



Towards mauri ora: Examining the potential relationship between indigenous-centric entrepreneurship education and Māori suicide prevention in Aotearoa, New Zealand

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Abstract

“Towards Mauri Ora” explored the potential contribution of *Ahikaa*, an indigenous entrepreneurship education programme to increase Māori wellbeing. The instrumentality of indigenous entrepreneurship for hope-building and thereby, suicide prevention was examined using the Mauri Ora Framework, a continuum describing *mauri* (life force) states, originally

developed for Māori whānau or family violence prevention and adapted as a measure of the contribution of entrepreneurship education to mauri ora. Mauri ora in this study refers to a profound sense of wellbeing and is a measurable life-affirming Māori cultural construct.

Ahikaa graduates and whānau narrated their perceptions of the Ahikaa entrepreneurship programme, and its effects on their lives. The Mauri Ora Framework was used to examine progress towards mauri ora and away from a state of *kahupō* (hopelessness). Participants at the outset of this study exhibited many suicide risk factors, indicating a burgeoning sense of hopelessness and diminished capacity to envisage a future for themselves and their whānau. As a result of the Ahikaa programme, participants shared stories of hope, reporting Ahikaa as both life-changing and healing. They voiced their stories in hopeful language, interpreted in this study as progression from *kahupō* toward mauri ora.

It is theorised from these findings, that the points that individuals and whānau, appeared to be at on the continuum from kahupō to mauri ora relates to a relatively complex, and potentially self-sustaining interaction of *ibi* (essential force), *wehi* (to be awesome) and *wana* (to come to life), life force descriptors that constitute paths to mauri ora.

Finally, the Towards Mauri Ora research found that Ahikaa entrepreneurship education programmes provide one point of entry and one mechanism through which individuals, whānau and communities may move themselves further towards the mauri ora end of this continuum and therefore potentially reduced risk of suicide. We suggest that in addition to addressing risk factors (particularly those amenable to political interventions), policy and programmes aimed at reducing indigenous suicide rates need to incorporate opportunities for whānau Māori to identify and pursue preferred pathways to mauri ora, and thereby, to be supported to take their own steps toward wellbeing.

Keywords: Indigenous, entrepreneurship, suicide prevention

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Introduction

Globally, suicide rates for first nations (indigenous/aboriginal) peoples that have been colonised and positioned as a minority in their homeland, are more than double that for other groups in the same country (Lawson-Te Aho, 2017). In 1996, Chief Jean-Charles Piétacho of the Mingan First Nation addressed the Canadian Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples stating that:

Collective despair, or collective lack of hope, will lead us to collective suicide. This type of suicide can take many forms, foreshadowed by many possible signs: identity crisis, loss of pride, every kind of dependence, denial of our customs and traditions, degradation of our environment, weakening of our language, abandonment of our struggle for our Aboriginal rights, our autonomy and our culture, uncaring acceptance of violence,

passive acknowledgement of lack of work and responsibilities, lack of respect for elders, envy of those who try to keep their heads up and who might succeed, and so on. (As cited in Tatz, 2012, p. 922)

These words resonate for Māori, the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand. New Zealand has the highest rate of youth suicide in the developed world with Māori two and a half times more likely to take their own lives than other New Zealanders (UNICEF, 2017): As in other indigenous contexts, a history of colonisation has contributed to conditions that are directly influential in the suffering of indigenous people through generations and over time to the present day.

Ahikaa is an entrepreneurship education programme developed within a kaupapa Māori frame. It was designed to be implemented with hard to reach *whānau* (families).¹ To survive, these whānau must navigate a complex mix of daily intersecting risk factors (for example poverty, violence, mass incarceration etc.) and experiences (for example educational failure, homelessness, mental illness etc.). These risk factors are related to the broader national socio-political environment, and vulnerability to these factors is anchored in ongoing colonisation and colonising impacts (for example, institutional, systemic and individual racism and historical trauma).

