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*Decolonising
Social Work
Practice,
Through a
Bi-Cultural Lens*

Abstract



Decolonising Social Work through a Bicultural Lens

Social work practice has always sat under a westernised framework steeped in imperialism, colonialism and hegemonic practices that have not served Māori, the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand well. Since the 1980s, Māori indigenous bodies of knowledge (matauranga) has increased and is now a preferred way of engagement when working with whanau Māori. One practice that is becoming increasingly popular is the framework of Nga Takepū (Pohatu, 2008).

Within the social work education space, this framework enhances akonga (student) matauranga (knowledge) and are preferred ways of engaging with whanau Māori within social work services (Pohatu, 2004). This presentation focuses on the importance of the six Nga Takepū that all play a pivotal part within the shaping of new Māori and non-Māori Bicultural Social Work practitioners.

Akonga learn that when activating Māori worldviews, this places Māori knowledge at the centre of their learning and so they begin to understand the importance of a principled position within not only their career as an up-and-coming social worker, but more importantly of who they are as Māori and as non-Māori engaging in a Māori indigenous space.

Whakawhanaungatanga Pepeha



Ko Takitimu
te Waka



Ko Mauao
te Maunga



Ko Tauranga Moana
E noho ana ahau



Ko Tinana
te waka



Ko Emiemi
Te Maunga



Ko Te Tairāwhiti
E noho ana ahau

Whakapapa



1

1983 Humble
beginnings of
TWOA

2

2003 Biculturalism in
Practice
Nga Poutoko
Whakarara Oranga

3

2024 – today:
Rejuvenation
Reclaiming
Re -Storying

Whakapapa

Nga Poutoko Whakarara Oranga



Taina and Hariata Pōhata

Nga takepū

- Te Whakakoha Rangatiratanga
- Kaitiakitanga
- Ahurutanga
- Taukumekume
- Tino Rangatiratanga
- Mauri Ora

Nga Takepū

Māori applied principles that
promote well-being



Challenges



Statistics

Ethnicity	Num Of Taurira (2008 – 2015)
Māori	1301
NZ European/Pakeha	218
Samoan	151
Cook Island Māori	77
African	67
Tongan	63
Indian	55
Niuean	25
Other Asian	24
Fijian	22
Tokelauan	16
Chinese	15
Other Pacific Island Peoples	8
Not Stated	5
Total	2047

Ethnicity	Num Of Taurira (2016 – 2024)
Māori	998
Samoan	151
NZ European/Pakeha	108
Tongan	103
Cook Island Māori	70
African	44
Niuean	35
Indian	28
Fijian	21
Other Asian	15
Tokelauan	9
Other Pacific Island Peoples	9
Chinese	9
Total	1600

*Tauira
completion*



Akongā Voices



Student 1

I am so blessed to have done this course, it has given me a better understanding of how to engage with Māori from a Māori positioning. Takepū have helped me to find out who i am as an indigenous German women working with our whanau here in Aotearoa.

Student 2

I am Māori and i did not know anything about nga Takepū or even what these words were. Now as a clinical practitioner, nga takepu have become my kaitiaki in my practice. Thank you TWOA.

Student 3

As an older wahine Māori, it was hard for me to come back into education. I am so glad i did as this course has taught me so much about myself. Nga Takepu have grounded me back to my roots and i am so thankful.

Student 4

Being a non-maori pakeha on this course as taught me so much about our Māori heritage. With the learning i have had on this programme, it has helped me to stand strong in non maori spaces and speak up for what i believe in



Conclusion

To leave a legacy for our
mokopuna and whanau katoa.

“Māori philosophic utterances
may exist in parallel columns
alongside those of any other race”

(Te Apirana Turupa Ngata, 1929,
cited in Te Wananga o Aotearoa,
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