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SPECIAL ISSUE • Creativity and co-production

practice

He Ture Kia Tika/Let the Law Be Right: informing evidence-based policy through kaupapa Māori and co-production of lived experience

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Background: Ninety-one per cent of Aotearoa New Zealand prisoners have been diagnosed with either a mental health or substance use disorder within their lifetime. Challenges exist in how to meet their needs. Diverse pūrākau (stories) of success in whānau ora (wellbeing) and stopping offending are missing from academic and public discourse that should direct law and policy changes.

Aims and objectives: We describe a kaupapa Māori co-production project called *He Ture Kia Tika*/Let the Law be Right. We highlight how kaumātua (Māori indigenous elders), academics, and practitioners merged their voices with people with lived experiences of mental health, addiction, and incarceration to create justice policy and solutions.

Methods: We focus on the theory and application of our co-production, directed by kaupapa Māori methodology. We describe the work of a co-design group that actively guides the project, from inception towards completion, using rangahau kawa (research protocols) as culturally clear guidelines and ethically safe practices. We then detail our processes involved in the collection of co-created pūrākau (storytelling) with 40 whānau (family) participants, and describe our continued collaboration to ensure law and policy recommendations are centred on lived experiences.

Findings: Kaupapa Māori informed co-production ensured rangahau kawa (research protocol and guidelines) were created that gave clear direction for an engagement at all levels of the project. We see this as bringing to life co-production, moving beyond theory to the practicalities of 'being' and 'doing' with each other in safe, ethical ways for all.

Discussions and conclusions: A strong association exists between unmet mental health needs and reoffending. Tackling cultural, health, social and justice issues requires a multi-layered approach from a range of rangatira (leaders including kaumātua/elders) and tohunga, or experts, of their lived experiences to inform future policy and law reform.

Key words lived experience • co-produced • kaupapa Māori • solution-focused

Key messages

- The rationale for the paper draws on the expertise of those with lived experiences to determine how research can be co-designed and co-produced.
- The paper outlines how kaupapa Māori (cultural approach) can direct co-production.
- The co-creation of a research kawa (protocol) provided culturally clear guidelines and safe practices.
- Kaupapa Māori co-production details the creative processes used in co-creating whanau kōrero pūrākau (participant storytelling).

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Introduction

In this paper, we provide a reflexive account of a kaupapa Māori-led co-production project that aims to envisage a criminal justice system that better supports people experiencing mental distress and/or addiction. We begin by providing the background to the project, where we build up a rationale for our research and methodology. Within this process we focus on the distinct cultural context upon which our research practices are based. Our focus is important given that existing approaches have been largely ethnocentric in their origin, which can influence how knowledge is produced, what knowledge is privileged, and even what constitutes participation. As such, adopting the assumptions of these approaches has the potential to perpetuate the colonising effects already experienced by indigenous populations, described further below. While we recognise the important contributions of wider participatory research, those immersed in this kind of research will be able to make their own connections to our processes. Due to word constraints these details are not specifically included in this article. Instead, we focus on the distinct cultural context upon which our research practices are based. Importantly, those immersed in wider participatory research will be able to make their own connections.¹ This background is followed by our narrative of developing and undertaking the project. The paper primarily focuses on our methodology as we are not yet able to foresee research and policy impacts of our findings. In telling our story, we emphasise the power of kōrero pūrākau (storytelling) as a central feature of what makes our methodology creative, legitimate as evidence, and relevant to the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Background

The criminal justice system in Aotearoa

This project is particularly important because of the high incidence of mental health and addiction needs among populations who commit criminal offences in Aotearoa. Mental health disorders are up to five times more prevalent among prisoners than in the general population (Department of Corrections, 2016). One study found 91% of prisoners had been diagnosed with a mental health or substance use disorder within their

lifetime (Indig et al, 2016), with less than half (47%) of this sample receiving treatment. Young people have expressed an explicit relationship between their offending and use of drugs, and this is matched in adulthood with alcohol use and offending (Bowman, 2015). Overall, unmet mental health and addiction needs have been repeatedly reported as clearly maintaining a pipeline towards prison (Bowman, 2015; Gluckman, 2018).

Aotearoa has one of the highest imprisonment rates in The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Approximately 220 people per 100,000 population, compared to OECD average of 147 per 100,000 are imprisoned (Gluckman, 2018). Recently, the Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor reported on the association between rising incarceration rates and a culture of retribution embedded in government policy. For example, Aotearoa has a high prison population despite a record low in crime, conviction and sentencing rates. This means the high incarceration rates are the likely result of successive governments' pull on the 'tough on crime' rhetoric, resulting in costly use of non-evidence-based imprisonment over well-evidenced rehabilitative approaches (Gluckman, 2018; Pratt, 2013).

Gluckman (2018) argued for an evidence-based policy agenda and drew on research to discuss an array of complex vulnerabilities that have impacted those incarcerated and young people at risk of criminal justice outcomes. For example:

- Poverty has been associated with criminal justice outcomes, with research indicating a rise in challenging childhood behaviour in socially deprived communities.
- Abuse in childhood is strongly associated with later violent offending.
- People incarcerated are often victims of violence, subjected to sexual abuse and consequentially have a lifetime diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder and difficulties with managing aggression and anger.
- Lower literacy levels and learning disabilities among adults and youth in justice settings overlay issues.

Studies have explored how rates of incarceration are associated with ongoing processes of colonisation and structural racism. The imprisonment rate for New Zealanders of European heritage is 93 per 100,000 population, compared to Māori at 704 per 100,000 (Skipworth, 2019). At all points of the criminal justice system, rates are disproportionately higher for Māori than for similar offences by non-Māori peers (Quince, 2007), and Māori are more likely to be represented in all vulnerabilities and risk factors. Despite this, Aotearoa has a lack of secure investment in indigenous approaches that support the whole whānau (this can include family, extended family, close connections, and genealogical associations) with their wellbeing needs and connectedness across the lifespan. To address the disproportionate inequities for Māori across various milieu it is important to offer diverse solutions that have a more culturally specific, whānau-centred approach.

A policy shift

In 2018, two government inquiries were announced into the criminal justice and mental health systems. Together, these inquiries indicated:

- A lack of diverse services across a continuum of mental health and addiction care underpinned by dignity, respect, and empathy (Patterson et al, 2018).

