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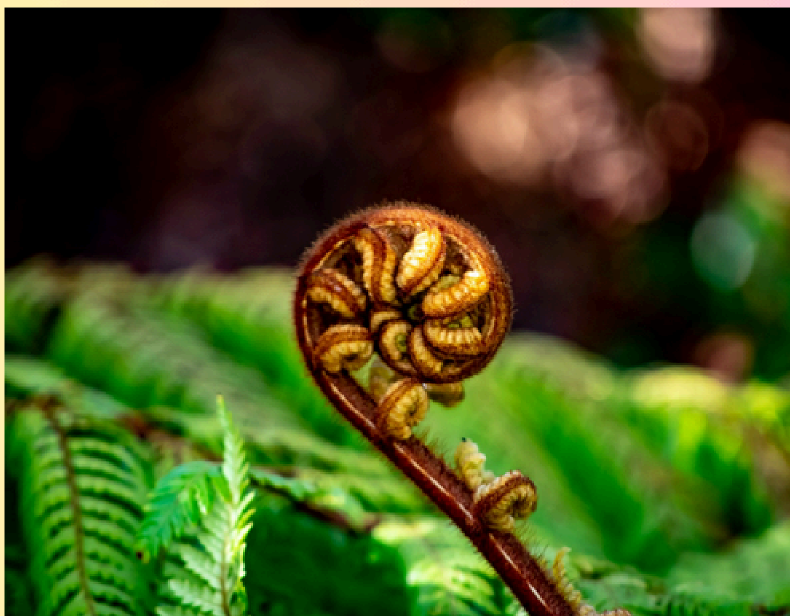
PSYCHOLOGY AOTEAROA



Kia ora and welcome to *Psychology Aotearoa*, the official twice-yearly publication of the New Zealand Psychological Society.

Psychology Aotearoa aims to inform members about current practice issues, discuss social and political issues of importance to psychologists, celebrate the achievements of members, provide a forum for bicultural issues, and highlight research and new ideas relevant to psychology. It also aims to encourage contributions from students, hear the views of members, and connect members with their peers.

Being part of *Psychology Aotearoa*

We welcome your contributions to *Psychology Aotearoa*. We are looking for submissions related to psychology that readers will find stimulating and can engage with. This can include items on practice and education issues, social and political issues impacting on psychology, bicultural issues, research in psychology, historical perspectives, theoretical and philosophical issues, kaupapa Māori and Pasifika psychology, book reviews, ethical issues, and student issues.

For more information on making submissions to *Psychology Aotearoa*, go to https://www.psychology.org.nz/members/professional-resources/psychology-aotearoa

Editor Dr Kyle Tan

Student editor Paolo Aquino

New Zealand Psychological Society
Rōpū Mātai Hinengaro o Aotearoa

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President's Kōrero

Kia ora tātou

We would like to send aroha to all those affected by the recent weather events and are acutely aware healing and recovery can be a difficult process for whānau. E tuku aroha me ngā mihi whakamoemiti kia koutou katoa. We also want to acknowledge our frontline staff and iwi for your immediate and ongoing support across the country. We are deeply thankful for your hard work and responsivity during these challenging times.

I am mindful of the impacts of our geopolitical environment and how this can affect wellbeing, so am extremely grateful to our members for your commitment and dedication to your mahi in your respective areas of practice.

We would like to send a warm welcome to our new team members, firstly Dr Jerry Hsu, who has joined us in the role of Director of Scientific Issues on our Executive. We also have two new staff members joining our team. In the role of Professional Development & Events Coordinator we would like to welcome Dr Letisha Wyatt, and Julie O'Brien, who joins us as our Communications, Marketing and Publishing Coordinator. Many thanks to Heike Albrecht for her fantastic guidance as our Professional Development Coordinator over the years. We hope your new journey with your whānau brings you joy and prosperity.

