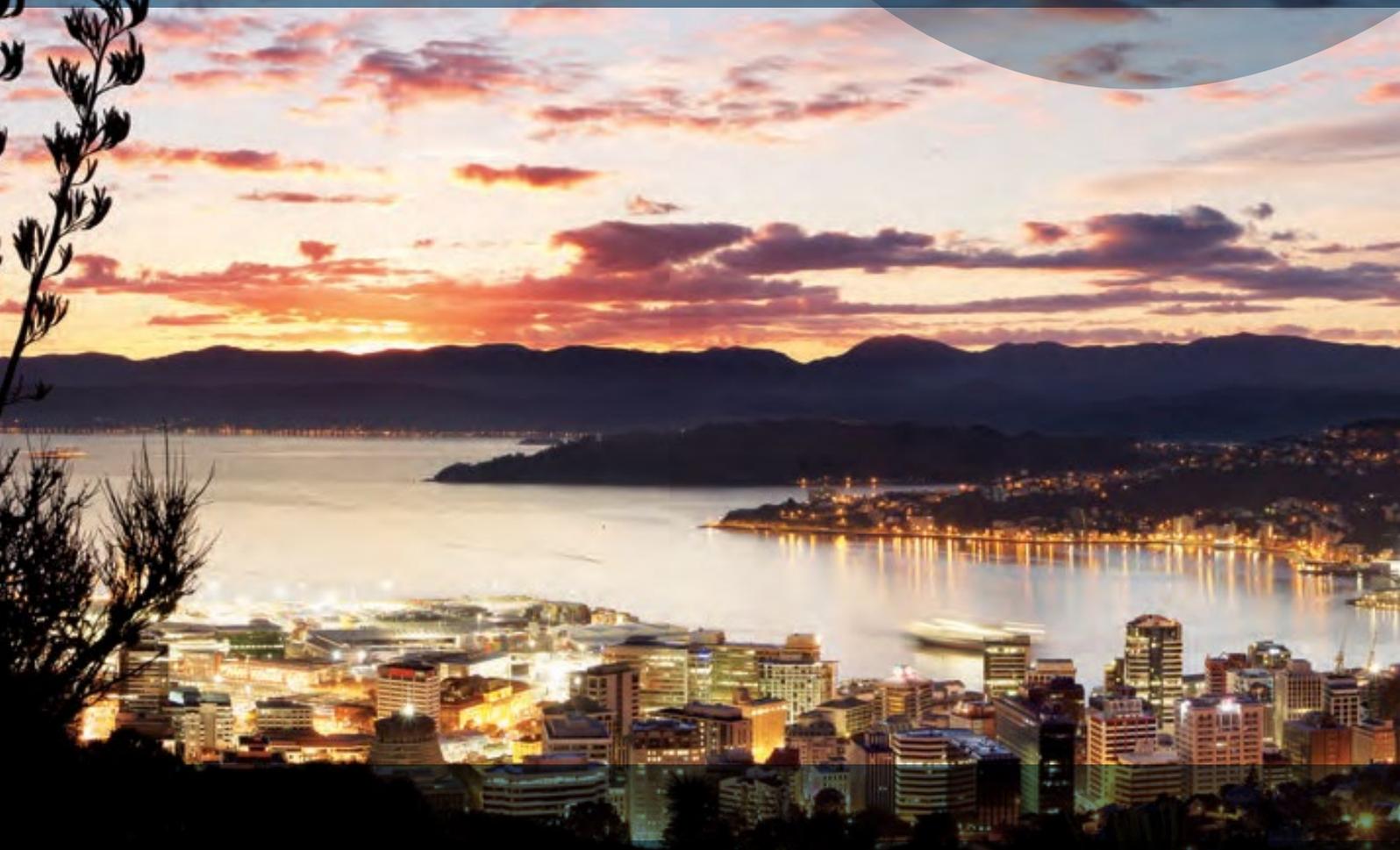


Protecting the Public – Enhancing the Profession



E tiaki ana i te Hapori –
E manaaki ana i nga mahi

Edited proceedings from the Social Workers
Registration Board Conference 2013



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Editorial

The Social Workers Registration Act was passed in 2003 after many years of debate and consultation. In November 2013 the Social Workers Registration Board held a conference, *Protecting the Public – Enhancing the Profession*, to provide an opportunity for those attending to work collectively to create a vision for social work and the social service sector in Aotearoa New Zealand as the profession moves into the next decade. The two-day conference, attended by over 200 social workers and social service organisation managers, was also a celebration of 10 years of the registration of social workers in Aotearoa New Zealand. There are, at this writing, 4,500 registered social workers in Aotearoa New Zealand, which we believe is something to celebrate indeed.