- Victims and family/whānau felt unsupported and disempowered in their pathway through the criminal justice system, with consistent themes of victims feeling unheard and re-victimised.
- For those exiting prison, social care needs, such as work and housing, were absent but considered important in assisting successful, prosocial reintegration back into the community.
- Widespread concern was voiced regarding the over-representation of Māori in the criminal justice system, as well as the punitive nature of the system, which neglects prevention, rehabilitation, and reconciliation ([Te Uepū Hāpai i te Ora. Safe and Effective Justice Advisory Group, 2019](#)).
- A co-designed process involving new partnerships was recommended, with a focus on homegrown solutions, where transformation is led by those grossly overrepresented in the criminal justice system ([Solomon and Murray, 2019](#)).

The Government's response was a \$1.9 billion investment in mental health and addictions support in the 2019 budget. Allocations of \$128.3 million for mental health and addictions services for offenders were provided. To date, the specifics of these initiatives have yet to be released.

The current criminal justice reform agenda in Aotearoa is moving towards the use of evidence being embedded in every aspect of criminal justice system transformation. We argue that for this to be realised by the Government, it is imperative that 'evidence' be collected culturally appropriately from the grassroots. This may require meanings of evidence to divert from Westernised ideas of science. Some such work includes actualising co-design with those with lived experience of incarceration to design better systems. The project, *He Ture Kia Tika*, began with the premise that co-production may provide the starting point from which to create positive outcomes.

Co-production in mental health and addictions

Our approach was influenced by existing co-production in mental health. Co-production is premised on the principles of partnership, equal distribution of power, and commitment to building consumer leadership capacity ([Slay and Stephens, 2013](#); [Carr and Patel, 2016](#); [Roper et al, 2018](#)). These principles require a shift in the focus of research from 'doing to' to 'being and doing with' the people relevant to the context of the study ([Kidd and Edwards, 2016](#)). For us, this meant thinking about working in partnership with people who have lived experience of the criminal justice system in the design, implementation, and dissemination of this project.

We also took learnings from co-production in addiction. Best argues that 'recovery doesn't happen within people, it happens between people' ([Best, 2016a; 2016b](#)). This statement recognises that co-production is not just applicable to service users; it includes service providers, government, community groups and the whole spectrum of society, working together to identify gaps and implement solutions. Along with [Best and Lubman \(2012\)](#), we understand recovery as a social movement, whereby visible recovery champions generate a social contagion for hope. Recovery champions are people with a lived experience of recovery who then transmit the possibility of a life in recovery to others through their work or personal lives. Recovery champions are involved in co-production in many ways, but when ex-offenders have made this shift and get involved specifically in research, they bring an important perspective with them that is often missing ([White et al, 2010](#)).

While we found co-production to be a good fit, there are critical factors to consider. Co-production is commonly known to be used in a tokenistic manner, considered an abstract concept, and pays little attention to issues of intersectionality (Humphreys and Grayson, 2008; Roper et al, 2018; Rose and Kalathil, 2019). Writings on co-production can be less clear about the micro detail of how *to do* co-production in a way that is continually attuned to power imbalances and diversity of worldviews (Thom and Burnside, 2018). We were certain that to get the most out of our *He Ture Kia Tika* project, we required deep reflection and discussion about who we are, what we are aiming to do, and how we could do this together, that respects the safety of our co-design group and our participants.

Kaupapa Māori research

Fortunately, co-production shares values with kaupapa Māori research, with related aims to engage participants as experts by experience. Kaupapa Māori research is a distinct and ancient body of knowledge used by indigenous Māori, founded on epistemology, and includes tikanga values and practices as valid and legitimate (Nepe, 1991; Pihama, 2001). Kaupapa Māori research disrupts Pākehā (European) hegemony; it is political, promoting Māori control, autonomy, power, and self-determination, given the colonising impacts of power, privilege, racism, and other social justice issues (Curtis, 2016; Walker et al, 2006). Although kaupapa Māori research endorses ‘by Māori, for Māori and with Māori’, this does not mean it rejects Pākehā knowledge or participation. Instead, kaupapa Māori research provides a platform to challenge, question and critique who controls and benefits from that knowledge (Smith, 1999; Pihama et al, 2002; Mahuika, 2008). At its core, kaupapa Māori research aims to produce positive outcomes for all Māori beyond those who simply take part in the research (Walker et al, 2006; Mahuika, 2008).

Kaupapa Māori research provides a framework to challenge the dominance of Westernised ways of doing research and repositioning elements of power and control (Pihama et al, 2004). It is an approach we see as valuable principles to guide co-produced research and explicitly embrace our need to undertake intersectional research. Although critics may argue that kaupapa Māori research may totalise narratives and fail to show the intersectionality of different truths (Mahuika, 2008), we were cognisant of honouring the diversity of voices in co-designing this research with our partners. We drew on the values embedded in both co-production and kaupapa Māori research methodologies to create a research partnership among the co-production rōpū (group) to enable all to engage in the research process (Bishop, 1996; Smith, 1999).

Developing our methodology

In what follows, we detail our story of collaborating deliberately to promote an indigenous led co-production methodology. The story starts with our spark of an idea for a project, followed by our journey towards seeking funding and starting to get to know each other as a co-production rōpū (group). We then describe the work of a co-design group in developing our research design and rangahau kawa (research protocol) for culturally clear guidelines and ethically safe practices. Finally, we detail how this same kawa was extended to our co-created pūrākau (stories) with 40 whānau (family) participants.

Along the way there are props used to help tell the story, these include:

- our reflections in speech bubbles;
- breakout boxes to highlight culturally significant practices;
- our 'meeting minutes' that provide further insights into our hui topa (zoom meetings);
- Kawa summary on the mechanics of our methodology.

Four members of our co-production rōpū wrote this paper – Katey Thom, Stella Black, David Burnside, Jessica Hastings – each bringing diverse lived experiences which are reflected with different speech bubbles. The bubble suffixed with (KT) is Katey Thom, who identifies as Pākehā (non-Māori) wāhine (female); (SB) is Stella Black, a wāhine of Māori (Ngāi Tūhoe) descent; (DB) is David Burnside, a tane (male) and (JH) is Jessica Hastings, a wāhine, both have experiences of incarceration and identify as Pākehā. We all have varying personal and work-based experiences of mental distress and addiction. Wider rōpū are also referred to, including Shane White (Ngāti Tara Tawhaki Tokonui, Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāti Raukawa), Elaine Ngamu (Ngāti Porou), Brian McKenna (Pākehā), Jeremy Tumoana (Ngā Ariki Kaiputahi, Te Aitanga a Mahaki, Ngāti Porou and Tūhoe), Tracey Cannon (Pākehā), Debra Lampshire (Pākehā), Martin Burke (Pākehā and Ngāpuhi), Warren Brookbanks (Pākehā), Rob Tua (Ngāpuhi, Te Atiawa), Jason Haitana (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi), Daniel Exeter (Pākehā), Thomas White (Samoan and British), Shelley Turner (Ngāti Rāhiri Tumutumu), and Khylee Quince (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou), all representing diverse ethnicities and experiences of incarceration, mental distress, and addiction.