In the process of implementing Ahikaa, many participants reported an increased sense of hope and general wellbeing or *mauri ora*. They also identified many positive benefits of the programme that went beyond the learning of specific skills. Towards Mauri Ora, grew out of this context and sought to collect the perceptions and voices of Māori youth and their whānau regarding the ongoing impacts of Ahikaa for the building of hope and elevation, accentuation of experiences of mauri ora and diminishment of *kahupō* (hopelessness) associated with suicide. It was clear that participants had been exposed to multi-generational, complex risk factors for suicide and, that hope-building was possible through indigenous entrepreneurship education. Towards Mauri Ora examined the potential

¹ Hard to reach whānau are defined here as those living at or below the poverty line.

contribution of Ahikaa to suicide prevention (Love, Lawson-Te Aho, Love & Shariff, 2016).

Using the Mauri Ora Framework to Analyse the Impacts of Ahikaa

The Mauri Ora Framework was developed in 2004 by the Second Taskforce for Whānau Violence Prevention (Kruger et al., 2004). It was selected for this study as it offers a way of conceptualising wellbeing as a journey from darkness (kahupō) marked by the loss of hope and will to live; to light (mauri ora) marked by the desire for life and enhanced or heightened state of wellbeing. In the state of kahupō, the potential for suicide is strongest. Whereas, in the state of mauri ora, the potential for life is strongest. The Mauri Ora Framework shown in Figure 1 below, was identified by the research team as a useful way to measure the impacts of the Ahikaa entrepreneurship education programme on the wellbeing of the participating whānau based on the capacity to operationalise the core cultural construct of mauri².

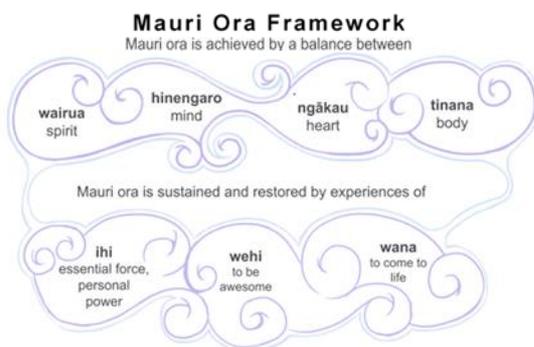


Figure 1: Mauri ora framework (see Appendix 1 for enlarged image)

Mauri Ora and Kahupō

Mauri is the spark, the essence or life force that is in all things. Mauri exists as part of the wider *wairua* (spirit) system, and is what keeps people and things aligned with and within the flow of the

wairua. The effect of mauri has been described by Kruger et al., 2004 as follows:

Mauri is like the centre that drives people. When they have mauri there is a sense of purposefulness, they are inspired, they have these intangible qualities that motivate them and provide them with a sense of self and collective identity. One of the by-products of mauri is mana. (p. 4)

Mauri ora represents the wellbeing, health, strength of the mauri in people, and may be used with reference to individuals and collectives.

Kahupō literally refers to the darkness of night, or a dimness of sight or inability to see.

The state of kahupō is of not being aligned with *wairua*. If you are kahupō then you are spiritually blind and ... you have no clear purpose or meaning in life. Life is but a physical drudgery. The antithesis of kahupō is awareness of *wairua*, living in the flow of the *wairua*, and having a passion for life. (Kruger et al., 2004, p. 4)

Hence individuals and groups experiencing a state of kahupō, are unable to see a way forward, and in a real sense lack vision, direction and hope for the future. While risk factors for suicide are likely to be more closely associated with the kahupō-end of the continuum and protective factors with the mauri ora-end, these factors alone cannot account for the resilience, or lack thereof, of particular individuals and groups. Therefore, a risk factor minimisation, reduction, clinically emphatic approach to suicide prevention in indigenous populations may only offer temporary alleviation of suffering.

An alternative way of understanding these factors is to acknowledge that they can be both *contributory* and *symptomatic*. Thus, within the Mauri Ora Framework, whānau violence, suicide, substance abuse and addiction are viewed as symptomatic of kahupō. In order to be effective at individual and whānau levels, prevention and intervention should address key aspects of the path to mauri ora. The cultural constructs of *ihi*,

² Mauri is defined as “a unique power, a life essence, life force and vital principle” (Henare, 2001, p. 208). Mauri occurs in different states from mauri noho/kahupō (which is likened to spiritual death or deep wounding of the spirit); mauri oho (awakening), mauri tū (revitalisation), mauri ora (consciousness of being and exhilaration; for references on mauri see Durie (2001) and Pohatu (2011).

wehi and *wana* (described in Figure 1 above) are integral stages of that path.

