, Intimate Partener Violence | Victim | n/a | Netural |
| Domestic violence, Family harm, Generational cycle/breakthrough, Intimate Partener Violence | Victim | n/a | Netural |
| Abuse, Family/Domestic Violence | Victim (Awareness) | n/a | Netural |
| Abuse, Family/Domestic Violence, IPV | Victim (Awareness) | n/a | Netural |
| Abuse, Family/Domestic Violence, IPV | Victim (Awareness) | n/a | Netural |
| Police partnership, Strengthening community | n/a | n/a | Netural (uplifting) |

| R | S | T |
|---|---|---|
| **Descriptors (of offenders)** | **Age range** | **Location of Crime** |
| n/a | 36 years old | East Auckland (Glen Innes) |
| n/a | 25 years old | West Auckland (Central) |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand |
| n/a | Youth/Adolscent ages | New Zealand |
| Father | 37 years old | Tonga |
| | 48 years old | Auckland |
| considered dangerous' | 37 years old | Central Auckland (Onehunga) |
| | 38 years old | Central Auckland |
| | 63 years old | Auckland |
| | n/a | South Auckland (Manurewa) |
| n/a | 50 years old | Bay of Plenty (North Island) |
| n/a | 31 years old | Auckland (South Auckland) |
| n/a | 30 years old | South Auckland (Mangere) |
| | 53 years old | Auckland (West Auckland) |
| n/a | n/a | Pacific region (Global matter) |
| Medical staff | n/a | Auckland (Central) |
| | n/a | Cook Islands |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand/Pacific region |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand |
| rown says violence often comes from "our tāne,our men, our tamas", and he believes it is possible to break the cycle for the next generatio | n/a | New Zealand/Pacific region |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand/Pacific region |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand/Pacific region |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand/Pacific region |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand (Tongan community) |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand |
| n/a | n/a | New Zealand |
| n/a | 43 year old | Sydney, Australia |