The beginnings of He Ture Kia Tika

Figure 1: Speech bubble reflection box 1

Feeling slightly disillusioned after attending yet another conference with little reference to the need to have lived experience at the centre of research so that policy decisions respond directly to people's needs. I'm tired of this. I share my thoughts with DB as we sit at the airport awaiting our flight home. My spirits are lifted when he shares my concerns have been there – he knows first-hand the harms of our criminal justice system. Could we be bold enough to create a project with others that directs policy and law reform directions founded on lived realities of incarceration? My brain starts to spark as I make connections to an upcoming funding round from a new legal research charity... the deadline is in a week, could we craft a proposal together? The energy between us gives me the confidence to just do it! (KT)

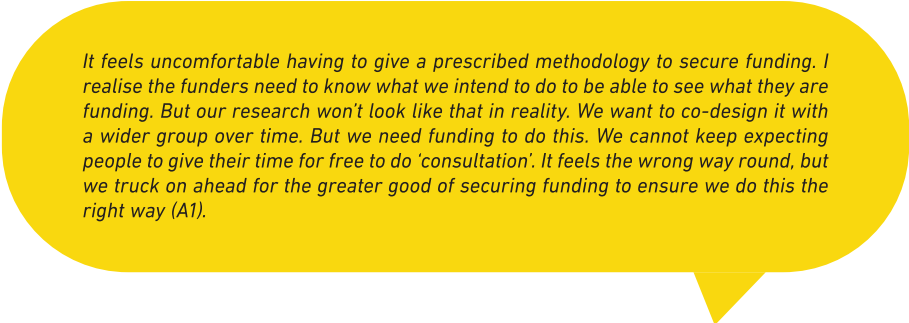
To tell our story, we go back to where initial ideas were first sparked. KT, SB and DB had worked together on many research projects. As we started to disseminate our work at conferences, we found that explaining cultural concepts or lived experience roles, such as peer support, often took more time than we were allotted. Additionally, lived experience, it seemed, only mattered in specific events dedicated to this purpose. Our growing sense of dissatisfaction with the lack of research at the intersection where mental distress, addiction, and criminal justice systems meet, garnered our energy towards a new

research proposal. At the time, Aotearoa was undergoing many aforementioned inquiries directly focused on transforming our criminal justice and mental health systems. We wondered, could we shape the future of these systems from evidence centred on the stories from people who experienced them? We knew nothing was going to change if systems were not led from those closest to the problems they are trying to resolve.

Securing funding

Fortunately, a new charity – The Michael and Suzanna Borrin Foundation – had been established as we were developing our ideas. In a curious process, we were asked to submit a funding application and were then shortlisted to present at an open forum with other applicants before a panel of reviewers. Although we broadly knew what we wanted to research, getting down to the specifics contravened our hopes to work in a co-production way. We needed to ‘pitch’ the project, selling it with tight research questions, aims and deliverables.

Figure 2: Speech bubble reflection box 2



It feels uncomfortable having to give a prescribed methodology to secure funding. I realise the funders need to know what we intend to do to be able to see what they are funding. But our research won't look like that in reality. We want to co-design it with a wider group over time. But we need funding to do this. We cannot keep expecting people to give their time for free to do 'consultation'. It feels the wrong way round, but we truck on ahead for the greater good of securing funding to ensure we do this the right way (A1).

In the end, we named this problem and spoke to the tentative design that we saw as fluid and ripe for transformation once we got the funding to get our co-production rōpū (collective) together. We had five minutes to describe this large-scale project. It was here that creativity became our friend. Instead of multiple PowerPoint slides that we would not get through in time, we presented a poster that represented the project (Figure 3). This removed the academic nature of our proposal and shone a light immediately on our kaupapa (purpose) for the panel. It worked! We were funded for a three-year project, embedded with paid researchers and consultant roles for people with lived experience. The next step was consulting with our community.

Consulting with our community

In late 2018, we brought our newly formed co-production rōpū together and offered the space to get to know each other and share our stories. We wanted to start our community engagement off on a solid footing. With this, our first hui took place on marae (courtyard) and included pōwhiri (Māori welcoming ceremony) and whakawhanaungatanga (a process of introductions and making connections). After the formalities of the pōwhiri concluded, we shared in kai (food) before returning to the comfort of the wharehau (meeting house).