Ahikaa and Suicide Prevention

The association between Ahikaa and suicide prevention is complex and while some of the benefits of the Ahikaa programme are described here, further analysis and measurement of outcomes for participants over time, is needed.

The participants in this study had significant risk profiles in relation to suicide. A positive protective factor approach (White, 2015) is promoted as a solution to suicide in indigenous populations.³

The potential of Māori development as a positive approach for suicide prevention is anchored in the accentuation of protective factors that promote the enhancement of Māori and indigenous cultural values and language (White & Rewi, 2014); reclaim indigenous knowledge *mātauranga* frameworks including the revival of traditional indigenous knowledge systems (Sissons, 2005) pertaining to reclaiming healing systems (Lawson-Te Aho, 2014) and pathways towards self-determination (Durie, 2014).

Ahikaa entrepreneurship education programmes became of interest in relation to suicidality as a result of participant feedback about the positive changes in attitude, mood, and approaches to life that occurred. While not overtly focused on suicide prevention, the programmes appeared to directly and indirectly address and influence a range of identified risk factors, strengthen protective factors and contribute significantly to whānau transformation.

Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset

An entrepreneurial mindset has been described as a set of skills and behaviours that can be taught and practised...a mindset that equips (people) to recognize opportunity, take initiative, and innovate in the face of challenges rather than a fixed trait within individuals (NFTE, 2015). These skills fall in the mauri ora end of the continuum and can be understood as protective

factors. The eight core elements of an entrepreneurial mindset are:

- Opportunity recognition
- Comfort with risk (calculated risk-taking, risk management)
- Creativity and innovation
- Future orientation
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Initiative and self-reliance
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communication and collaboration

The skills described as indicative of an entrepreneurial mindset contain skills described as associated with indigenous suicide prevention.

Method

An exploratory study using qualitative methodology, supplemented with some quantitative data analysis was conducted. A literature review was completed and the data sets were compiled for analysis together with key informant interviews and other supplementary data.

Participants

The participating whānau in the interviews for this research identified as Māori from a range of different tribal backgrounds, were aged between 16 years and 78 years old and had been a part of the Ahikaa programme either as students, tutors (who had themselves completed Ahikaa entrepreneurship education programmes) or whānau.

Many of the participants and whānau met the criteria of being hard-to-reach, at risk, or vulnerable whānau. Whānau thus described included those who are long term unemployed or NEET (not in education, employment or training), gang affiliated, whānau in conflict with the law, including those with members experiencing periods of imprisonment.

Interviews

In order to generate comfortable and open narratives Whānau Narrative Inquiry (WNI) and

³Protective factors are those factors that are known to ameliorate or reduce known risks for suicide and that provide experiences that reduce the outcome of suicide even where risks are present and despite exposure to known risk factors

Kaupapa Māori were primarily utilised in the key informant interviews. WNI is a Kaupapa Māori research approach (see Lawson-Te Aho, 2016a): It is situated in the principles of Kaupapa Māori set out by Walker, Eketone, and Gibbs (2006) which include:

- Taonga tuku iho (the cultural aspirations principle).
- Ako Māori (the culturally preferred pedagogy principle).
- Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga (the socio-economic mediation principle).
- Whānau (the extended family structure principle).
- Kaupapa (the collective philosophy principle).
- Tino rangatiratanga (the self-determination principle).

The process of WNI is an action research methodology, designed to support Māori leadership, participation and guidance in designing the research questions and all associated processes. Broad themes were developed from a review of the literature, pre-tested, translated into a set of broad group focus questions pre-tested again and further adapted to reflect the ideas of the participants. The entire research process was based on collaborative inquiry, with emphasis on collecting and celebrating the good news stories that enhance cultural identity, spirit and vision.

Kaupapa Māori research encompasses the following values described by Cram, McCreanor, Smith, Nairn, and Johnstone (2006):

- Research that is controlled by Māori, conducted by Māori researchers and with Māori.
- The prioritisation of Māori in research questions, methods, processes and dissemination.
- It is not a prescribed set of methods but rather about how research should be framed
- It focuses on generating solutions and aspirations from within Māori realities.