The PPEP conference was planned to provide an opportunity both for experienced presenters as well as first-time presenters to share their practice and research experiences of social work in Aotearoa New Zealand. Papers submitted for the workshops and concurrent sessions were peer reviewed before acceptance. A total of 51 papers and three workshops were chosen for presentation from the abstracts presented. These were presented in themes: registration, practice, education and a special session on Māori models of education.

The conference opened with a speech by the Hon Paula Bennett, Minister for Social Development, followed by Toni Hocquard, chair of the Social Workers Registration Board, who outlined the history of social work registration in New Zealand. Keynote speakers included Dame Moira Gibb, former chair of the English Social Work Reform Board, who spoke on the reform of the social work profession in England, and Professor Vishanthie Sewpaul from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, in Durban, South Africa, who provided an overview of registration, regulation and the professionalisation of social work. The conference concluded with a workshop on the contribution from Aotearoa New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region to the review and revision of the agreed international definition of social work.

All paper and workshop presenters were invited to submit a full article for publication in the edited conference proceedings. These submissions were further blind peer-reviewed by at least two reviewers.

These proceedings are divided into two sections. The first section has a focus on social work practice; the second on education.

In the practice section, Jenny Aimers and Peter Walker challenge practice education and regulation to ensure that community development is considered an integral part of social work practice. Continuing with a community theme, Antonia Hendrick and Sue Young explore community approaches to protecting vulnerable children; Michelle Derrett looks beyond beginning social work practice and presents a framework for specialist health social work competence; in separate contributions, Judy Wivell and Gaylene Little, Geoffrey Nauer and Penny Ehrhardt report on putting research into practice with service users of a violence prevention organisation; Zoey Henley proposes a bicultural framework to support social work supervision; Helen Simmons, Wheturangi Walsh-Tapiata, Litea Meo-Sewabu, and Antoinette Umugwaneza also consider the bicultural necessity of social work practice in Aotearoa New Zealand and propose a bicultural framework, particularly for social workers from outside New Zealand, as a pathway to competent practice; and Mike Webster looks at the concept of, and a vision for, social work leadership.

The five education papers in this collection come from the range of tertiary education institutions teaching social work programmes: Wānanga, institutes of technology and polytechnics, and universities. Selina Akhter and Rose Leonard discuss research on the experiences of Bachelor of Social Work students on the programme offered by Te Wānanga o Aotearoa; Peter Boyd, Catherine Dickey and Shirley Ikkala discuss a whakapapa-based framework at Manukau Institute of Technology that sets out the processes involved with ensuring students are prepared to work with diversity; Lesley Pitt from Western Institute of Technology at

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9 Takepu-principled approach: A new vision for teaching social work practice in Aotearoa

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Abstract

The purpose of the research reported here was to gather reflections of the learning experience of taura (students) of Te Tohu Paetahi Ngā Poutoko Whakarara Oranga, Bachelor of Social Work : Biculturalism in Practice (BSW (BIP)) at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWOA). A total of nine taura (students) interviews were analysed by using kaupapa Māori methods, takepu principles and qualitative research design. The findings revealed that the students felt fulfilled throughout their journeys as ngā takepu (Māori principles, values, and beliefs) principled approach of BSW have awakened (mauri oho) their consciousness of who they are and made them challenge their hegemonic thinking. The findings were discussed in the light of the BSW framework and social work education and practice of Aotearoa.

Keywords: biculturalism, social work, social work education, Māori worldviews

Introduction

Biculturalism has been a major focus in the social work education curriculum in Aotearoa. Education providers' utmost priority is to ensure that students develop knowledge of Māori worldviews and their epistemological basis (Pappa, 2005). However, "Māori have had very limited opportunities to choose, construct and implement social work education options, integrating Māori worldviews and ways of life" (Pohatu, 2010, p. 11). Generally, teaching and learning are taking place in mainstream sectors from outsiders' perspectives which contextualise Māori bodies of knowledge within the zone of a dominant worldview. It is still questionable whether outsiders can claim legitimate ownership of the knowledge by translation and contextualisation of indigenous knowledge. To achieve competence in one cultural perspective one must own it, and ownership comes from ontological positioning as to who s/he is. Tangata whenua (people of the land) in Aotearoa are insiders in that culture as s/he can feel and act from the heart by inheriting both the seen and unseen (wairua/spirituality) truth of tangata whenua (Māori) worldviews. Māori 'as insiders' to the kaupapa (topic) are at the margin of the social work education (Pohatu, 2003). There has been a dearth of initiatives to bring them to the centre. Te Tohu Paetahi Ngā Poutoko Whakarara Oranga (Bachelor of Social Work [Biculturalism in practice]) programme at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa challenges the marginalisation and creates a safe space for Māori to navigate the social work kaupapa from an insiders' perspective. The biculturalism embraces both Māori and non-Māori bodies of knowledge, worldviews, and epistemology. The vehicle for this is ngā takepu principles that explore alternative methodologies informed by Kaupapa Māori (KM) philosophies. The programme began in 2005 but there had been no research to track graduates' experience and to see whether the programme was in line with its original intent, rigour, and integrity.