Figure 3: The pitch poster

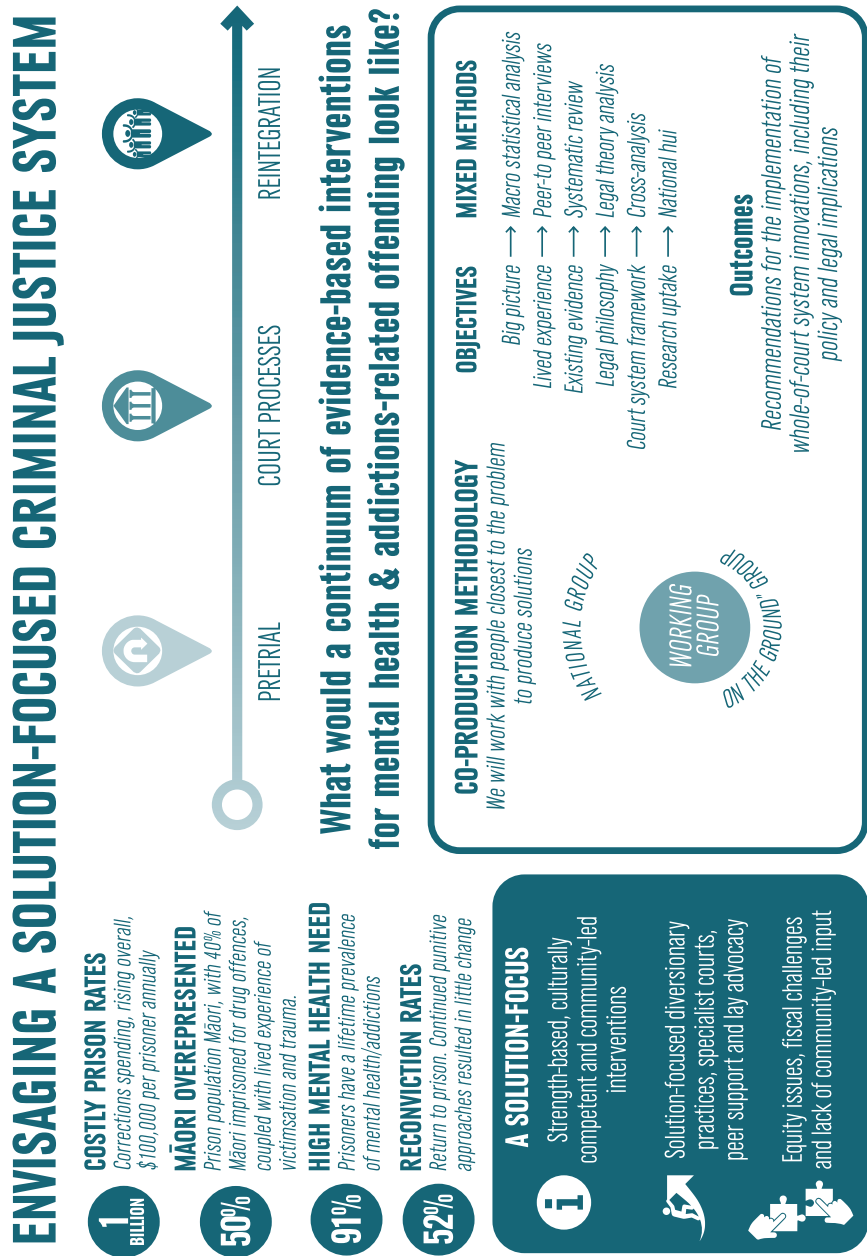


Figure 4: Speech bubble reflection box 3

KT, SB and DB had a good working relationship with the whānau at Hoani Waititi marae, so when I approached Shane about being involved in this kaupapa it was no surprise that he was supportive. Nā te timata (From the start) I knew we were bringing a diverse group of Māori and non-Māori experts together and that the whānau this rangahau (research) is about predominantly are Māori. We needed kaumātua support and guidance, in a very real way. So, having our first hui at the marae, with a pōwhiri practically modelled what kaupapa Māori is. We had we entered into Ngā Tūmanako, we were respectful, and I knew we were all safe. I was so proud of JT for stepping into the role of kaikorero (male speaker) and DB for leading our waiata tautoko (song). It was an honour to have the esteemed marae kaumātua in attendance, they offered some personal accounts of the mahi they been involved in to do with our kaupapa. I was very impressed that everyone shared their pepeha most did so in te reo Māori. The hui went well, I knew it would, we had allowed lots of time for the processes of whanaungatanga, kotahitanga and to whakamana (building relationships, becoming connected, united, and empowering) each other. Although, we still didn't know what or how we were going to do our research, I was heartened by the depth of sharing and the supportive words of Tā Pita. Going forward, I knew that letting our approach be guided by kaupapa Māori meant we would have to trust in the process! (SB)

The remainder of the hui included presentations of the pitch to the funder (KT, SB and Daniel Exeter) using the poster (Figure 3) and toy blocks as visual aids to describe what we could do with statistical data. Much of the discussion revolved around the co-production rōpū members sharing their personal experiences within the criminal justice and health systems. This was an important layer of building our connections and something we needed to dedicate time to share what stake we each had in this kaupapa. Our discussions strengthened the development of our research design and research guidelines, not only within our co-production rōpū but how we would engage with whānau participants later. A date was made to meet again, and we explicitly acknowledged the multiple demands on our co-production rōpū, stating we wanted to allow people to come and go and give to the project on their terms. Figure 6 represents our first hui.

Figure 5: Breakout box 1

Marae are culturally significant meeting locales. Meeting here promoted the use of marae kawa through our observance of pōwhiri (ceremonial welcome) rituals, te reo Māori and tikanga Māori values and practices before discussing the rangahau kaupapa (research purpose). Our hui on the marae commenced with the pōwhiri (welcome ceremony), which set the scene for a culturally appropriate meeting. This process included whakawhanaungatanga or connecting and building relationships with each other through introducing ourselves with mihi (greetings) and pepeha (formulaic way of saying who I am by outlining the waters, landscapes, or people a person comes from). The hui was led by SW and also in attendance were nationally respected kaumātua. In this space, we are offered a safe space where power can be considered redistributed. We become connected, like whānau, respecting each voice as important as another.

Figure 6: Hui poster 1



Figure 7: Breakout box 2

A crucial part of decolonising research practices and ensuring it is culturally appropriate for localised Māori includes engaging in meaningful consultation with mana whenua. Mana whenua are those who have historic and territorial rights within specific areas and is why we sought to consult and obtain approval from rangatira from Ngāti Whātua, the local iwi of Tamaki Makaurau (Auckland).

Guided by kaumatua on our co-production rōpū, we were conscious that we required support from mana whenua (indigenous peoples with historic rights over the land). Members of the research team (KT, SB, DB and Khylee Quince) met with Dame Naida Glavish, a Rangatira (a Māori person of rank or authority) of Ngāti Whātua (local iwi (tribe) to our research). Dame Naida is known for her passion for this research context, and meeting with her was crucial for doing justice to our kaupapa Māori research methodology. The hui resulted in Dame Naida gifting our research a taonga (treasure) in the form of the project name: *He Ture Kia Tika* /Let the Law be Right. Khylee Quince describes how the title was appropriate, explaining ‘kia’ is a verb indicating ongoing action, desire, or effect to let the law be right. Having obtained support, we provided assurances that we would keep Dame Naida informed of the project progression and felt mandated to keep going with the project.

Building our research design

Figure 8: Speech bubble reflection box 4

I get so much energy after these hui. I now recognise it is because the way we work together to build our kaupapa, feels right. We have been taught throughout our academic life to often work alone in a removed state of being, not using our own experiences to guide research, or necessarily collaborating with others. That is just a reflection of westernised research – independent, investigator-driven, and at a distance from the people impacted by the research. Our process now on the marae feels safe because we all have moments of vulnerability in showing ourselves to others, but we connect deeply in doing this and know we want our research to mirror these liberating feelings we are experiencing through sharing and caring like we are whānau. The research feels like it is developing a strong foundation because it builds reflecting experiences closest to the reality of the problem we are tackling (KT)

Our next hui can be represented in [Figure 11](#). Shane White started with karakia (prayer) and mihi (Māori greeting). After whakawhanaungatanga and a project update, the co-production rōpū were invited to discuss what the research should examine. Overwhelmingly, the co-production rōpū wanted us to centre our research on lived experiences of incarceration. We would aim to collect stories of self-defined success

co-created with research participants. Our group thought stories should focus on turning points in life in recovery and free of offending. This may unravel many barriers to people being what they wanted to be, but also allow for stories of whānau ora (wellness and connection), restoration and redemption. In turn, the stories might shatter stereotypical views of offenders and shine a light on the varying reasons behind criminality, including significant trauma, thereby building empathy and connection to offenders' lives from the public.