- It contains a notion of action and commitment to change, and to Māori development.

These foundational values underpinned this study.

Supplementary Data

Supplementary data included pre-programme and post-completion self-evaluation surveys. The surveys included questions relating to self-efficacy and confidence, as well as self-assessments of knowledge and skill levels. The research team analysed 203 Ahikaa self-evaluation completion surveys. This data was included in the triangulation of the research findings. The completion surveys provided data, in the form of demographic detail, ratings based feedback and commentary about the programmes generally and about specific impacts of the programme on participants.

Results

A number of themes emerged from the narratives and study data that are consistent with the literature on indigenous suicide prevention. The major themes that correlate with the outcomes of Ahikaa for suicide prevention as interpreted through the Mauri Ora Framework are presented⁴.

Kahupō – Evidence of Risk Factors

High numbers of risk factors (associated with suicide) were identified by participants at the time that they embarked on the Ahikaa programmes. Participants and their whānau had reportedly experienced historical trauma, structural violence and institutional and systemic racism associated with kahupō (Kruger, et al., 2004). The stories they shared reflected substantial disadvantage including socioeconomic disadvantage, parental histories of substance abuse or offending, parental discord or instability, compromised childrearing and high residential mobility. For most participants, these risk factors had been present throughout their childhoods, and remained features of their lives at the time that they entered the Ahikaa programmes.

⁴ The full study report can be viewed on <http://wakahourua.co.nz/research-projects>

It is not within the scope of this article to discuss in detail participant’s risk factors and experiences of kahupō prior to attending the Ahikaa programmes. However, a summary table of these is presented below.

Table 1: Kahupō indicators (pre Ahikaa)

Kahupō Indicators
Intergenerational experience of colonisation, loss of cultural cohesion and identity, marginalisation
Socio-economic disadvantage
Low levels of educational achievement, being NEET, health issues, early parenthood with limited whānau support.
Disconnection from cultural identity, social systems and institutions (e.g. employment, training sports or culture related), poverty restricting ability to fully participate in society
Powerlessness
Colonised thinking
Insecure or negative cultural identity
Whakamā, feelings of worthlessness, uselessness, self-condemnation; lack of pride in whānau
Hopelessness

When asked about their lives, views and attitudes, participants in this study described numerous experiences of cultural disconnection, ambivalent or negative views of Māori identity (in relation to themselves and others which was interpreted by the researchers as exemplifying colonised thinking and self-loathing). Many described schooling experiences in negative terms, with half of the participants leaving school early, and few having formal qualifications. Substance abuse and addiction was the most common health issue with features of depression and anxiety. Feelings of shame, worthlessness, feeling stuck and lacking motivation, direction and future vision were also commonly described by participants when they entered the Ahikaa programme.

Mauri Ora (Protective Factors)

Participants and their whānau identified a number of positive changes and experiences that they attributed to the Ahikaa programme. Table 2 below summarises participant’s descriptions of their experiences and movement towards mauri ora. The descriptions are broadly categorised according to the sources of restoration and

sustenance of mauri ora (ihi, wehi, wana) as illustrated in the Mauriora Framework.⁵

Table 2: Kahupō indicators (post Ahikaa)

Mauriora Indicators (post Ahikaa)
Wana
Maurioho
Hopefulness
Igniting the spark that burns within
Liberation
Ability to navigate and participate in socio-cultural milieu (e.g. sports clubs, social and cultural activities such as attending tangihanga and hui)
Engaged in career development, further education, training, employment and business to improve economic outcomes
Connectedness
Ihi
Rangatiratanga
Sense of agency, self-efficacy, confidence
Decolonisation
Wehi
Strong, positive cultural identity
Mana, self and whānau-acceptance, sense of usefulness, having a role to play/contribution to make, participation in reciprocity

Wana: Coming to Life, Hope-Building Impacts

Participants described their experiences during and following participation in Ahikaa entrepreneurship programmes in terms of *mauri oho* or an awakening, gaining a different, more hopeful and liberating way of seeing their whānau, their communities, the world around them and their own place and potential within that.

Mauri oho. "I think we are all at mauri oho.... By that...I mean awakening....to the entrepreneur thing. It opened up my mind."

