ORIGINAL ARTICLE
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Āpiti hono, tātai hono: Collaborative bicultural social work practice—A selection of findings

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Bicultural practice in Aotearoa, New Zealand is an integral aspect of social work. However, there can be a lack of understanding and engagement in some spaces. Collaborative bicultural practice could encourage a more active engagement by creating a reciprocal Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership between Māori and non-Māori. This research focussed on how bicultural partnership can create a more dynamic and effective approach to practice that privileges Te Ao Māori to benefit whaiora of any ethnicity.

METHODS: The research design was grounded in social constructionist theory and used a decolonising, Te Tiriti o Waitangi lens. Data were collected from semi-structured interviews with four registered social workers. An integrated, narrative approach to analysis allowed for multiple narrative levels to be considered. For a detailed exploration of the methodological design please see the companion article in this issue "Āpiti hono, tātai hono. A collaborative bicultural social work research approach" (Deverick & Mooney, 2023).

FINDINGS: The findings of this research followed the narrative of diverse personal journeys, and illustrated that wider social, historical and political contexts are inseparable from practice.

CONCLUSIONS: Recommendations show a need for more commitment from the public sphere to bridge the gap between policy and practice; more research is required to establish this approach as a successful partnership model; a clear need for the support of agency and government policy; and social workers need to have more courageous conversations for bicultural partnerships to succeed and flourish.

Keywords: Collaborative bicultural practice; social work; Te Tiriti o Waitangi; narrative

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Bicultural practice in Aotearoa New Zealand is an integral aspect of social work. However, there can be a lack of understanding and engagement in some spaces. Collaborative bicultural practice could encourage a more active engagement by creating a reciprocal Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership between Māori and non-Māori thereby creating a more dynamic and effective approach to practice that privileges Te Ao Māori to benefit whaiora of any ethnicity. Collaborative practice can be described as a reciprocal relationship where both sides contribute equally. Biculturalism is a partnership which is everybody's responsibility to uphold (Bishop, 1996). This article is based on a

research report completed for a Master of Applied Social Work qualification in 2019, gained through Massey University. The aim of the research was to explore social workers' understanding of collaborative bicultural practice as a contribution to the broader kōrero of bicultural social work practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. This article will first focus on the motivations and basis for this research, including both authors' and participants' positioning. Key findings are then integrated into a discussion using the four narrative analysis levels (see Table 1) as used in the data analysis. In the interest of accessibility for international readers, a small glossary of key kupu Māori is included at the end of the article.

Bicultural collaboration

Interest in the notion of bicultural collaboration was first sparked by the 2017 book, *Collaborative and Indigenous Mental Health Therapy: Tātaihono, Stories of Māori Healing and Psychiatry*, by NiaNia, Bush and Epston, where two of the authors describe successful collaborative practice between a matekite and a clinical psychiatrist in a Kaupapa Māori service provider. They describe their approach as tātaihono, which "can be about reparation, reconciliation, collaboration and connection", and "is a kind of spiritual binding that gives unity and strength" (p. 7). For this research, I (as tauira) wanted to actively explore and engage in bicultural practice "beyond mere tokenism" and to explore ways it is practised successfully (Eketone & Walker, 2015, p. 110). The text by NiaNia et al. (2017) provided examples of the active engagement that I was searching for.

Methods

The research had a qualitative research design and used semi-structured interviews; these emphasised practice examples and explored the participants' interpretation of "bicultural practice" and "collaborative practice". Narrative analysis was used to bring focus to the social and personal context of the participants' kōrero—as the bicultural journey is often a personal one, it followed that these influences should be acknowledged (Crawford, 2016; Riessman, 2008; Ware et al., 2018); see Table 1 for an overview of the narrative levels used. Names were changed to ensure confidentiality.

This research was informed by social constructivist theory and took a decolonising approach as described by Coates (2013): prioritising language and stories of an Indigenous culture, understanding the history, knowing your positioning and privilege, engaging in difficult conversation and challenging implicit bias. Combining these two approaches acknowledges that, while there are social change objectives, the views are limited by individual experience.

For a detailed exploration of the methodological design, including the narrative analysis process, please see the companion article, "Āpiti hono, tātai hono. A collaborative bicultural social work research approach" (Deverick & Mooney, 2023).