Figure 9: Breakout box 3

Our co-production rōpū collaborations were directed by tikanga, which meant we included rituals such as karakia (prayer), mihi (greeting), whakawhangatanga (connecting) and shared kai at each hui. Karakia, sharing of kai, and on occasion, the use of water is tikanga practices based on a complex Te Ao Māori (paradigm) system of control and management of interactions that lifts tapu (sacred, prohibited and prohibited activities) and makes it noa (ordinary or safe). The whanaungatanga process unites and connects peoples; each has obligations and responsibilities, including demonstrating manaakitanga (to care, be generous and hospitable). Later, after we had designed the research, we extended this approach to all our participants, thereby becoming connected as whānau. In this way, tikanga guides everything we do as a starting point before we get to the practicalities of doing the research work.

We took guidance about how our shift in focus should be done, firstly by changing the labels we used, for example, switching from 'offender' to 'whānau'. A simple shift in language created a different set of responsibilities that we already offered to each other – we would work with our participants in a way that we were all whānau.

Development of the final research design took place over several months outside hui. By the next hui in 2019 (see [Figure 12](#)), the core team presented the research design.

SB shared the 'guidelines for cultural engagement and safety' (see [Table 1](#)), a two-page guideline informed by the literature ([Pere, 1988](#); [Cram and Pipi, 2000](#); [Pipi et al, 2004](#); [Hudson et al, 2010](#); [Eketone, 2012](#); [Simmonds, 2015](#)), but also drew on SB's extensive research experience using tikanga Māori values and practices. We were now ready to collect the stories.

Figure 10: Speech bubble reflection box 5

I had started to feel an incredible sense of empowerment through the process by this stage. My lived experience of mental health distress, addiction and incarceration was being valued for what it was. It wasn't something that you could buy or study. I lived it, I lived through it, and I carry it with me today as a powerful story of resilience and of hope. The voices and guidance of Māori wrapped around me like a korowai (cloak) of safety and support. We were all as one, academics, those with lived experience, whanau Māori, working together to get the real stories of hope and transformation and to use those to bring change (DB)

Figure 11: Hui poster 2

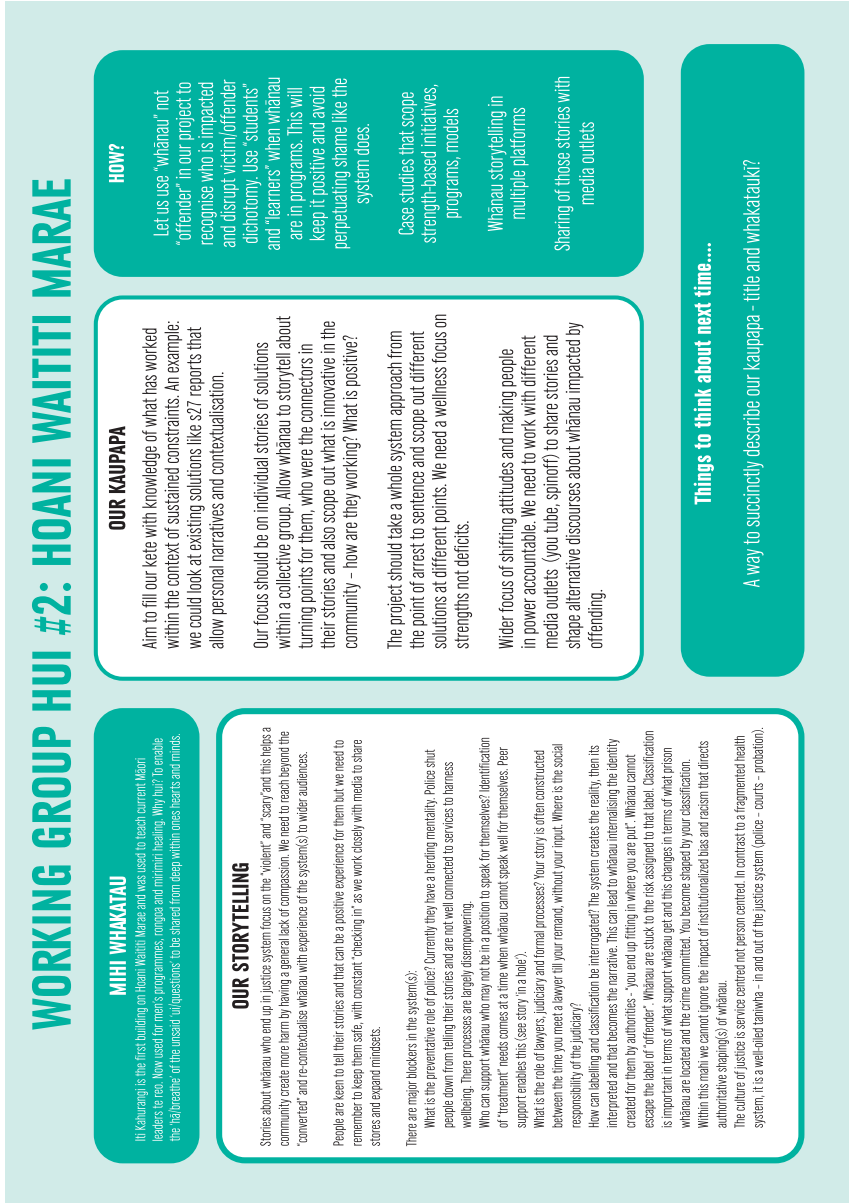
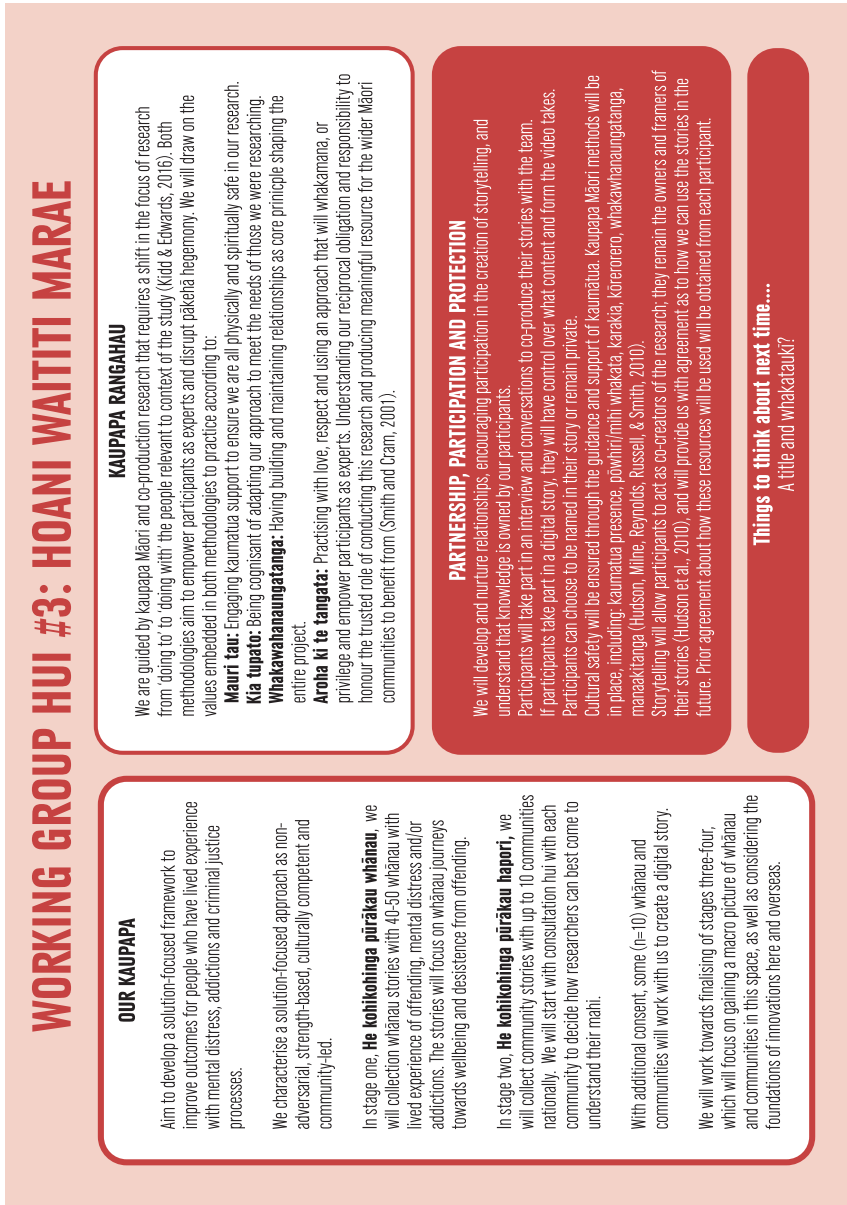