Motivation. Participants spoke of their increased motivation and confidence as a result of Ahikaa. For example, they described the programme as: “my fuel for getting me up” and reflecting on how the programme built confidence “It built my confidence in terms of that, built my self-belief in what I could do."

⁵ As previously noted the dimensions should be viewed as intertwined and fluid, rather than compartmentalised.

Opportunity recognition and hope-building.

Opportunity recognition is a key part of an entrepreneurial mindset. In relation to suicide prevention, opportunity recognition provides hope and future vision. Participants in this research described opportunity recognition activities in the programme as providing a new way of looking at the world. For example: "It ...opened our eyes to all the different opportunities out there in the world"; "Yup they've all stayed out [of jail] because I think that they realise there's a better life, they realise that there are more opportunities."

Wehi: Seeing and taking up opportunities to flourish

Finding Purpose. Significant feedback from participants on the Ahikaa programmes reported a new-found sense of purpose, of having contributions to make and significant roles to play in the present and future.

I was quite valued for my contribution to the class...I didn't realise it but I had quite a lot to offer.... so I could share a lot of things with the other people in the class.

Being with a lot of these people... was really uplifting and I identified that I could mix and mingle in that world. It was just my own personal barrier and I didn't need to use flash words to confuse everybody with.

Rangatiratanga, confidence, sense of agency, self-efficacy. Increased confidence and sense of self-efficacy were identified as outcomes of Ahikaa programmes. The capacity for collective self-determination is linked to indigenous suicide prevention. Self-determination and the Māori cultural construct of *rangatiratanga* (exercising authority over the choices one makes) are considered to be key protective factors for Māori suicide prevention (Lawson-Te Aho, 2013).

It gave me self-belief I think, by progressing through it with others, I realised that I had strengths in different areas that I didn't think I could really place myself in that category at the time.

Connectedness. Connectedness can take many forms. Participants spoke about increased experiences of (cultural) connectedness to their whānau, to Ahikaa whānau, culture and identity, and of connecting with and growing in

confidence and ready to participate in seeking and taking up economic development opportunities. Cultural connectedness has been extensively linked to indigenous suicide prevention (Wexler, et al., 2015) and is identified as a protective factor.

Whanaungatanga. *Whanaungatanga* is a Māori cultural construct that means family and extended family connections and relationships. Ahikaa entrepreneurship education programmes are whānau orientated, celebrating whānau or extended family models of relationship and utilising collective based teaching and learning methods. The majority of participants in this study embarked on and participated in the entrepreneurship programmes as a collective. Membership in positive, life affirming, non-judgemental cultural collectives has a powerful influence on wellbeing.

Whānau transformation. "You're changing. Sometimes your whānau...you think it's just impacting on you, but your change is actually impacting on a whole bunch of other people."

One of the most exciting findings from this study concerned the role that a programme operated on the basis of kaupapa Māori, ako educational principles, with a strength-based, inter-generational focus reportedly had on whānau. Participants, whānau members and tutors consistently described the programme as strengthening and even transforming whānau.

In most cases, whānau participated in Ahikaa after witnessing positive transformations in other members of their whānau. Whānau development and transformation, exhibited for example by whānau participating together, working together and appreciating each other, having increased areas of common interest and shared goals, increased levels and depth of whānau communication, whanaungatanga and support, opportunity recognition, collective responsibility, and access to relevant services were identified by participants throughout this study. A strong sense of connection and positive relationships with whānau is associated with Māori suicide prevention (Lawson-Te Aho, 2016a).

Hopefulness.

Hopefulness to me means being able to achieve my goals.....I'm hopeful that the hard work that I do pays off. That I'm able to keep good opportunities. That I'm in a good position to make good change I suppose - in my life and the life of others.

Increased hopefulness – epitomised in experiences such as having a future vision, increased confidence, sense of self-efficacy and capability, pride in self and each other, self-esteem, identification of development pathways, opportunity recognition and uptake is a key theme in the participant narratives.

Hope and the capacity to maintain hope are foundational to Māori and indigenous suicide prevention. A sense of culturally constructed collective agency (rather than individualised agency) is critical for the maintenance of hope. However, perhaps more important or at least, equally important is the addition of pathways to experiences of hope/hopefulness.