The focus of this research was to invite graduates to share their stories and reflections on their learning experience before, during, and after their journey with the BSW programme.

Bachelor of Social Work : Biculturalism in Practice (BSW (BIP))

The BSW (BIP) is a three-year, full-time social work degree programme of 360 credits consisting of 21 kōnae ako (papers) accredited by New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) (Pohatu, 2010). The bicultural notion of BSW recognises the historical foundation of the nation Aotearoa and consciously created equal space for Māori bodies of knowledge to be constructed alongside non-Māori bodies of knowledge (Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, 2004). This mirrors Apirana Ngata's vision: "Māori philosophic utterances may exist in parallel columns alongside those of any other races" (Ta Apirana Turupa Ngata, 1929, cited in Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, 2013, p. 34). Dr Rongo Wetere, initiator and prime mover of TWOA, signalled the significance of this organic philosophy and "set its direction when he required that a Bachelor of Social Work be established and that would have a bi-cultural framework" (Pohatu, 2010, p. 11). Taina Pohatu, the designer of the programme named the degree.

According to Pohatu (2010), best practice always includes takepu-applied principles which inform practice and are more relevant than abstract theories. The conception of takepu includes Māori wisdom, culture, applied principles, ethical positions, and ways of life to convey ways of humanness to guide te ao Māori. They are all about supporting people in their relationships, kaupapa, and environment in the pursuit of mauri ora. According to Pohatu (2008a), "Takepu as applied principles signpost to generations how to live, to behave, then engage with people as they pursue the quest of their aspirations and needs" (p. 2). Takepu is fundamental to every BSW (BIP) class, to the content, assessments, and the delivery methods. The six selected takepu of the degree are: āhurutanga (safe space), te whakakoharangatiratanga (respectful relationship), kaitiakitanga (responsible trusteeship and guardianship), tinorangatiratanga (absolute integrity), tau kumekume (positive and negative tensions), and mauri ora (well-being) (Pohatu, 2003).

Takepu āhurutanga is the heart of BSW (BIP) which creates and maintains a safe and quality space for study. In this learning environment, mauri or the life force can be felt. Teaching has a humane feeling to it. This humaneness allows students to open up irrespective of their differences. It is crucial to be humble in BSW about knowing others' perspectives. According to Clark (2006), this is epistemological humility reflecting a stance of the 'humble knower'. Humble knowers honour and value others' perspectives. They do not interfere with others' valuable construction of reality. The students and teachers of BSW constantly ask themselves "Are we imposing anything that does not fit others' worldviews"? This approach of humility in knowing in the BSW (BIP) not only represents āhurutanga (safe space) but also te whakakoharangatiratanga (respectful relationships) which, along with other takepu, interact in a holistic manner and invite students to position strongly in the centre of the social work content and papers.

Kōnae ako (papers) of BSW are unique in that each paper is named using Te Reo Māori with English translations. There is a historical/revolutionary or simple but phenomenological intent in naming these kōnae ako which creates spaces for claiming Māori bodies of knowledge. For example, names of some of the kōnae ako are: Ngā Ao-Ngā Tirohanga (worldviews, significance, and consequences), He Tikanga Tukutuku A Te Tangata Whenua (indigenous social work systems and legacies), Tou Ao: Tōku Ao (uniqueness and diversity), Kia Tū Rangatira Ai (struggle for cultural equity), and Te Tango Mana: Te Whakamana (oppression & empowerment). (Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, 2014).

The takepu-principled approach: a transformation Takepu principles utilise core transformational elements for both teachers and students including uniqueness (who they are), contextualisation, story-telling, and conscientisation (Pohatu, 2010).

Uniqueness: who they are

This question is explored by asking students an ontological question: 'what is their purpose of being or reasons for being or why they exist in this world?' This existential question allows them to explore their worldviews, belief systems, principles, values, orientations, and so on. Thus students go back to their cultural principles and values and find that they have already been defined by their ancestors. When they know their own values and orientations they become closer to themselves.

Contextualisation

The BSW utilises a contextualisation process by which students share their stories, old knowing, and lived experience. It is not only sharing, listening, and being empathetic to each other but also engaging in a dialogue to make sense of what was told. While the story is clear to the teller, the listeners try to make it alright and useful for them. In other words they want to know how much of the stories/experience from other contexts can be utilised in the present context of Aotearoa social work. Students struggle and sit for ages. They try to unlock their door of experience (Pohatu, 2010). It gives them a chance to reflect on another time and space so that they can find another layer of meaning for their beliefs in new contexts and time with a new meaning. As they make meaning, they ask "how do I understand another person's frame of reference?" (Fred, 2009).