He tūranga, authors' positioning

Pūkenga—lecturer and supervisor

I identify as both Māori and Pākehā, I whakapapa to a number of iwi on the west coast, from Taranaki down to Whanganui-a-tara. This identity is important to me, personally and professionally, as it is integrated in all that I do, although the journey is not always easy. This combined with our obligations to Te Tiriti o Waitangi—it is essential that Māori research ethics and ideas are explored adequately when supervision students are forming their research ideas and conducting their research. Kora and I came together to form a collaborative bicultural partnership, we openly discussed her ideas and she listened to ideas and guidance that I had to offer. She was very open to feedback and very respectful and humble in her approach.

Table 1. Overview of Narrative Levels

Narrative level	Description
Interpersonal	The telling, re-telling and reading of the participant stories.
Personal	Participants' way of seeing the world.
Public	Shared political and historical narratives, influenced by values.
Positional	Social and moral context, overlapping significantly with public narratives.

Tauira—student

I am Pākehā, born and raised nestled in the Waitakere Ranges, I currently call Whanganui home. My ancestors on both sides are of British descent. My family are passionate about social justice and I was raised to treat everyone fairly, with respect, and to stand up against injustices. I spent most of my 20s exploring abroad and, upon my return to Aotearoa, I felt simultaneously connected yet disconnected with the whenua and the people in it. I spent the first year of my master's study aghast at how little I knew about the real history of Aotearoa New Zealand. Thankfully, the increasing focus on racism in this country has meant that past and present injustices towards tangata whenua have been brought into mainstream consciousness. My journey through bicultural and decolonising practice is influenced not only by my studies and mahi, but also this resurgence. Throughout this study I attempted to practise what I was preaching by exploring a decolonising approach to my life (for example, see Coates, 2013). I would not claim to have taken this approach perfectly, nor that it is the best way; but I will respectfully, and courageously, try.

Participants

Erika is Māori and has been a social worker for 30 years. Erika says she is "a bit ethnocentric because I believe that the Kaupapa Māori models actually work for all whānau" and emphasises that her approach is about mutual respect and "getting the best for whānau". Her agency context and personal approach is to work collaboratively, it is not separate from working biculturally. Her work history is in both statutory and non-government organisations and she gave many examples of collaborative practice: as parallel development between Māori and non-Māori, between Kaupapa Māori agencies and between colleagues.

Lynley was brought up in Aotearoa New Zealand by Pākehā parents; she married a Māori tāne and has Māori mokopuna. This has influenced her personal and professional journey, encouraging her children and herself to learn about their whakapapa and tikanga Māori when her tāne passed away. She took this approach to her working life, immersing herself in Māoritanga throughout her career and emphasising Māori models in her practice. Lynley has been working in the social work field for 30 years, in both bicultural and collaborative settings. Her roles include counselling, private practice, within the justice system, stopping violence programmes and in Kaupapa Māori whānau services.

Alana is of Pacific Island descent and has been practising social work for 10 years. She emphasises that her lived experience and cultural background have helped her with bicultural practice because she is family orientated and aligns more with Māori approaches than non-Māori approaches. She said that learning about bicultural relationships from books was informative but completely different in practice; this is one reason she sought out a Kaupapa Māori service to work in. She has worked in probation and parent support services, which were a mix of community and statutory organisations. She describes her practice approach as natural, holistic and intuitive, following the client's lead and treating everybody as a human being, whether or not they share values.

Rose is of Māori and Pākehā ethnicity and is influenced by both Māori and Pākehā in her extended family. She embraces many ways of knowing: from traditional Māori values and knowledge to contemporary Māori and Pākehā life values and knowledge. In over 19 years as a social worker, Rose has worked in care and protection, domestic violence, probation, Māori health, elderly and special needs in both community and statutory organisations. Rose has also worked many years outside the social work field with tangata whenua in rural Aotearoa New Zealand. Rose has seen the ramifications of disruptions in whānau and connections to whenua, especially for our rangatahi who need to understand their identity and tūrangawaewae. This was the only interview conducted in person. This biography was co-written by Rose to allow for clarity and confidentiality concerns.