Whānau talk and togetherness and communication. "I think just having open discussions and not feeling like I was under anybody - kinda being on the same level as the adults"

A number of participants in this research commented that their whānau had found new ways of speaking with each other, that communication had improved and that inter-generational relationships had grown. For youthful participants in particular, developing their appreciation of, comfort and ability to communicate with adults or *old people* as equal participants in collective endeavours, was a new experience for them.

The ability to talk about suicide is as yet still considered to be more of a risk than protective factor for suicide in the general population. However, indigenous scholars agree that talking is vital for indigenous suicide prevention. The importance of talk was identified in this study as part of the building of relationships. While there is considerably more to the supporters and detractors of talking for indigenous suicide prevention, this small study confirmed the need for more research on the myriad of beneficial

outcomes of communication as a group and culturally aligned processes for Māori.

Managing conflict.

(Name of rangatahi participant) has completely opened her eyes on life. You couldn't talk to her back then you know. You know that bad step dad relationship kind of thing but now me and her we're good friends. We communicate way better.

I think that's what helped them a lot too, was to talk about how they were feeling. Coz in our family we never spoke about that, it was just either - just leave her, leave her alone she's in a bad mood. And then that was it - LEAVE IT! But nope. We have all learnt it's unhealthy to bottle things up.

Participants shared experiences around how they had learnt to deal with challenges and situations in a more constructive way. They attributed this development in part to the whānau discussions, negotiation and communication strategies learnt through the Ahikaa programme.

Discussion

Indigenous entrepreneurship education provides one avenue through which the movement of individuals and groups away from kahupō and towards mauri ora might be facilitated. This opens up potential pathways for suicide prevention through the hope-building effects of indigenous entrepreneurship education which acts to counteract the effects of hopelessness.

The Ahikaa programme was a contemporary kaupapa Māori, non-clinical educational vehicle that promoted community development and self-determination thereby reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors associated with suicide.

The Towards Mauri Ora research found that the utilisation of cultural values (tikanga and a pedagogy based on 'ako'), promotion of cultural pride and identity, building of an entrepreneurial mindset and skills, contributed to participant experiences of whānau transformation and journeys towards mauri ora. These factors are all found in indigenous suicide prevention scholarship and intervention design (Lawson-Te Aho, 2014).

Programmes such as Ahikaa entrepreneurship education have the potential to move vulnerable indigenous groups towards mauri ora on a larger and more liberating scale than individualised clinical approaches. However, ultimately, Māori suicide is symptomatic of unresolved historical trauma together with a contemporary crisis of inequality, inequity, and oppression.

Relevance of Ahikaa for Māori Suicide Prevention

When considering the potential of indigenous entrepreneurship as hope-building (to create movement away from the risks of kahupō towards mauri ora) several interconnected propositions are offered as key principles to underpin efforts to reduce and prevent Māori suicide. These propositions are supported both by the literature and the outcomes of this study. However, further research is needed to more precisely examine, articulate and validate the pathways from suicide kahupō to suicide prevention mauriora.

Political choices are connected to Māori suicide rates. Suicide is one of the outcomes of a range of factors a significant number of which are socio-political in nature. Political adherence to and public support for neo-liberal economic policies has made New Zealand hostile and unsafe for many whānau. Māori are consistently and seriously over-represented amongst those who experience the most brutal, hope-destroying consequences of neo-liberal politics. These consequences include unprecedented rates of homelessness or insecure or no employment, erosion of worker rights, third world health and educational outcomes, a highly punitive justice system and imprisonment rates for Māori that are second to none in the world. Suicide is not merely an issue of individual *dysfunction* (Pridmore, 2011) or inability to cope but tracks the brutality of socio-political choices and processes. It could be argued that we each have responsibilities to create and maintain a nation in which youth and vulnerable groups are provided with choices and hope, as it is the perceived absence of these that is a frequent precursor to suicide.