Figure 12: Hui poster 3



Collecting stories

Our core team of four (the authors) managed the collection of stories. Recruitment of whānau occurred in two ways, either via the networks among our co-production rūpū or via our website (heturekiatika.com). Most whānau were contacted by SB to ensure they met our criteria, understood what was involved, and to answer any queries they had. Options were provided for someone with lived experience or certain gender and/or ethnicity to conduct their interview. Where possible, interviews were conducted by two interviewers where one person with lived experience was present. Having two interviewers present aided in our interpretations of the pūrākau, for example, from a te ao Māori (Māori worldview), gender, or lived experience point of view.

Figure 13: Speech bubble reflection box 6

Many of the participants warmed up and began to open up more fully after we introduced ourselves, particularly if they related to something such as one of the researcher's places of birth or lived experiences of incarceration. Often there were heavy issues spoken about, sometimes we cried together, sometimes we laughed together but the spirit of unity and Te ao Māori was always there. Another benefit of coming from a kaupapa Māori framework is the importance of whānau. By this I mean the core team, wider rūpū and participants were all treated like family, and we have been able to see all our words and insights as a valuable collaboration of ideas for bringing more justice into the justice system (JH).

Each interview began with a mihi (greeting) and whakawhanaungatanga of sharing pepeha (who we are). Kai (food) was shared, and we gifted our whānau a food voucher.

Figure 14: Speech bubble reflection box 7

For me as an interviewer with lived experience, it seemed natural to be part of the interview, to at times, share some of my own experiences to validate and connect to whanau as they told their story. I liked using an unstructured approach which allowed for whanau to lead the process themselves, honouring their story, their feelings, and our methodology. The use of a Kaupapa Māori approach gave a sense of safety and also compassion, rather than the sometimes-brutal questioning of traditional research. It allowed us to build a relationship, to find common ground and for whanau to disclose what they were comfortable with, recognising the sensitive nature of the research (DB)

As the collaborative pūrākau process is iterative, we highlighted that we would come back to them in a staged consent process. Consent was fluid in this sense. For example, some whānau were clear they wanted to be named in their story, others chose pseudonyms and then some chose to de-identify when they saw the first draft

of their story. All whānau were assured that our first collaboration on their story was *their* copy. Co-creation of stories fit for public consumption would take place when we were ready; the power to decide was in the control of whānau. The recorder was then turned on and whānau were asked to tell us about their journey. The focus was on telling their story in the way whānau wanted to. Interviews ranged in time from 24 minutes to 3 hours and 7 minutes. After a closing karakia, the whānau were given a general timeline (4–6 weeks) in which the first draft of their pūrākau would be returned.

We always then did a welfare check the next day. We found whānau had varying reactions to the pūrākau process. While some had shared their story many times, others had not thought about their past in a long time, and this triggered some sadness. For others, it was therapeutic to recount their past and see how far they had come. It was important for us to care for our participants as if they were whānau; having DB and JH there with lived experience strengthened our ability to support anyone who felt impacted by telling their story. Our whānau approach also meant taking care of each other. We regularly had hui for peer debriefing. Being able to talk through poignant moments in whānau stories that were tragic, sad, or unjust enabled us to offload the vicarious trauma we were exposed to.

Crafting the pūrākau

The shape of the stories was often guided by our whānau and how they told their story to us. We often started out listening to recordings and loosely transcribing verbatim, and then started to join up the narrative, usually in chronological order. Just as in our hui and interviews, we started describing, ko wai au? Who are you and where are you from? From there, the shape continued from childhood to adulthood experiences. The weight of honouring whānau voices, staying close to their words and ensuring we correctly conveyed the intent of those words was a heavy burden we carried. This meant we did not see ‘distress’, ‘addiction’, ‘criminality’, or ‘recovery’ in predefined ways, it was open to our whānau to self-define what these terms may mean to them and how they featured in their lives. Our processes were bolstered by the ability to go back to whānau with our first draft.

