

The Place of Tangata Moana: The Whitireia Experience

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CITE THIS ARTICLE: Mullane, T., Tasi, T. L-L. L., Schütz, T., & Isaako-Tolosa, L. (2024). The place of tangata moana: The Whitireia experience. *Whitireia Journal of Nursing, Health and Social Services*, 31, 7–10. <https://doi.org/10.34074/whit.3101>

THIS EDITORIAL AIMS to highlight the importance of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand as tangata moana, and how being proactive Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners is essential to supporting better outcomes for Pacific peoples. This, we propose, can be achieved by retaining and practicing Indigenous values that reflect, complement and align with the uniqueness of tangata moana, whilst also respectfully supporting those of tangata whenua.

We suggest that this can be better achieved by acknowledging and celebrating the shared whakapapa, cultural and relational bonds of tangata whenua and tangata moana, created by historical migrational movement within the vastness of Te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa, while retaining distinct indigeneity in their own right.

These historical relationships and shared whakapapa allow the natural occurrence of several things for tangata moana at Whitireia:

1. Exploration of how kaupapa Māori aligns closely with Pacific values and methodologies, rather than with Western, Eurocentric research methodologies. Any promotion of kaupapa Māori and Pacific frameworks and methodologies that support Māori and Pacific peoples allows us to take control of our own definitions, relationships and connections.
2. Context to the tuākana and tēina relationship

that exists between Māori and Pacific peoples in Aotearoa, which to some extent is mirrored with the development of the Bachelor of Nursing Pacific (BNP) and the Bachelor of Nursing Māori (BNM).

On many occasions the BNP programme and team members have been personally and professionally challenged to justify the existence of a specific Pacific Nursing programme, in spite of over 450 BNP graduates now positively contributing to the nursing workforce. The need is undeniable, as we are the fastest growing population in Aotearoa. This means that, more so than ever, we will need health provision that reflects who we are, where we are from and how we identify ourselves.

I would like to welcome and introduce my Pacific whānau who work alongside me in the BNP to highlight their research and views that promote and advocate the importance of 'by Pacific for Pacific', and how we are holding strong to this position within the BNP. –**Tania Mullane**

The development of the BNP in 2004 was an inaugural and paradigm-shifting approach to nursing education in Aotearoa. The BNP curriculum uniquely integrates the diasporic and diverse Pacific ethnic traditional knowledge systems that inform nursing practice and health professionals in the

healthcare sector, in partnership with the Pacific communities across the motu.

Mentorship was a significant part of the inaugural BNP curriculum, and it was integrated and woven into the teaching, learning and assessment work. BNP students had to indicate who their mentors were prior to enrolment. Mentors include both cultural and academic support through connections with Pacific community and leaders, and Pacific registered nurses in Aotearoa.

Now, 20 years since the launch of the BNP at Whitireia, the new BNP Kuta Framework and curriculum developed in 2020 further integrates the roles of Pacific leaders in nursing and Pacific graduate experience in the health sector (Mullane et al., 2020). Mentorship for Pacific student nurses now continues with the increased number of Pacific registered nurses and leaders in the community. Pacific leadership for nursing encapsulates the vast diversity of knowledge and expertise among the existing and growing Pacific health workforce. For BNP graduates, their contribution to the health sector is gaining momentum and continuously being realised. As an intended outcome of the BNP degree programme, having more Pacific nurses in the sector delivering culturally relevant practice in addition to nursing expertise is a positive outcome for the Pacific community, who are still disproportionately represented in the need for healthcare support at all levels: primary, secondary and tertiary care. As current and future leaders, BNP graduates have a significant place in the healthcare sector, and their contribution to the health and well-being of all citizens of Aotearoa must be acknowledged. To navigate two or more paradigms of well-being, the competent and highly skilled BNP graduate diaspora are well placed to participate in the modern-day healthcare workforce (Tasi, 2022).
–Taulapapa Loma-Linda L. Tasi