Results and discussion

A reminder of the narrative levels used in the narrative analysis and utilised to present the results. *Interpersonal*: The telling, re-telling and reading of the participant stories; *Personal*: Participants' way of seeing the world; *Public*: Shared political and historical narratives, influenced by values; and *Positional*: Social and moral context, overlapping significantly with public narratives.

Interpersonal narrative

The interpersonal narrative is embedded in the interview process, analysis, re-storying and reading of this article. Interview questions and the way they were asked contributed to the co-construction of our kōrero, and therefore the results of this research. The researcher's input during interviews was often prompted by the natural flow of the kōrero and did not always relate to the aims, again showing the co-construction of our story. Differing interpretations are inherent in all interactions—reading, writing, and practice—and are important to keep in mind. These interactions also show the relationship between research approaches and practice approaches. As in practice, this research has engaged with participants in their own context, whanaungatanga, considering rangatiratanga, acknowledging and being open to other worldviews, and self-reflection. These perspectives are important to consider in both research and practice, especially in a profession based in the social world. The heart of this research, however, is the personal narrative.

Personal narrative

The participants' understanding of collaborative bicultural practice was embedded in their personal story, showing the individual nature of bicultural practice (Crawford, 2016). The personal narrative was shown to drive the participants' decisions and perspective, as opposed to being led by societal expectations or agency policy. Participants portrayed a passion for their practice and were informed by the political and historical context of bicultural spaces. This section explores three aspects of the personal narrative: bicultural definitions, collaboration as an active engagement, and the importance of education.

Exploring bicultural definitions

Participants' interpretations stem from their moral positioning, a shared public narrative of the importance of bicultural practice and the aim of rangatiratanga for clients. Their personal narratives have also influenced these interpretations, based on their lived experience and passion for this work.

Nairn et al. (2012) discussed bicultural partnerships in psychology, describing bicultural partnerships as navigating the "space between" two cultures (p. 24). L. Ruwhiu et al. (2016) suggested a similar concept, referring to a "borderland" where Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners and their cultures intersect (p. 79). The understanding

of bicultural practice given by participants aligned with the literature, even considering their varied responses. While emphasising the complex relationship that can occur when engaging at the border, two participants referred to biculturalism as a respectful Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership between Māori and non-Māori, echoing the definition from ANZASW Practice Standards (ANZASW, 2014) and other literature (Crocket et al., 2017; Huygens, 2011; Millar, 2004; Nairn et al., 2012; NiaNia et al., 2017). Alana's understanding of bicultural practice was from a Treaty perspective, she also emphasised that "regardless of whether we agree with…each other's values and beliefs", bicultural practice is "a respectful relationship between two cultures", where one culture is Indigenous and the other is "everyone else." Lynley also referred to the Treaty, indicating that bicultural practice was between the crown and tangata whenua. She referenced Beazley (2019) who indicated that, together, New Zealanders are tangata Tiriti. She explained further that,

> …recognising the different ways that another culture does things, to me is biculturalism…biculturalism is knowing about what our culture is and being able to live within another culture or operate within another culture. (Lynley)

Alana stressed that one must learn to be bicultural before one can learn to be multicultural and added that she "doesn't stop being bicultural", which was echoed by all other participants. In these accounts, the two cultures are not fixed—they could be tangata whenua and Pākehā, or tangata whenua and Pacific—recognising the multiple cultures that exist in Aotearoa and the diversity within them (Crocket et al., 2017; Eketone & Walker, 2015; Nairn et al., 2012; L. Ruwhiu et al., 2016).

In contrast, Eketone and Walker (2015) and L. Ruwhiu et al. (2016) define bicultural practice as specifically when non-Māori work with Māori. This could be consistent with Erika's view; as Māori, she believes the word *bicultural* is not for her.

> …that term is more for others that don't have an understanding of te Tiriti o Waitangi and of Kaupapa Māori models of practice… because for me it's a just a natural way of working because all Māori social workers have had to actually learn to two systems. (Erika)

Erika's approach emphasises a respect and honouring of whānau from a Māori perspective.

> …from my worldview, whenever I'm talking to someone, I'm talking to them as a living breathing face of their tīpuna no matter what their ethnicity is, so I need to be mindful and respectful. (Erika)

Her assertion that the weaving of Kaupapa Māori theory with western theory was a necessary aspect of her practice has been discussed in previous studies, reiterating the observation that some Māori practitioners have been participating at the border for a long time (Hollis-English, 2015, 2016; Moyle, 2014; L. Ruwhiu, 2013; L. Ruwhiu et al., 2016).