Matariki is fast approaching and (as always) we are hopeful this will be an opportunity to spend time in wānanga resting and restoring with whānau. Our theme this year for Psychology Week and our annual conference further encourages opportunities for wānanga and reflection, Moemoeā: remembering the past and dreaming for the future. We are therefore especially excited to be meeting in Tāmaki Makau Rau this year and look forward to reconnecting with everyone in August. Many thanks to all those who have participated in and organised psychology week events.

Finally, I want to congratulate our Kaihautū, Professor Moana Waitoki for her election to the Academy of the Royal Society. Thank you for your many years contributing to the advancement of matauranga Māori in our profession. Equally, congratulations to Dr Ainsleigh Cribb-Sua's appointment to the International Union of Psychological Science Standing Committee of Governance, and our utmost appreciation for your guidance and leadership across multiple fora. Mā te tuakana ka tōtika te teina, mā te teina te tuakana e tōtika ai.

Kia tau te rangimarie whānau.

Nāku iti nei

Rebecca

Editorial

Kia ora koutou

The role of psychology has become more important than ever as we increasingly witness inhumane tragedies, wars, oppression, and inequalities affecting our societies and communities. Psychology, as a discipline that seeks to decipher human nature, I argue, has the ability to influence people's behaviour and actions. As its students and practitioners, we therefore have a responsibility to draw on psychological knowledge to address the injustices and their ramifications that we see. After all, how can a discipline that proclaims to promote human flourishing afford to be a bystander in times of crisis?

As the biannual bulletin of the New Zealand Psychological Society (NZPsS), *Psychology Aotearoa* aims to bring together contributions of contemporary relevance to the teaching, research, and practice of psychology in Aotearoa, while also engaging with the nation's sociopolitical landscape and global challenges. In 2026, I (Kyle Tan) will work alongside the student editor (Paolo Aquino) to edit *Psychology Aotearoa*. Paolo and I have collaborated on multiple occasions, including through the newly established Asian Psychology Collective Aotearoa (APCA). Any queries about *Psychology Aotearoa* or expressions of interest in contributing to upcoming issues can be directed to either of us.

In this issue, we want to celebrate Life Member Bill Farrell (President of the New Zealand Institute of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy) and acknowledge the recognition of newly elected Royal Society Te Apārangi Fellow and current Kaihautū of NZPsS, Professor Waikaremoana Waitoki.

Kyle and the student editor, Paolo.

We would also like to share updates from the Global Psychology Alliance (GPA), including its recent publication on the Principles for Understanding Artificial Intelligence, as well as the featuring of Kirsty Dempster-Rivett and Neil Micklewood on the GPA podcast. NZPsS is a participating organisation in the GPA, and more information about the alliance can be found here: https://www.apa.org/international/networks/global-psychology-alliance

Matua Quentin generously shared tips on writing submissions for the Crown's proposed bills and provided an example of his submission to the Education and Training Amendment Bill. Across the ditch, we feature a piece by the President-Elect of the Asian Association of Social Psychology, Wendy Li, who discusses the many opportunities that may arise through Asia–New Zealand partnerships in psychology. Next, we include submissions from two researchers in Malaysia, Salman, and Raihan, who offer insights into the psychology of doomscrolling, with implications for psychoeducation and further research in Aotearoa.

In the one-on-one section, I'm excited to introduce the current Tumuaki (President) of He Pāika Tōtara, Carrie Clifford, who is as humble as she is relentless in championing more inclusive services for whaiora Māori, expanding the use of pūrākau, and increasing the number of Māori psychologists. The final piece is an event review of the Promoting Asian Psychologies in Aotearoa New Zealand symposium, which I had the privilege of participating in. The organisers, including Minh, Shiloh, and Darrin, did an amazing job of bringing together local and international psychology scholars for the three-day symposium.

I hope to see some of you at the NZPsS Annual Conference in Auckland this August for further connections and ideas to enhance *Psychology Aotearoa*.