Understanding and acknowledging Indigenous Pacific students' distinctive cultural contexts and backgrounds are critical to providing culturally appropriate pedagogy across the three years of the BNP programme. The BNP

kaiako are designated to collaborate with Pacific ākonga, along with their whānau, and academic and cultural mentors in order to realise and understand the individualities of ākonga, including their cultural world views, knowledge, strengths, potentials and learning styles, as well as identifying their learning gaps. This collaboration and understanding of the pedagogical level and cultural knowledge of individual ākonga are important as these set the scene for the BNP kaiako to plan, design and implement a culturally appropriate and holistic teaching model to best support Pacific learners. The BNP programme has also extended this approach to 'Other Migrants' who have enrolled in the programme. Evidently, the implementation of the Kuta Framework (Mullane et al., 2021) in teaching the Bioscience-Nursing Praxis course has made a difference to ākonga understanding. Weaving the indigenous knowledge and world views of ākonga about body structures and functions, causes of diseases, health, well-being and illnesses with Western knowledge of medicine and nursing has naturally bridged the gaps in their learning. The weaving of the diasporic world views also makes learning easier as ākonga relate to their cultural perspectives and increase their understanding as they use their own Pacific ethnic nuances and languages in the first instance to find meaning in complex medical and nursing concepts. As a kaiako, I also use 'Te Kora' framework, a Kiribati research methodology that I developed to understand how I-Kiribati navigate health practices in Aotearoa (Schütz, 2017, 2022). 'Te Kora' is a Kiribati traditional string, made with two filaments of dry coconut fibres. The two filaments are rolled between the thumb and index finger on the thigh of the person who makes 'Te Kora' (Schütz, 2017). To contemplate 'Te Kora' framework as a Pacific pedagogy to support our BNP Pacific learners, I think of one filament as the Western nursing concepts, and the other filament as the cultural world views of ākonga and their indigenous perceptions of health, well-being and illnesses. The spinning or rolling of 'Te Kora' represents how ākonga navigate and make

sense of the two world views in their learning spaces and levels. I envision that when 'Te Kora' is loosely made, both the ākongā and kaiako will undo 'Te Kora' and find out why the end product is not strong. When this context is applied to the teaching–learning space, when 'Te Kora' is loose and poorly made it means that the ākongā is not prepared, confident and competent either culturally or academically in the nursing and health disciplines. When this happens, both the ākongā and kaiako must reflect on the teaching–learning approaches to ensure that the learning needs of the ākongā are met through the application of a holistic and culturally appropriate teaching model. This reflection is important in the evaluation phase, where the learning progress of nursing ākongā is evaluated in conjunction with the kaiako teaching approach to ensure that Pacific ākongā learning gaps are addressed, and that they receive the appropriate cultural and holistic teaching approach for success. –**Teramira Schütz**

PERSPECTIVE OF A NEW PACIFIC ACADEMIC

I am honoured to be part of the BNP kaiako team and to contribute to this editorial. My perspective is that of a new Pacific kaiako as well as ākongā, for there is so much to learn in my quest to be a competent Pacific kaiako in academia. My transnational journey to Aotearoa from the Tokelau islands is no different to

those of many Pacific people, their Aotearoa-born children, and the children of the children of tangata o Te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa. Many Tokelauans who live in Porirua first migrated in the mid-1970s. Today there are at least three to four cohorts of Aotearoa-born Tokelauans living in the Porirua region. This is an area that needs in-depth analysis, though it is safe to say that there is greater diversity and complexity among these cohorts as their number increases. Many have studied and completed the BNP at Whitireia Community Polytechnic since its inception in 2004. So, as I immerse myself in this new role, I am more aware of my place and that of my fanau as tangata moana in Aotearoa and in the context of Te Ao Māori world views. Tokelauan practices of mutual respect, and peaceful and harmonious living align well with Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles that guide the Kawa Whakaruruhau framework. These similar world views encourage and support practices that promote equity, diversity, inclusion and the rights of tangata whenua and all the people living in Aotearoa. It is pleasing to be in the knowledge that many Tokelauans and Pacific people alike have come through the doors of the BNP. For me so far, it is a liberating journey of self-discovery, reflection and appreciation of my place as tangata moana in contemporary Aotearoa. Fakafetai lahi. –**Loha Isaako-Toloo**

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