Figure 15: Breakout box 4

To stay true to tikanga within our story writing process we had to be careful not to appropriate the process and principles of a Kaupapa Māori methodology. This is seen in many examples of contemporary academic writing where non-Māori or Māori centric researchers claim alignment with tikanga but a western bias overshadows the true intent in the writing. Walker, Eketone and Gibbs (2006) state that when using Kaupapa Māori as a methodological strategy, the intended outcome is to benefit Māori. This created a unique opportunity for us as researchers to produce culturally appropriate pūrākau that would stand scrutiny from Māori.

The reality set in for some of our whānau participants when they read their written story. For example, when one person read their story in black and white, they were triggered by those memories. In that case, a lengthy process of de-identifying their details was made. This period required skills of negotiation based on trust and respect

without expectations, reaffirming our whānau focused approach. Throughout our research we have endeavoured to make it clear that whānau are free to withdraw at any stage from the research; again, the power was in their hands to direct our next steps.

Figure 16: Speech bubble reflection box 8

The story writing process has been unique, unifying, and collective. Each story is edited with each of our core team's creative and academic input. Lived experience also factors in and together we can unpack people's pūrākau and give them a voice that is edited from all different aspects of life to bring together their individual stories. Allowing them to check the story and give informed consent multiple times also allows the participants the respect of choice they deserve; we are never sensationalising or abusing the gift we have been given, there is a kindness and deep care in our methodology, which is intended to make everyone feel safe and free to communicate honestly (JH).

Once whānau were happy with their draft, we moved into the creative stage of mocking up their story ready for print. Our rōpū worked closely with each participant to create a pūrākau they can treasure, with each story full of photos and memories that led them to where they are today. A final step in our process included gifting back pūrākau to our whānau participants to keep. The pūrākau is gifted back to participants in a carefully designed report printed and digitally on USB, both encased in a beautiful kōwhaiwhai patterned harakeke folder. This step was an integral aspect of our reciprocal responsibilities to participants as whānau.

Figure 17: Speech bubble reflection box 9

The gifting of our participants' stories is an essential part of our mahi (work) because we truly treasure their kōrero and see it as a taonga that we treat with gratitude and respect. Gifting the final version of one story of our whanau recently was an awesome experience, to see her face light up and for her to physically see and hold her precious story in a hard copy was really cool. Both of us have a passion for justice reform and this brings us even closer together as sisters on a journey of change. For many whanau members, they had never seen their story in the form it was given, and it was a heart-warming experience to see the joy in their faces when they received their pūrākau. It almost felt as though no one had really listened or treated their story as a taonga before and this is something I loved about the work we do. We helped people see their amazing journey all at once (JH).

Discussion

Our methodology, steeped in the ancient tradition of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge), contributes new learnings for co-production research by rising to the

challenges already voiced in the literature (Humphreys and Grayson, 2008; Rose, 2019; Roper, 2021).

Kaupapa Māori led co-production can lead to the actualisation of a 'third space'. This occurs because we shifted in worldview, sitting outside the Eurocentric way of doing research. We actively resisted privileging Westernised ideas of individualism, neutrality, and certain ways of knowing and being. Instead, we deliberately chose a Māori worldview to lead our research, disrupting white privilege and prioritising the voices of those often marginalised. However, we did this in a way that was respectful to diverse voices, with our kawa bridging Māori and Pākehā spaces.

A central mechanism to help with this shift in worldview was seeing our core team, co-production rōpū and participants as whānau, shifting the way we related to each other. As such, we created a safe space where we listened, validated experiences, and cared for one another. A whānau approach does not equate to paternalism. It allows for voice and protection in a reflexive, mutually beneficial and evolving negotiation of consent. Having a safe space that incorporates tikanga rituals allowed us and whānau to speak our truth, which enabled an acceptance that 'there are times when knowledges simply collide' (Rose and Kalathil, 2019: 8). We sat with the associated uncomfortableness. Whanaungatanga (kinship) is integral; building relationships, relating well to others, and collaborating with the community and whānau during research is a source of strength, not invalidation. The core principles for practice that have emerged from years of kaupapa Māori research guide researchers' ability to build and maintain good relationships. This includes making time to gather advice on a research question and methodological design, ensuring this consultation is face-to-face, laying bare who you are, moving through your research with participants with caution, and most of all working with people while showing respect. One could argue that a Westernised approach to research that conceptualises the researchers as 'detached', 'neutral' and 'objective' is counterintuitive and perhaps even counterproductive in the context of this research area.

Our safe space was bolstered by ensuring an intersectional team and design. Our co-production is a grassroots endeavour; members of our co-production team live and breathe te Ao Māori and work and/or have experienced incarceration and community based mental health and addiction support. Our positionality came from a place of social justice for those people in our communities often viewed as falling into the 'too hard basket'. We were united in rejecting this basket and replacing it with a diverse array of kete (baskets) filled with localised mātauranga (knowledge) and solutions to improve wellbeing and reduce reoffending. We recognised the true value of lived experience as not something measured by a qualification, professionalisation, or quantified space of objective knowledge that met standards exclusive of others. Instead, we allowed space for experiential and indigenous wisdom, free from the constraints of judgement. Importantly, those without lived experience on our co-production rōpū were willing to take the back seat and trust the process. They recognised what it means to be an ally; to be self-reflexive and open to challenges; to recognise the rangatira voices of those with intersectional experiences of race, gender, sexuality, mental distress, addiction, and criminal justice.

Ultimately, our methodology requires acknowledging as researchers that we are reliant on whānau participants, and need to understand our reciprocal responsibility to honour our part in producing meaningful outcomes for whānau and the community. Gifting pūrākau to whānau was a small measure that led to a sometimes-big positive impact in the lives of whānau. We also recognise our responsibility for this co-production research to become political and demand transformative change.