Incongruent with the studied literature is the idea that the term *bicultural* is limiting, as one participant suggested. Rose explained that bicultural is limiting to think of as two cultures because there is so much diversity within each person and family group. Her positioning was that everyone is different, and you must consider culture as the client understands it.

> [I]t could also be limiting to just think of biculturalism as say a blanket approach for say Māori because they like everyone else have to be assessed in their individual context of the system and world they live in. (Rose)

These differing interpretations show the complexity of bicultural practice and emphasises the influence of the

participants' personal stories and positioning on their practice approaches and beliefs, thus demonstrating the term's intricacy. It would be beneficial to explore further differences, if any, in interpretation in a larger study with more varied ethnicities. This could inform bicultural education for both social workers and the public by showing how biculturalism can be engaged in from different perspectives.

Collaboration as active engagement

The interview question regarding collaboration was "what does collaborative practice (between practitioners) mean to you?". As a result, the answers centred on collaboration as a separate approach to bicultural were often given. This shows an interpersonal narrative taking place between researcher and participant. Collaborative bicultural practice was understood more broadly than anticipated; not only through co-supporting a client as is described in NiaNia et al. (2017), but also in supervision, inter-agency programmes and parallel development within agencies. Studies in these areas show that collaborative bicultural practice exists under different monikers like *partnerships*, *parallel development* and *supervision* (Consedine & Consedine, 2012; L. Ruwhiu et al., 2016).

Prior research has noted the necessity for more reciprocal relationships where, if Māori knowledge systems were emphasised alongside Pākehā knowledge systems, there would be better outcomes for all (Bennett, 2016; Durie, 2003; Hollis-English, 2016; Huygens, 2011; Nairn et al., 2012; Semmons, 2006). Findings from this research reinforce this view and suggest that collaboration could be a successful way to do this. Practice examples from participants illustrated the benefits of sharing knowledge and skills between colleagues, motivated by their personal drive to get the best for whānau. For example, Erika described collaboration between colleagues (sharing skills and utilising speciality knowledge) was an important aspect of her approach.

> …we all had our speciality areas and speciality niches and no matter who we were working with we could always collaborate with our colleagues to make sure they got the best wrap-around service. (Erika)

When co-counselling with a Māori man, Lynley described how they would work to their strengths:

> I might put out a concept for the thing and he would tell a story around it and that was a lot of the way that we worked and he was much better at doing it than I was, I'd be too clinical. (Lynley)

This indicates that the collaborative approach engenders a more active engagement in bicultural practice, where both sides of the border contribute whilst recognising the impact of the dominant culture (Durie, 2003; NiaNia et al., 2017; L. Ruwhiu et al., 2016). This also reveals the importance and influence the agency context has on practice decisions; the participants' endeavours were most beneficial with support from workplaces and policy. In line with ideals of decolonisation, this active engagement acknowledges the uneven power structures that were created by our colonial history and offers a re-storying of bicultural relationships (Coates, 2013).

Education

Education of social workers and the wider public is key for bicultural relationships and contributes to successful collaborations at the border. Participants believed that bicultural practice was an essential aspect of their social work training and is recognised by a number of authors (Consedine & Consedine, 2012; Crawford, 2016; Eketone & Walker, 2015; Huygens, 2011; Margaret, 2013; McNabb, 2019; Walker, 2012). However, participants also indicated that lack of appropriate education has inhibited

society's move to a more understanding and productive bicultural space—in social work and in policy. All participants stressed the importance of teaching New Zealand's history and Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles in schools, in social work education and in wider society.

> New Zealand history needs to be in the schools, but it needs to be everywhere. Within our practice how can we fully understand the Treaty if we don't actually know New Zealand history. (Lynley)

> [There needs to be] more of an understanding of the impacts of colonisation, and the guarantees that te Tiriti o Waitangi brought...so that the gaps and barriers [of understanding and support] can be addressed more. (Erika)

It was felt that the change needed to address this should happen at a government level.