Ngā manaakitanga
Kyle Tan

Life member's reflection: Bill Farrell

I feel very honoured to be granted a Life Membership of the Society at this point in my career. As opposed to the noun, the verb career means to move swiftly and in an uncontrolled way. I maybe haven't quite done that, but I've certainly been around. This is my 50th year in clinical practice (I started in 1975, after a first degree in Experimental Psychology at the University of Sussex, as a social worker in psychiatry, later becoming a UK Chartered Counselling Psychologist), and my 30th in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In my 20-year career in the UK I worked in adult, child and family psychiatry, as well as in child health and development, and then as a University Counsellor at the University of Liverpool, and Director of the University's Diploma in Psychotherapy. Later I worked as a Senior Lecturer at the University of Chester, and in the Department of Psychotherapy at Mossley Hill Hospital in Liverpool.

I haven't mentioned my involvement in UK psychology. A group of us therapeutically inclined psychologists, many of whom had trained elsewhere, went through the British Psychological Society's procedures for establishing new branches of professional psychology, until the BPsS Division of Counselling Psychology was finally formed in 1995.

In New Zealand, life was a struggle. I arrived with my family after the 80's crash, in a new migrant category designed to attract a diversity of talent, but of which the Labour Department seemed unaware. Although I've had contractor roles, I've never managed to get a job in New Zealand, and so I've had to build a private practice. I worked as Head of Training at Auckland Family Counselling and Psychotherapy for seven years, and led the development of the Centre's Psychotherapy Modules into, first, a Postgraduate Certificate and then a Postgraduate Diploma in Health Science (Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy) at AUT. My main role was as a psychologist and psychotherapist, with individuals, couples and families at AFCP, and privately, first as a founding principal at Practice 92, and later in solo practice. In 2002 I moved to my own premises in Mt Eden where I still work.

I feel like I've veered between psychology and psychotherapy whilst I've been in New Zealand. As I think about that, I can see why that has been. When I first came in 1995, I was told by the then Secretary of the Psychologists Board that "in New Zealand, psychology and psychotherapy are *entirely* separate" (my italics).

Prior to the HPCA in 2003, the former Psychologists Act operated like an import ban in relation to recognising trainings or qualifications in areas such as Counselling Psychology, which was well established in a range of other countries. One could only gain registration as a Psychologist (without a further process) if one's training was equivalent to those then available in New Zealand, basically Clinical Psychology or Educational Psychology. Completing the further process only led to registration in the General Scope. It has been important to me to overcome that separation.

As I look back, the New Zealand Psychological Society has been a real waka for me, always moving forward. Sometimes I'm on board, sometimes I cross its path, and at other times I'm elsewhere. I was involved in the transition of the Counselling Section into the Institute of Counselling Psychology. With colleagues, I was involved in the writing of the Core Competencies for Counselling Psychologists and the presentation of those to the Psychologists Board for approval, finally establishing Counselling Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand. Most of my clinical practice has been as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist, and latterly I've become a Member, and now President, of the New Zealand Institute of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy. However, that practice has been based on the foundation of my identification as a counselling and clinical psychologist, and my professional home in the Society.

Dr Bill Farrell
Registered Clinical and Counselling Psychologist

Congratulations

Congratulations to NZPsS Fellow, Professor Waikaremoana Waitoki, on being one of the 21 new Ngā Ahurei Fellows elected to the Academy of the Royal Society Te Apārangi. Professor Waitoki served as President of the New Zealand Psychological Society from 2021 to 2022 and now provides guidance as Kaihautū (Senior Māori Advisor). A well-deserved honour for her tireless scientific research and contributions to indigenising psychology.

Professor Waikaremoana Waitoki, Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato – University of Waikato

Elected for indigenising psychology

Professor Professor Waikaremoana Waitoki FNZPsS (Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Mahanga) is a clinical psychologist and an internationally recognised Indigenous leader in psychology. Waikaremoana's expertise spans mātauranga Māori, hauora, Māori wellbeing, and the social determinants of health. Her research indigenises psychology and seeks to dismantle systemic racism. She has generated new knowledge to decolonise psychology, advance Indigenous knowledge systems and address systemic inequities in health and education. Her projects have promoted maternal wellbeing using mātauranga Māori, and she was the Science Lead for research programme Working to End Racial Oppression, which has examined the entanglement of racism across employment, housing institutions, and inter-ethnic relationships.