Personal stories and conscientisation

When students share stories of lived experiences, they become critically aware because they hear each other's sufferings, loss, and oppression. They come to realise how one's own experience and background affects understandings and actions in the world. They become conscientised and question traditions. The stories give a time and space to heal as they deconstruct by being critically aware of not knowing the effects of their own perspective (Fred, 2009). This is an educational process that develops a greater ability to think critically, that is the ability to read one's world more deeply and ask meaningful 'why' questions – the central theme of Paulo Freire's framework of conscientisation (Freire, 1972). This promotes transformation (Fred, 2009). The intent of the paper is to see how the gathered stories and reflections are in line with the framework of transformation. In the following section the research methodology highlights the methods of collecting and analysing the stories.

Methodology/methods

The study is of an exploratory nature concerning the essence of graduates' experience of their BSW learning journey. Kaupapa Māori research methodology, ngā takepu principles, and qualitative research methods were utilised for the purpose.

Kaupapa Māori research has been grounded on the concept of power relation in the research arena (Smith, 2005). It is a counter-hegemonic approach to Western forms of research where Māori has been seen on the margin of the research paradigm. According to the KM framework, Māori should guide and control the process of research (Bishop, 1996). Similarly, ngā takepu ensure participants' full engagement in all aspects of research by giving them a space to 'voice' and take ownership of research knowledge (Pohatu, 2008b).

The present research utilised KM principles and takepu in a number of forms. Karakia or prayer was an integral part of each hui (gathering, meeting), interviews, and presentations conducted for the research. Most of the members of the team were Māori and fluent in Te Reo (Māori language) with subject expertise. They were involved at all stages – from the initial stages of identifying research area to disseminating findings. The hui process was used in every step of the research. The present research incorporates the whanau (family) and whakawhanaungatanga (process of establishing relationship), koha (gift), kai (food), manaaki (hospitality), and tiaki (to care for). Takepu te whakakoharangatiranga refers to respect, honour, and acknowledgement of the participant's contribution to the research. Takepu kaitiakitanga (guardianship

and trusteeship) refers to the notion of “he kaitiaki katoa tatou” (we are all responsible) which makes both researchers and participants responsible for the research. This notion of kaitiakitanga was used to guide, care, support, and protect the research processes including Māori tikanga (ethics) and information.

Participants

Participants were selected from year three of the BSW (BIP). Some of them completed years one and two of the BSW and some obtained Diploma qualifications from other tertiary institutions. Researchers (the authors being Kaiako as well as the members of the research committee) obtained a list from Te Wānanga students’ database (tekete). A total of 17 names were selected from the list to reflect a balance of ethnicity and gender. Initial emails and telephone contacts brought 13 responses. An invitation with a cover letter, information sheet, and consent form was sent to them. Out of 13, nine attended the hui or group discussion prior to the individual interviews. The purpose of the hui was to create an atmosphere of whakawhanaungatanga to warm up the relationships. All the processes and information of research was explained in the hui. Nine graduates, of whom four (two males,) were of Māori descent, two (males) from European, two from India (one male) and one (female) from a Samoan ethnic background. All interviews were carried out in English.

Data-collection method

Data was collected in three stages: (i) takitini, that is, group discussion setting for an initial korero; (ii) takitahi, individual interviews; and (iii) whai maramatanga, which is to reconduct hui or interviews to clarify some points (if needed after interviews) (Pohatu & Pohatu, 2009). The primary data were gathered through the personal stories shared by the participants in kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face-to-face) with kairangahau (researchers). The interviews were guided by a questionnaire which was developed by three wā (time) categories of before, during, and after (Pohatu, 2010, p. 22). Some example questions were: What had been your tertiary education experience before starting the degree? What was your experience of the degree during the programme? How useful was the learning from the degree after the programme?

Each interview lasted for approximately 60 minutes. The questions were checked for interpretation, appropriateness, and time in a pilot interview. A committee consisting of five members was formed to check and confirm the questionnaire. The committee members included two kaiarahi (kaupapa lead), kaiako matua (programme lead), the programme developer and one kaiako (non-Māori indigenous, lecturer). Approval of the TWOA Ethics Committee was obtained. The research was funded by internal contestable fund (ICF) of Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Permission was taken to record the interviews. All audio tapes were translated and video tapes were kept to provide evidential records whenever needed. The transcribed stories were sent to the participants for verification.

Data analysis

Nine stories were analysed and discussed by the members of the research committee. Care was taken to capture general themes first and then individual secondary themes were brought under each main theme (Richmond, 2002).

Each transcript was coded by three coders and five major areas of codes were identified. The coders were chosen from the research committee and the BSW team. Cross-checking was done on the themes to see if any inconsistencies had emerged between different interpreters. The next section describes the research findings.

Findings

The structure of this section derives from three research questions. These are graduates’ reflections on their academic journey before, during, and after the course. Within each stage of their learning journey graduates’ reflections identified a number of subthemes. Each section provides a summary of these.