> [O]ur Treaty it's not implemented so if we have racism up here [gestures up] at the top then what's being filtered down… it all starts with our leaders, if our leaders aren't bicultural or don't have value in the indigenous people and what's happening for Māori then I dunno what the future of biculturalism is gonna look like. (Alana)

Education should include conscientisation as part of the bicultural journey, which could be confronting for some (Coates, 2013; Crawford, 2016; Margaret, 2013; P. Ruwhiu, 2019). Conscientisation in this context was first introduced to me by Dr Paul'e Ruwhiu, it had a profound impact on me, and is discussed in her PhD thesis (P. Ruwhiu, 2019). Alana stated that it would depend on the person's values, and Lynley stipulated that Pākehā in particular need to be more involved. Lynley suggested that the dominance of mainstream culture has meant that many Pākehā became complacent and have not had to learn about their own or other cultures and ethnicities.

> [I]n indigenous culture and other minority cultures, they have to fit in with the mainstream so they know the difference between how they do it in their own culture and how they do it in mainstream...whereas because we're mainstream, we don't need to. (Lynley)

This knowledge and willingness to confront uneasy realities was apparent in participants—they accepted the public narrative of intergenerational impacts of colonisation, and were seeking to contribute to change, even if it was difficult. Rose stressed that there is a lot of work being done by iwi in communities to work on ongoing issues, and that this should be known and celebrated.

> [There is a] lack of knowledge public knowledge about all the work your iwi organisations do in different communities. (Rose)

It was noted by some authors that, although education and conscientisation should be delivered in the public arena and in social work education, ultimately, movement towards change will come from the individual social worker (Crawford, 2016; Margaret, 2013). This echoes the first stages of the decolonisation process as outlined by Laenui (2006), which must first happen in the mind. It should be acknowledged here that these two authors write from a Pākehā bicultural experience, whereas Māori and others may have different stories to tell.

Te reo Māori was recognised by participants as a positive aspect of education. Erika expressed that the increased interest in learning te reo Māori was encouraging:

> I think it's quite beautiful the amount of New Zealanders who are embracing te reo and going to learn te reo and speaking te reo. (Erika)

Rose echoed this, indicating that compared to the historical oppression of te reo Māori, wider use of the language was a positive

and is increasing "public awareness and interest". However, it was felt by Alana that without also teaching the oppressive history of te reo Māori, this surge of interest and events such as Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori were merely tokenism.

Barriers to collaborative bicultural practice were felt by participants in many areas but were mostly felt in statutory organisations and in government policy. Their positioning is shown through their value-based responses, and by working against the colonial narrative. This leads to the divide between policy and practice, which sits within participants' public narrative.

Public narrative

The participants, authors, and the literature studied shared a public narrative, especially regarding the value of bicultural practice and the negative intergenerational impacts of colonisation. There was also the shared understanding that Te Ao Māori perspectives and approaches contribute to rangatiratanga in social services and should be widely acknowledged in mainstream policy (Hollis-English, 2015; Rangihuna et al., 2018; L. Ruwhiu et al., 2016; Walker, 2012). It is difficult to separate the public from the positional narrative, as any public phenomenon will be interpreted and acted upon based on an individual's moral positioning. This section will focus on the issues mentioned that pertain to the public sphere; the policy/practice divide and valuing Te Ao Māori.

Policy/practice divide

The participants' focus on rangatiratanga for clients and whānau sometimes sat in tension with the structure of government systems and policy, creating a policy/practice divide. Alana stipulated that although individual practitioners have a personal responsibility, none of that will matter if the change does not occur from the top:

> …you *gotta educate the front-line workers*… put it in your policies and make sure that staff know what that looks like on the ground otherwise it's just something written on paper. (Alana)

> …policy needs to be linked to the practice. (Rose)

Lynley discussed a lack of acknowledgement of the Pūao te ata tū Report (Ministry Advisory Committee, 1986) in a family court setting:

> …the law said we could do these things but none of it was done. As judges they never asked for cultural reports, and what good was that? (Lynley)

Alana emphasises this:

> [N]othing's changed from when Pūao te Ata tū came out and recommendations were being made… people still experienced institutional racism, *nothing's changed.* (Alana)

On a positive note, it was identified by Erika that the government is supporting collaborative practice in some ways.