Conclusion

A strong association exists between unmet mental health and addiction needs, criminal offending, and reoffending. Compounding these needs are the impacts of the continued colonisation of Māori, the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand. The criminal justice system, with its strong Westminster roots, significantly contributes to intergenerational traumatic experiences by Māori of both victimisation and

Table 1: Te Ara Tohu

| Tikanga/Principle | Rationale | Putting things into practice |
|--|---|---|
| Whakapapa (origin) | Focuses on how the research began and is being developed. Nā wai? Whose research is this and why? | – Be clear with the kaupapa/purpose of the research |
| | | – Who developed it? |
| | | – What is the purpose? |
| | | – Who will the research benefit? |
| | | – What does the outcome look like? |
| Rangatira ki te rangatira (chief to chief) | Ensure those with mana (status) are engaging. Kei te hui tatau me wai? Who are we meeting with? | – Ensure the right people, rangatira (leaders, experts) or researchers are involved for the right hui or interviews |
| Nā te timata (from the start) | Early engagement | – Involve Māori from the start, be present throughout the whole hui including kai |
| | | – Be prepared for the long-haul |
| | | – Plan hui early to enable full participation |
| | | – Invite participation and determine how they want to be involved, for example, hui, email, or newsletter updates |
| | | – determine if they have an MOU or informal process, they want us to work under |
| | | – how will you continue this long-term relationship? |
| Whakamana (empower) | Consistently monitor and improve engagement to empower | – Acknowledge and enhance the mana (status) of research participants |
| | | – Act in accordance with the mana of the research team |
| | | – Acknowledge the tinorangatiranga (self-determinatoin) of Māori to decline to be involved in this research |
| Whakatika (accountability in terms of correcting the wrongs) | Kia tūpato (use caution), review and correct processes | – Be accountable and take responsibility |
| | | – Listen and act on feedback |
| | | – Engage in ongoing kōrero (dialogue) |
| | | – Feedback on how issue resolved |

(Continued)

Table 1: (Continued)

| Tikanga/Principle | Rationale | Putting things into practice |
|--|---|--|
| Kotahitanga (unity) | Create a safe place for the diversity of perspectives within a common goal | – Facilitate the sharing of different views with respect |
| | | – Encourage full participation |
| | | – Be prepared for consideration of a Māori holistic worldview |
| Tikanga Māori (correct Māori ways of doing things) Culturally correct processes in working with Māori in considering the nature, shape and design of the project including Māori participation, analysis, and dissemination of results (Simmonds, 2015). | Guided by kaumātua and Māori researchers, it uses processes that use culturally correct processes in working with Māori. The research aims to improve Māori outcomes, and contributes to equity and Māori health development. | – Recognise, respect, and use tikanga Māori values and practices |
| | | – If in doubt seek guidance cultural advice |
| Active whakawhanaungatanga (relationship building and development) (Bishop, 1996) | Build rapport, trust and ongoing relationships | – Identify who should be approached? For example, individuals, whānau, iwi, hapū, kahui kaumātua ropu, individuals (for example, rangatira (leaders), marae kaumātua, and so on) |
| | | – use a process to build trust and rapport, for example, via key link/connector |
| Kanohi kitea (face that is seen) (Cram and Pipi, 2000; Pipi et al, 2004) | Cultural preference to meet in person, share pepeha and stories to build rapport and trust | – Meet in person (be prepared for pōwhiri or mihi whakatau). |
| | | – What support will be needed? (for example, te reo speakers, whaikōrero, and so on) |
| | | – Determine ongoing communication via email, or zoom meetings can take place |
| Whakapono (honest, open, ko te tūmanako (transparent)) | Work with integrity and in good faith | Open honesty in seeking perspectives and feedback Be clear and transparent in all communications |
| Ki tai wiwi, ki tai waeawaea (be flexible) | Work with each organisation processes and structures Plan, to adapt to issues | – ongoing consultation, at different levels |
| | | – seek input on the details, for example, when, where, what, how and who's involved |
| Ko te hanga raukaha (build capacity) | Contribute to enhancing Māori capacity and capabilities | – Do Māori communities have the capacity to participate? |
| | | – Participation should not cause financial burden for example, catering, venue use |
| Manaakitanga (caring and sharing), aroha (love) | Reciprocal giving and sharing means being prepared | – Preparation is key, to share our stories, experiences, info, ideas, and whakapapa |
| | | – Don't be afraid to kōrero Māori, share your pepeha, know a waiata |

(Continued)

Table 1: (Continued)

| Tikanga/Principle | Rationale | Putting things into practice |
|--|---|---|
| | | – Observe karakia and other customs for cultural safety |
| | | – Kai and other ways of giving koha as reciprocal giving and sharing |
| | | – Provide advice (where qualified) and/or make appropriate referrals as an obligation of caring |
| Mahaki (humble) | Be humble but willing to share | – Provide advice (where qualified) and/or make appropriate referrals as an obligation of caring |
| | | – If in doubt seek guidance cultural advice or otherwise |
| | | – be willing to share your knowledge with humility |
| Ko wai kei te honohono, kei te tuitui i a tātou? (who is the key link or connector?) | Key link or connectors are members of the team? | – How, what is needed? |
| Tikanga haumarū (safety procedures) and cultural supervision (Pere, 1988; Eketone, 2012) | Māori rules, methods, approaches, customs, habits, rights, authority and control (Pere, 1988) | – Kaumatua guidance and the incorporation of tikanga based practices and values will be implemented. |
| | | – Utilise KM approaches to deal with sensitive material: a pōhiri (welcome ceremony) or mihi whakatau (less formal welcome) are like the rules of engagement; these can be reflected wherever a meeting or interview takes place. |
| | | – KMR is underpinned by manaakitanga (caring), whanaungatanga (sharing), karakia (spiritual). |
| | | – Interviews will be conducted in pairs and checking in with KT before and after interviews. |
| | | – In rare cases of serious escalation, use of de-escalation techniques from Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training, at that instance by Dave, followed by referrals to our list of providers for support. |
| | | – SB, DB, and others involved in data collection to complete the peer debriefing within a week of the interview being conducted. If any issues arise, support can be sought from Katey or matua Ken. |
| | | – Cultural supervision will take place regularly or as required by the kaumatua. |

Guidelines for consultation and engagement with Māori including individuals, whānau, hapū, iwi and services, NGOs, rūnanga, and Māori communities.

(re)offending. Law and policy changes are rarely formed with the input of Māori and non-Māori who have lived experiences of the criminal justice system. The project, *He Ture Kia Tika*, is built on the premise that we need to listen to people at the heart of the problems to which we are seeking solutions; in this case, people who have experienced incarceration, addiction and/mental distress. This paper has detailed our creation of a kaupapa Māori co-production methodology that can help us realise these solutions.

Note

¹ Also see special issue covering editorial for more context.

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Research ethics statement

This project was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Human Participants Ethics Committee on 14 May 2019 (Reference number 19/105 and 19/106).

Contributor statement

KT and SB wrote the first and subsequent drafts of the manuscript, with additional comments and reflections from DB and JH. KT, SB, DB and JH, as well as the kaumatua and wider rōpū listed conceptualised and designed the study. SB, DB and JH collected data, while all were involved in the creation of pūrākau to gift back to whānau.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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