Graduates' reflections before the course

The findings revealed that specific aspects that influenced students to choose the course were: where they were brought up; influences of significant persons or environment; professional background; academic background; migration and other relevant factors. Some of them are presented below:

Hegemonic environment and perceived institutional racism

A number of participants stated that they came from a hegemonic, white, and racist background that included the community environment in which they were brought up, the educational institution they studied in, and the statutory work environment they worked in. They thought that they would be challenged by the programme. Four of their reflections:

I was quite racist before coming here..., I didn't have a clue what biculturalism was because obviously it didn't mean anything to me being down South it didn't really apply because I was surrounded by white people.

I could have gone to M.I.T, but I found M.I.T. to be hegemonic if you like, they were too structured which suited me probably but – I wanted to challenge my practice which is why I chose the Wānanga.

I did Certificate in Social Work at Invercargill. European white-centred, the class was full of white, had Māori in the community but did not talk with them. Did a bit of work on the Treaty of Waitangi, not a great deal.

I came into the programme very conscious of the fact that I'd come from a... that I knew would be challenged not necessarily by others but certainly by myself, that meant that I had to be prepared to look at myself and invite others to reflect their own observations.

Struggle for cultural equity in a mainstream educational institution

Some students came with a quest to reclaim and establish their cultural identities. In particular, some reflections include a diverse range of realities such as: feeling abused in the mainstream social work education environment; were caught up with two confusing identities in two cultures; being Māori, never validated as a thinking, educated person; or did not want to be awakened to a Māori worldview because of past injustices and sufferings. These taurira came to the course to find a safe space to validate their own essence. Two stated:

[I]t was a struggle and that was a challenge because there were 250 Māori students, we would do karakia in the morning, we had a small area of grass and when we did karakia we used to have things thrown at us... sometimes verbal abuse from social sciences but we held on and continued, the pain of going through that and the learning got me into there was another way.

I went to Auckland College, the only course they had available for me was social work, so I put myself in thinking, I am in trouble because I don't know what that is, having to be grounded in the certificate, I got lost...but I couldn't see myself surviving in the mainstream, so I came to Te Wānanga... asking for help. I think that very night that I joined, it really opens me...the Bachelor of Social Work here in Te Wānanga will allow me to explore more of myself and be accept[ing] of who I am.

Being Māori, never validated as a thinking, educated person

Prior to entering the programme I had been exposed to Biculturalism in Practice in its infancy, usually it meant that a bit of tangata whenua thinking, language, or readings was inserted into an educational system as a tokenistic gesture to refashion and soften the harshness of western framework, methodology and intent.

Being Māori was neither validated nor aligned with being a thinking educated person. I was positioned by educators as the subject of need. Western principled practiced is taught today as a validated positioning, ngā tikangā me ngā reo is silenced in most institutions.

These taurira came from a wide range of academic backgrounds with more than one qualifications: Psychology; Certificate in Mental Health; Nursing; Certificate of Teaching People With Disability; Bachelor of Arts; Diploma of Social Work (ACE, Wintec Polytechnic); Te Tari Mātauranga Māori Certificate of Social Work at MIT; Diploma in Social Work (MIT); IBT Social Work from Wānanga; Wintec Certificate in Social Services; and Diploma from UNITEC.

Reflection of learning experience during the course

Several subthemes emerged from the stories within this stage of reflection. Some of the key themes were: students felt fulfilled and satisfied throughout the journey; perceived that the degree challenged and shifted hegemonic thinking and approaches to Māori and other cultures; they felt that they were more confident as to who they were and their worldviews were validated by the programme.

Felt fulfilled throughout the journey

As reflected:

My experience at the Wānanga if I have to give it a score out of say one to ten, I would say ten: I thoroughly enjoyed, although initially had some reservations but I did thoroughly enjoy my learning there, I really did, I am looking at coming to do some more studying I'm not quite sure when but the Wānanga will be my first choice and I've actually told people to come here because I found it to be sort of like a family setting.

Sense of gratitude and indebtedness

One student felt that he had a sense of gratitude, an indebtedness to Wānanga. He felt he was very fortunate to be accepted into the course and it was a real opportunity and its influence would stay for the rest of his life. Another found Wānanga was very forgiving and non-judgemental. Wānanga do not judge people from their past. A senior member felt very respectful. As he reflected:

[S]ometimes I think being the older person you can feel some vulnerability to whether you'll be accepted into a group of younger people, whether your views will be heard or whether they'll even be relevant, but at no point did I ever have a sense of being rejected, I always felt that there was a sense of being welcomed. I was heard, I was listened to, I was responded to appropriately and treated with huge respect.