> [The government are] doing more funding for collaborative groups, they're once again encouraging the collaboration and the sharing, which is good. (Erika)

This is consistent with earlier studies, showing that the structures social workers operate within sometimes create barriers that impact on practice (Nairn et al., 2012; L. Ruwhiu et al., 2016; Swann & Crocket, 2017). This divide can be linked to tokenism in some social policy and emphasises the need for commitment to biculturalism at an agency policy and social policy level (Eketone & Walker, 2015). Our kōrero showed that the agency had a significant influence on how participants could engage in bicultural practice, and how collaboration could, or could not, occur. If the agency and participant values diverged significantly, this

impacted on their ability to provide effective support which, for two participants, resulted in their resignation.

The participants' practice examples showed that they were actively trying to work against the policy/practice divide. While highlighting the need for policy to reflect practice and vice versa, this also shows the commitment of participants to continue regardless. This was not reflected in the literature studied.

The participants' shared understanding of the current political climate is that many social services operate in a mono-cultural, western system. They shared the moral positioning that this western system is problematic and were actively promoting change throughout their respective workplaces. This displays a tension between differing public narratives, the participants' positioning and their personal contexts.

Valuing Te Ao Māori

The value of promoting and privileging Indigenous services and approaches is evident in this study. Participants highlighted their appreciation of Māori worldviews through continued education and in using and promoting Māori models. Erika and Lynley explained they used Māori models for all clients, Erika adding that she naturally operates from a Kaupapa Māori perspective. She also referenced her treatment plan, which included facilitating access to matekite. Both women indicated that a Māori worldview-centred approach can benefit anyone; discussing Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1998), Lynley says: "[the taha] are all significant, not just for Māori, but for everyone". This is supported by literature and reflects decolonising aims of privileging Indigenous narratives and knowledge (Coates, 2013; Durie, 2003; McNabb, 2019; Munford & Sanders, 2010). Contrary to this was the observation by participants that Māori approaches were not always taken seriously or did not have the same standing as western approaches in some arenas. For example, Rose discussed difficulties when her supervisors were not educated in, or did not acknowledge, Māori models. In reference to engaging with Māori frameworks, she indicated:

> [T]here'd be a lack of sort of understanding as to the progress you were making with people to change, with Pākehā and Tauiwi supervisors. (Rose)

These experiences are supported by previous studies (Bush et al., 2019; Hollis-English, 2015; Kopua et al., 2019; McNabb, 2019; Moyle, 2014; Munford & Sanders, 2010; Semmons, 2006). Further, within Erika's training and practice she has had to "weave" the dominant western worldview with her natural approach so that she could be understood in both Māori and western practice contexts. Erika explained:

> …there's still not proper weighting given to Kaupapa Māori knowledge of practice and what works…although with Whānau Ora coming about more is being recognised and with the decree in mental health, that you've got to look at the *whole* whānau now, you see that's just what we used to do naturally. (Erika)

This could be the result of entrenched societal views resulting from colonisation and ongoing systemic racism; however, further research is needed to understand and mitigate this.

Positional narrative

A positional narrative is the broader social and moral context that has influenced personal narratives. The relationship between public, positional and personal narratives is evident in this section. Participants' share a sense of responsibility to re-story the colonial narrative within their roles in the workplace and their communities. The personal narrative is intrinsic; the experiences are portrayed

through their lenses and are influenced by their backgrounds. The relationship between narrative levels shows how personal stories greatly influence moral interpretations of public narratives. Participants, therefore, had different roles in this space and were primarily related to their ethnic identity, but also to their moral standpoints.

Know your positioning

Māori and non-Māori have differing roles in bicultural practice (Consedine & Consedine, 2012; Crawford, 2016; Hollis-English, 2016; Huygens, 2011; Moyle, 2014; NiaNia et al., 2017; Waldegrave, 2012). Results mirrored this, highlighting the need for practitioners to understand their own positioning. Although many studies referred to Māori and Pākehā as the two sides of a Tiriti o Waitangi relationship, in this study there was more diversity. Regardless of their ethnic identity, participants saw their role as working against colonial narratives—the relevance of this is stressed in two decolonising aims of social work: reflexive practice and questioning dominant views (Coates, 2013; Huygens, 2011; McNabb, 2019; L. Ruwhiu et al., 2016). This section explores responses from participants' differing positional standpoints.