Photo taken from Royal Society Te Apārangi

Research-Practice-Education

Global Psychology Alliance: Principles for Understanding Artificial Intelligence

The Global Psychology Alliance (GPA) was formed in 2019 to bring together leaders from national, regional, and international psychological associations to actively address global issues, using psychological science to advance the field and enhance human wellbeing worldwide. In 2026, GPA published a guideline document outlining the top 10 principles for understanding artificial intelligence (AI) in psychology. This guideline is not meant to replace the guideline published by the New Zealand Psychologist Board in October 2025, but to offer a complementary viewpoint from our international colleagues.

Ethics, transparency, and AI

Principle 1: Ethical responsibility
Psychologists should be informed by professionally recognised ethical principles relating to the use of AI.

Principle 2: Transparency in selection of AI tool
Psychologists should use only those AI tools that offer transparency regarding their development and provide clear, conspicuous, and persistent disclosure to users that they are interacting with a nonhuman entity. When full transparency is unavailable, psychologists should document known limitations and seek available technical documentation about data practices.

Principle 3: Informed consent
Psychologists who incorporate AI-based tools into their professional activities should clearly advise relevant parties about potential risks and benefits. Consent must be explicit regarding limitations of AI tools, must include opt-in for use of individual data, and must not use deceptive design patterns.

Principle 4: Accountability, governance, and professional responsibility
Psychologists who develop, deploy, or rely on AI systems share professional accountability for their appropriate use and outcomes alongside other stakeholders and should advocate for clear governance structures that distribute responsibility appropriately.

Professional competence and AI

Principle 5: Evidence base
Psychologists who integrate AI into professional activities should possess sufficient foundational understanding of how their selected AI tools function, including their general methodology, data requirements, and known limitations relevant to psychological applications

Principle 6: Human oversight and professional judgment
Psychologists who incorporate AI tools into their professional activities must have sufficient expertise and discretion to ensure appropriate oversight of AI-supported outcomes.

Principle 7: Psychological safety and harm prevention
Psychologists who employ AI systems should prioritise and maximise benefit alongside psychological safety, and actively work to prevent potential harms.

Global Psychology Alliance: Principles for Understanding Artificial Intelligence

Access, bias, and inclusion with AI

Principle 8: Validation and scientific evidence
Psychologists who use AI tools should critically evaluate whether such systems are supported by rigorous, transparent, and contextually appropriate scientific evidence that demonstrates reliability, validity, and relevance for the populations and purposes for which they are used.

Principle 9: Algorithmic bias and fairness
Psychologists who employ AI systems should proactively identify, evaluate, and mitigate algorithmic bias, ensuring that AI-supported outputs do not systematically disadvantage or discriminate against individuals or groups based on demographic, cultural, socioeconomic, or contextual factors.

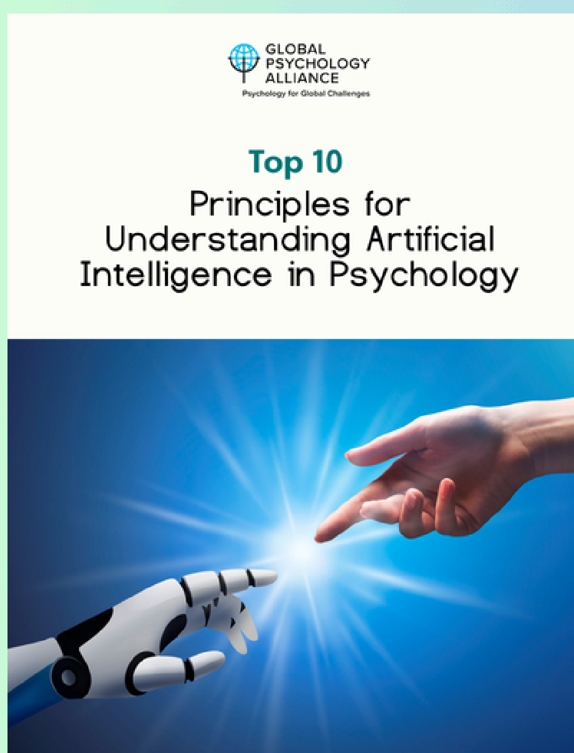
Principle 10: Access, equity and inclusion
Psychologists who integrate AI tools into their professional activities should promote equitable access and inclusive design, ensuring that AI-supported psychological services do not exacerbate existing disparities or exclude individuals and communities based on structural, economic, linguistic, or technological barriers.