A shift of thinking

A student came from a white background and had very little understanding of Māori and other cultures. He came to the course to challenge his hegemonic thinking. Now he felt more cultured, more enriched in cultural understandings. Previously when he was with people from other cultures he got annoyed easily but now it did not worry him. Now he was more open to talk about Māori cultural tattoos and whakapapa. As he stated:

Still hegemonic stuff happening, I think it's getting better, I'm certainly more easy-going, I'm not so racist now...I spent a long time living the white man culture but I think it's getting better...I still get annoyed when I go into [a] shop and someone speaks in another language, that annoys me, I find that quite rude, but it doesn't worry me as much as it used to, I used to get quite brassed off actually, but now I'm more accepting of other cultures.

The course challenged taurira hegemonic and Pakeha thinking

Taurira came to the course with an idea that their hegemonic and white-centred thinking would be challenged by the course and by themselves. Now they felt that the course did challenge their thinking. One student said:

the most profound effect was the impact of biculturalism on me in my life, and I guess reflecting back over the many years of how ineffective I had been as a pakeha male, and how I had to challenge much of my own thinking and much of my own values and beliefs in that time last year and that at times was not easy, at times it was painful, but I believe I am continuing that the journey.

Much greater depth in practice

One student said that if such a learning opportunity had come much earlier in his career as a social worker it would have given him a much greater depth, but it was not lost. It gave a confidence to stop seeking ideas from others but from within.

Shifted approach in thinking

A taurira reflected that during the course now she tended to think more and put more thought in her work whereas she was quite reluctant before. Now she thought about legislation, Mauri ora, positioning, and where she had come from. Similarly, one said that it had given her a place to make sense of where her own thinking came from.

Singing waiata did not mean anything, but now...

A student said singing waiata had not meant anything to him before the course. As years went by, he found it was quite enlightening because he now knew the history behind the song. That history made sense to him. Now he sang with others and felt that he was giving something back to the culture.

Group activities

Some students who had an individualistic-based worldview did not like group work before, but during the course they deconstructed the idea. As reflected:

As a hegemonic I did not like being in a group because I believed that I could do by myself. But I quite enjoyed it. It was quite dynamic, quite brain storming. They brought their cultures and customs. Sometimes they cry. A kaiako cannot bring all those.

Looking at the books, no expression on the face, but expression on the face told the whole story.

Contents

The contents were reawakening and strengthening. One reflected that when she was going through real human development stories of class members she realised how much she had missed in her childhood. As she reflected:

That was such an awakening for me and I guess the thing I felt was the blatant racism that people had to grow up with and coped with and the alienation that they must have felt in terms of being Māori, and having to become a white New Zealander. And how they struggled with that and maintained and of course some of them were in fact reflecting on what the programme was offering them here, in terms of a reawakening and the strengthening of their own identity. I think the content was so powerful and meaningful.

Who I am

One student's understanding of 'who she is' was very powerful. She said:

[[I]f I know who I am genuinely, I will be very comfortable with myself but when I want to be somebody else other than what I am that is when the conflict begins and it was the impact of urbanisation and colonisation on Māori.

The BSW helped restore her identity. In this programme teachers dealt with students through their personal journeys and helped them understand genuinely who they are. One said:

I do not think I could have got that (personal stories) from any reading or books and that for me was the best part of doing the study here.

Awakening to Māori worldview and no longer walking in ignorance

One Māori student, reflected how awakening the impact of the programme was on her attitude. She had not wanted to be awakened to a Māori worldview before she joined the course but during the journey she thought she could no longer walk in ignorance.

Religion and culture

As a non-Māori, a student said that she was able to reflect her culture within the programme. Another said “the programme [had] accepted his religion and it was a gift – more than an academic learning”.

Different points of view and others’ perspectives

One reflection revealed that difference stood out and that the programme developed a tolerance to accept differences and to see different people speak from their levels. She stated that students saw how other taurira were talking from their perspectives which were totally different from her own. The programme provided a foundation for understanding ‘What I am exposing to you and to the others and how to listen to others’ point of view’.

Takepu

A number of reflections revealed that students knew takepu before but did not know the names. They had never articulated them but heard them while they were growing up in marae. Most of the reflections revealed that takepu provided safety and respect and most importantly Te Whakakoharangatiranga (respectful relationships). As one says:

takepu respect is very important because it was hard one for me. I have to respect point of view of another culture. Now I know I cannot change their culture. I can learn about it.

Contextualisation helps understanding of takepu. One student said “we can contextualise non-Māori knowledge to our situation, not to take them as they are, but to contextualise to my age, gender, ethnicity and how much it applies and how much I can draw from them”. Another student said, “these values help[ed] you work outside yourself, helped you find your own self and you need those values to create safe space for others.”

Reflection of learning experience after the course

The findings revealed that students applied the knowledge of takepu both in their personal and professional lives.

Personal life

Having been exposed to Māori worldviews, the European participants said they now understood colonisation and that how it was imposed was not right. They respected Māori culture now and one of them said:

[In his family he has a Pakeha partner and three Māori children.] I got racist around the culture before, now I talk about whakapapa [genealogy]. My son is going to [a] Māori school; before, no way he could go.