"Pākehā paralysis"

Tolich (2002) describes "Pākehā paralysis" as the reluctance of Pākehā researchers to engage with Māori as part of any research (p. 164). This is expanded upon by Eketone and Walker (2015) in the social work field, who indicate that this Pākehā *fear* has led to a reluctance to engage with whānau Māori, and therefore they may have incompetent practice. This was not demonstrated as a personal challenge or identified as a practice issue for the participants in this study. On the contrary, the active interest in bicultural practice portrayed by Pākehā participants, or interactions with Pākehā colleagues, could be considered the opposite of paralysis. Participants showed courage in their interactions and a willingness to try, and accept when they were wrong. However, challenges were experienced with Pākehā supervisors. This would be an important area of further study as it was not discussed on a policy or agency level in the considered literature.

"Resisting dominance"

Resisting dominance is described as a small but effective way of opposing mainstream systems and worldviews through individual actions of a practitioner, for example advocating for culturally appropriate treatment options (Swann & Crocket, 2017). Swann and Crocket (2017) described how some Māori kaimahi have woven the two knowledge systems together whilst retaining rangatiratanga in their practice; this is echoed by Erika in this study. Swann and Crocket (2017) describe the dual concept of "resisting dominance" of western approaches while still "continuing to engage" in processes (p. 177). This is shown in their example of a required statutory assessment; creating space for the meeting to occur (continuing to engage) but doing so on their own terms, a hui in the client's home (resisting dominance). This was shown through the practice examples of participants in this study; for example, advocating for more appropriate diagnoses and weaving two knowledge systems together so that practice was seen as *valid* by outsiders. Two possible ways of resisting dominance became clear through the results; recognising diversity, and parallel development.

Recognising diversity

L. Ruwhiu et al. (2016) proposed that the singular focus of current social policy is a failure to adequately recognise diversity in Aotearoa New Zealand. This research found that recognising the diversity in client's cultural worldviews was a vital aspect of bicultural practice and results in better outcomes when considered. Erika acknowledged this implicitly by ensuring Māori have a choice in which

service they prefer to engage with, "Kaupapa Māori or general". Rose's understanding of bicultural practice is based on diversity of social work clients:

> [B]icultural practice is acknowledging and working to understand Pākehā, Māori and Tauiwi where they fit in the wider spectrum of the New Zealand community as a whole. (Rose)

Celebrating diversity is linked to practitioner self-awareness and positioning as well as being able to work with difference. Alana described being mindful of diversity as a personal challenge, especially when the client's views do not reflect her own. To counter this, she reminds herself "that we're all at different levels in our own cultural identity". Recognising diversity was seen by participants as especially significant because of the homogenisation of Māori culture. Māori are often referred to as a whole group with one perspective or agenda; but this fails to recognise varied worldviews, whakapapa, iwi and hapū, dialects, whenua and so on. This is also acknowledged in the literature (Consedine & Consedine, 2012; Munford & Sanders, 2010; L. Ruwhiu et al., 2016; Waldegrave, 2012).

Although some agencies were shown by participants to actively acknowledge diversity, it was not indicated that this was reflected at a government policy level. While these findings are consistent with the aims of decolonisation and in previous literature on this topic (Coates, 2013; McKenzie & Matahaere-Atariki, 2008; Munford & Sanders, 2010), further research into the approach of government organisations and policy makers would be beneficial. In addition, the examples show how participants' practice is focussed on rangatiratanga and enhanced by working with diversity.

Parallel development

Parallel development is a way of resisting mainstream approaches to social work practice. It is an acknowledgement that Māori clients and whānau may prefer Māori-led services.

> [Parallel development] set up specifically to be a collaborative sharing thing with total acknowledgement of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document and so parallel development of, by Māori, for Māori. (Erika)

It was evident that Erika was passionate about this process by the way she described and emphasised the successes. This is a combination of her positional and personal narratives, showing her commitment to this process and the significance that values in practice. She explained:

> …there's a real respect an absolute respect and honouring of the process of that parallel development. (Erika)

Notably, Erika's understanding of collaborative practice and bicultural practice are "one and the same", reflected in descriptions of her working environment.