Suicide prevention should not be simply or primarily the domain of professional clinicians focused on treating or correcting on individual psychopathology or

dysfunction. Responses to suicide require action and movement by communities – through reclaiming rangatiratanga (Lawson-Te Aho, 2013). This also takes into account criticism of the post-mortem analysis of risk factors, and in particular the findings – or more correctly the assumption that mental disorders such as depression (conceptualised as internally located within the individual and confined within the person) must have been present in order for suicide to be effected. This is a circular argument. In effect the research team found that suicide cannot be considered in isolation from wider social disadvantage and the cluster of negative outcomes affecting whānau Māori. Suicide is considered here to be one of a number of symptoms, signs or indicators of the inequities, distress and dis-ease disproportionately affecting Māori whānau and communities, and leading to short or long term experiences of kahupō. Defining or confining suicide prevention and intervention to academic, professional, clinical and individualised spheres of expertise and responsibility risks diverting attention from the role of socio-political policies and priorities, and risks de-emphasising the vital role that socio-political institutions and communities can, and should play, in changing the conditions that make suicide a response to ongoing pain, lack of hope and perceived lack of opportunities.

Proposition: Healing can be a collective process. The multi-generational effects of historical trauma and ongoing colonisation (Pihama, Reynolds, Smith, Reid, Smith, & Nana, 2014), compromises the capacity to heal, flourish and transform and as such, are implicated in Māori suicide. Amongst the losses experienced by Māori through the colonising mission, land alienation, destruction of an economic base, and a sense of powerlessness in the face of negative social, educational, health, justice system, employment and income outcomes, and racism (in all its forms) and a consequent impairment in the ability to plan and act effectively in and on the world. The Ahikaa entrepreneurship programme was designed to re-build traditions of entrepreneurial mindsets and action. Key aspects of the entrepreneurial mindset include opportunity recognition (the practise of looking at our environments through eyes and minds attuned to opportunity), visioning and planning,

recognising and utilising strengths, addressing or remediating weaknesses, and resilience (coming back from failure or adversity).

Proposition: Reclaiming rangatiratanga in our lives can be self-sustaining. Whānau commonly face multiple challenges, from within and without, and over generations. These challenges are typically intertwined, maintaining and sustaining each other, compounding existing issues and impacting on the lives of whānau in multiple ways. In addition, the many challenges with which Māori are disproportionately forced to struggle, including suicide and its sequelae for whānau, friends, hapū, iwi and communities, are symptomatic of waning levels of mauri ora within many communities, whānau and groups.

A potentially useful aspect of this situation is that intervention can occur through a variety of pathways, and positive changes in one area of challenge can impact positively on other areas also. Just as a problem saturated situation can be self-sustaining, so too can the solutions. That is a basic tenet of Ahikaa entrepreneurship education programmes. Similarly, interventions involving whānau and hapū groups may increase the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions.

Proposition: Experiences of hopelessness, powerlessness and perceived lack of choice are associated with suicidality. Interventions highlighting opportunity recognition, providing experiences of efficacy and choice are worth exploring. As a strength-based, experiential programme, Ahikaa entrepreneurship education offers hope in place of hopelessness. The pedagogy is ako (Pere, 1982) Māori, the goal is reclaiming rangatiratanga in our lives, our whānau and communities. A key outcome is movement Towards Mauriora.

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Glossary of Terms

Ahi	Fire
Kā	To burn or to glow
Ahi Kā	To keep the home fires burning
Ako	Māori concept of learning
Hapū	sub tribe
Hinengaro	mind
Ihi	essential force, excitement, thrill, power, charm, personal magnetism
Iwi	tribe
Kahupō	spiritual blindness
Kaupapa	subject matter
Kaupapa Māori	Māori subject matter
Mana	prestige
Maurioho	awakening
Mauriora	wellbeing
Rangatiratanga	chieftainship
Ngākau	heart
Tinana	body
Wana	to be exciting, thrilling, inspiring, stimulating, moving, rousing
Wairua	spirit
Wehi	to be awesome
Whānau	family and extended family/kin
Whanaungatanga	family relationships and dynamics

Dr Catherine Love, Dr Love has worked in the arena of indigenous and endogenous development for three decades while continuing to be active in iwi/Māori leadership and development. She has held national and international positions in health, psychology, social service, justice and educational leadership. Dr Love's primary focus now is building recognition and efficacy of community systems supporting child and family wellbeing. Her work highlights the perspectives and voices of indigenous and endogenous families and

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Appendix 1

Mauri Ora Framework

Mauri ora is achieved by a balance between



Figure A1: Mauri ora framework