Professional life

The reflections revealed how students deconstructed their thinking and were applying the concepts of whanau, spirituality, Māori models, and the Treaty of Waitangi in mental health and prison sectors. Students realised that the medical model without whanau deals with only a part of a person. Some non-Māori students developed more confidence to say who they are to their service users. Students are in closer relationships with gang members, and support their Treaty rights.

One reflection revealed:

Now I use te whare tapa wha but before I did not. I start off with strength based then incorporate te Whare tapa wha. And spiritual part[s] as well. Applied in my personal practice. Organisation is very hegemonic, no chance to talk about even biculturalism. Very corporate.

Now no fear of saying that I am a Pakeha when you see a client from Māori background.

For prison clients, I engage them with whanau now but before I did not. I invite whanau, hapu, iwi now. I feel more enriched, my understanding of culture and Māori culture. Now in mental health, for recovery – families are coming and taking back to the families, holistic approach not only just mental stuff. Because I learned whanau is very important for social in transferring in interviews, developed relationships with the agency.

It's like you're mentally unwell so let's just work on your mental health stuff, don't worry about your social stuff but I think you need to. You need to work on the whole package it's a one-deal you know. I think I've spent too many years dealing with part of a person and not wanting to deal with it because you know your family problems have nothing to do with me.

Concerns and Issues

Some reflections included a number of concerns about using Māori language in class. When Kaiako switched into te reo Māori without translation of Māori words, it was felt that they needed to learn basic Māori words and phrases. As one reflected:

I struggle a lot with te reo Māori because I didn't get a lot of it but I'm a person that I always try. So I started my own little dictionary.

Another reflection:

I struggled during those times, but the good thing about it was that the body language was there to sort of tell you that this is, what they have been talking about, and what I felt was that there was a spirit within the room that allowed me to sense that. I think a lot of my learning happened in that perspective.

Another concern was that there were a few Europeans in class which was not enough to create a balance of perspectives. As one said:

My culture was challenged, my belief was challenged but there were not many in the class who could challenge other cultures. I went on with [a] hegemonic approach and a lot of people did not like that. But they need to be challenged too.

There were other concerns about administrative aspects such as that the noho classes were too long, about weekend noho and travelling issues, sometimes the class group was quite large, and so on.

Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to see how the BSW programme was reflected by the graduates and to explore whether the reflections are in line with the rigour and philosophy of the programme. The study explored students' experiences of their learning journey before and during the course and application of their learning after the course.

The 'before-course' reflections revealed that a number of students came from hegemonic environments characterised by dominant cultural worldviews and institutional and racial ideologies. As noted above, many students had been seeking a safe place where they could be challenged to address their hegemonic thinking. They came from a diverse range of realities including: unhappy engagement in the mainstream social work education environment; grappling with two confusing identities in two cultures; experiences of Māori knowledges and learning not being valued; and a reluctance to be awakened to Māori worldviews because of past injustices and sufferings. These taurira came to the course to find a safe place to validate the crux of their knowing their identity.

The 'during-course' reflections revealed that students felt fulfilled and satisfied throughout the course. They had a sense of gratitude and a debt to the Wānanga for their acceptance and to its enduring influence. Reflections also revealed that Wānanga was very forgiving and non-judgemental.

The students who came with expectations that the programme would challenge them, found that it did challenge their hegemonic thinking and they became more aware of Māori as well as other cultures. Those who came to reclaim their identity felt more awakened, more rounded, more cultured. Māori students perceived themselves as more confident about themselves and perceived that their worldviews were validated by the programme. The programme developed tolerance to accept differences and provided a foundation of understanding for what they were exposing to others and how to listen to others' point of view. It gave much greater depth in practice in terms of using more thinking on positioning, reflection, etc. The contents were reawakening and strengthening. Ngā takepu provided safety and taught them how to be supportive. Takepu te whakakoharangatiratanga worked with principle positioning and contextualisation which, in turn, allowed students to identify strengths, offer automatic respect to others, allowing them to work with opposites. Students liked the Tikanga Māori way of delivery, such as waiata (song), powhiri (welcome ceremony on a marae), and noho (to stay). Although some did not understand the Māori waiata and powhiri in the beginning, during the course they were able to contextualise and make sense of them.

Their experience after the course revealed that graduates were applying takepu-based learning experience in both their personal and professional lives. They were applying the concepts of whanau, spirituality, Māori models, and the Treaty of Waitangi in mental health and prison sectors. Students realised that the medical model without whanau deals with only a part of a person.

The findings, in particular, the during-course reflections, showed that students felt fulfilled throughout the journey, had more of a sense of who they are, of spirituality, transformation, and shift. These are consistent with findings of other studies conducted in similar fields. Phillips (2010), in her Master's project, interviewed students (non-Māori students of BSW) to see how they gained spiritual experience in the programme. The students expressed that they had felt a sense of acceptance and belonging and found people non-judgemental. That was the feeling of spirituality. It was where they were meant to be. Although not related by blood, participants were related to one another in a way that came from an open heart and spirit. It was also expressed that if they were not at the Wānanga they still would be seeking to reclaim spirituality and that they grew within their inner selves in the programme (Phillips, 2010).