Very little was found in the literature on the use and efficacy of parallel development in bicultural practice, however, Consedine and Consedine (2012) described it as an approach to Te Tiriti o Waitangi education workshops. Consedine and Consedine (2012) advocated that this separation is necessary, and successful, due to the differing cultural and historical experiences of each group. Their experience showed that it was more beneficial to confront bicultural issues alongside others who have had similar experiences. This could be related to social work practice in the same way. Through participants' examples, this model was shown to be successful as it recognises differing cultural perspectives and allows for culturally safe spaces where whānau Māori have rangatiratanga over their own decisions.

These results further support the idea that celebrating diversity and a parallel, equitable space for Māori is beneficial for all (Consedine & Consedine, 2012; Durie,

2003; Nairn et al., 2012; NiaNia et al., 2017; Rangihuna et al., 2018; Semmons, 2006).

Rata (2005) contended that separating groups based on ethnicity ignores "the universality of the human race", emphasising that dividing cultural groups to make decisions is in opposition to the political rights of the individual (p. 272). This position ignores the unequal power relations that form society, undermining the impact colonisation has had, and overlooks the diversity of experiences felt both within and between cultural groups. For Erika, it was key that Māori clients were given the opportunity to talk to a Māori worker, showing how the parallel systems works against these power imbalances.

> [I]f they wish to go into the general [agency] that's ka pai, but it's about having a Māori worker have that conversation rather than a non-Māori worker with a Māori client because what happens often is Māori workers are able to pick up on nuances. (Erika)

Conclusion

This article has discussed differing experiences and approaches to bicultural collaboration in relation to four narrative levels; interpersonal, personal, public and positional. Participants placed emphasis on positioning and personal values, the significance of education, and the value of Māori worldviews and approaches. Although practitioners contribute significantly to bicultural practice, results suggest a need for more commitment from the public sphere, with an active contribution from agencies and government to bridge the gap between policy and practice. It is concluded that, while collaborative bicultural practice is an existing approach in social work, more research is needed to establish it as a successful partnership model. Finally, it is suggested that, to ensure effective engagement in bicultural practice, social workers need to have more courageous conversations for bicultural partnerships to succeed and flourish. As a profession, social work is already contributing significantly to bicultural practice, shown through this report and through the polices of our governing bodies. In accordance with social work values, individuals and agencies are encouraged to advocate for social change and rangatiratanga, and also to work within discomfort and awhi others to do the same. Collaboration, tātaihono, means undertaking this mahi together; only this will keep the fire burning bright well into the future.

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Glossary

These definitions are from *Te Aka Online Māori Dictionary* or from within the texts they came from. They are defined as they are understood in context of this research, which for some is simplified and may have a further meaning in different contexts.

Āpiti hono, tātai hono—Let that which has been joined, remain intact

Hapū—Sub-tribe, kinship group

He tūranga—Positioning

Hui—Meeting

Iwi—Tribal group, extended kinship group, often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.

Ka pai—Good

Kaimahi—Worker, social worker, carer

Karakia—To recite ritual chants, pray, recite a prayer, chant

Kaupapa—Māori a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society.

Kupu—Word

Mahi—Work

Māoritanga—Māori culture

Matekite—"A seer of sickness and death" (NiaNia et al., 2017, p. 167)

Pākehā—New Zealander of European descent

Rangatahi—Younger generation, youth

Rangatiratanga—The right to exercise authority, autonomy

Tāne—Man, husband

Tangata whenua—People of the land, referring to Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa

Taonga—Treasure, sacred, something prized

Tapu—To be sacred, restricted, forbidden. Goes hand-in-hand with *mana*, with one affecting the other

Tātaihono—Collaboration, joining together

Tauiwi—Non-Māori New Zealander

Te Ao Māori—Māori worldview

Te Reo Māori—The Māori language

Te Tiriti o Waitangi—Te reo Māori version and different from the English version (The Treaty of Waitangi)

Te Whare Tapa Whā— "The house of four walls"; a Māori health model developed by Sir Mason Durie. Each wall is referred to as a *taha*.

Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori—Māori language week

Tikanga—Correct procedure or custom

Tipuna—Ancestors, grandparents, elders

Tūrangawaewae—Home, a place where one has the right to stand

Whaiora—Seeker of wellbeing, client, patient

Whakapapa—Genealogy

Whānau—Family group, extended family

Whānau Ora—A national health initiative driven by Māori values

Whanaungatanga—A relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging

Whenua—Land

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