In the same vein, Freeman (2011) narrated her journey of transformation with the BSW programme and reflected that Takepu te whakakoharangatiratanga was not only for building relations but also counteracted the isolation and social ostracism that many might have experienced within the mainstream tertiary environment. She also stated "with the embracement of the gift of six wonderful takepu-applied principles that have been given as companions for this learning journey, it is very rare occasion for a whanau member to be left behind" (Freeman, p.22, 2011). Anderson (2011) expressed how one of her students who was Māori but not brought up as Māori, reclaimed her identity. The student found ngā takepu to be a strength that gave her a position to speak out and she explained that ngā takepu invite Māori, Western, and other bodies of knowledge to be explored without one being prioritised above the other (Anderson, 2011, p. 72). In another study, Akhter (2013) critically reflected her experience as a teacher of the BSW and found that the principled approach had shifted her approach in teaching and her assumptions about spirituality and social work. She began a journey of emancipation, to deconstruct her hegemonic approach of teaching, and to reclaim her spiritual principles and values. Before she had never thought of using her spirituality in social work education and practice but the BSW opened an opportunity to contextualise and to make sense of her spirituality in the new context. All these studies support the findings of the present study.

Similar to this BSW study, a study was conducted to see how the certificate in Aboriginal Social Work Practice in the McGill University School of Social Work in Canada (Ives, Aitken, Loft, & Philips, 2007) was perceived by students. The project aim was to explore the curriculum and programme design as to cultural appropriateness. It was revealed that there was an urgent need for professionally-educated social work practitioners from native communities and needed to have native approaches to learning where both indigenous and non-indigenous can study together and learn from each other. The participants referred to "Mohawk", an indigenous framework in guiding social work practice. If we compare the components

of Wānanga's BSW programme with the findings of Ives et al. (2007) it is clear that the BSW programme is unique in that it is grounded on indigenous KM and a takepu-principled framework. Most of the instructors and facilitators are Māori and that the teaching and learning address the learning needs of Māori and students with other indigenous cultural backgrounds.

The present study indicates that BSW has an emancipatory influence on the students. This can be explained by the framework of transformation, BSW teaching and learning pedagogies, curriculum, and manner of delivery.

On the course students started a journey, a struggle over how to make sense of their own lived experiences and how to define and name them in the context of social work in Aotearoa. Although it is a struggle, it liberated them from the notion of banking education where students are passive learners and teachers are knowledge-givers. Students receive all knowledge from teachers without any questions and critique (Freire, 1972). Contrary to that, the BSW facilitates a process through which students become active and critically reflective learners. Hence transformation occurs.

The curriculum of the BSW (BIP) is not as highly structured as a typical modern curriculum. Instead, specific contents are open to emerge via critical reflections. The cultural and multiple truths/contents emerge through a number of core exercises such as how to take a strong cultural positioning to question tradition and how to use history and colonisation to dismantle a modernistic view of social work. By doing that students are not only transforming themselves but transforming the social work profession from a notion of 'one truth fits all' approach to a multiple perspectives approach. Regarding teaching, according to Pohatu (2010), the process of lectures, hui and reflections is a normal, yet a vital, part of learning. So students bring personal lived experience, construct their own ideas via dialogue, critique, and comparison with existing bodies of knowledge for validation. Students come out with a position. When they see and feel their experience is valued, they can think further. This process allows them to enter a journey which they enjoy to reclaim cultural truths.

Conclusion

This study will contribute to enhancing our knowledge of theoretical and practical implications of the takepu-principle-based BSW programme and give direction for further research. The evidence supports the notion that the transformative framework of BSW is powerful; it provides a safe space for students for reclaiming their identity, for deconstructing hegemonic thinking, and for constructing Māori and other indigenous bodies of knowledge in social work education. It also suggests that the takepu-based delivery method may be a useful tool to be considered for social work pedagogy in Aotearoa. The implications for the findings are limited as only nine stories were analysed and analysis was based on only perceptions and reflections. The representation from Pacific Island communities in this research is insufficient (being only one). In order to gain in-depth meaning of data, thick description of quotations were provided which can construct local contextual knowledge, but further research studies with a mixed method design and large sample size are needed in this field for increasing credibility and usefulness. In particular, studies are needed to understand the depth of transformation that happens within the minds and souls of BSW students as re-imaginings. Research is needed to trace the volume of mātauranga Māori and other knowledges that are being reclaimed and to ensure that taonga (mātauranga Māori knowledge) of social work in Aotearoa are connected with the land and its ancestors.

He kākano ahau i ruia mai i Rangiātea

I am a seed scattered from Rangiātea

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