Read more

Global Psychology Alliance: https://www.apa.org/international/networks/global-psychology-alliance

Top 10 Principles for Understanding AI in Psychology: https://www.apa.org/international/networks/global-psychology-alliance/principles-artificial-intelligence.pdf

New Zealand Psychologists Board' Guidelines for the Use of AI in Psychology:
https://psychologistsboard.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Updated-AI-Guidelines-October-2025.pdf



GLOBAL PSYCHOLOGY ALLIANCE
Psychology for Global Challenges

New Zealand Psychological Society
Rōpū Mātai Hinengaro o Aotearoa

Global Psychology Alliance Podcast

The Global Psychology Alliance (GPA) Podcast, hosted by Alvin Joseph Mapoy and Leisha Redmond McGrath, featured two psychologists from Aotearoa in their April episode: Kirsty Dempster-Rivett and Neil Micklewood. Both Kirsty and Neil reflected on how growing up in multicultural contexts and witnessing intergenerational trauma, inequity, and resilience shaped their paths into psychology and interest in systemic change. They discussed how effective change must be trauma-informed, people-centred, and collective – integrating relational safety (the heart), internal and cultural resources (the head), and empowered action (the hands). The conversation emphasised that sustainable change depends on lived experience across generations, genuine human connection rather than tokenism, and hope grounded in community resilience and the wisdom of young people.

Kirsty Dempster-Rivett (PhD) has been a clinical psychologist for 25 years and is currently the Director of Allied Health for Waikato Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Neil Micklewood is a clinical and neuropsychologist, change manager, and human system specialist with 19 years of experience in applying psychology to complex systemic change based in Kirikiriroa Hamilton. Neil currently serves as a Psychology Advisor at the Accident Compensation Corporation and runs a private consultancy. He can be contacted via email at micklewoodconsulting@gmail.com if you have any questions about the framework.

The podcast can be listed to from GPA channel.

Psychologists Speaking Up
He manako te kōura i kore ai

Quentin Abraham is an educational psychologist with more than 30 years' experience, and has worked in the UK and Aotearoa in public organisations, private practice and universities. He is the former president and director of social issues for the New Zealand Psychological Society. He was born in England, has English and Indian heritage and he has lived in Aotearoa for the past 23 years. Quentin studies the Māori language, and is passionate about Treaty-based relationships and providing everyone a place to stand in our country.

Psychologists in Aotearoa are required by our Code of Ethics to challenge unjust societal norms and behaviours that disempower people. Remaining neutral or silent is not an option. To uphold our responsibilities we need to engage with political systems in order to enhance social justice.

One way to speak up is to make Parliamentary submissions to inform policymakers and politicians about improving the conditions and wellbeing of our clients.

My recent submissions include the Fire Arms (Gun Control) Bill, Financial Markets (Conduct of Institutions) Amendment Bill, Regulatory Standards Bill, Electoral Amendment Bill, Fast Track Approvals Amendment Bill, Water Services Entities Bill, Plain Language Act Repeal Bill, Principals of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill and the Overseas Investment (National Interest Test and Other Matters) Amendment Bill.

Usually, I am asked to present at the relevant Select Committee. The oral and written submissions remain on the Parliamentary website for future reference. Occasionally these documents are picked up by reporters. It is a challenge to speak concisely in plain language to those who may have influence, including my colleagues.

I prioritise those Bills that have wide ranging implications for the country and those where expert psychological knowledge can contribute. An example is my recent submission on the Education and Training (System Reform) Amendment Bill (starting in the next column).

Submission on the Education and Training (System Reform) Amendment Bill (14 January 2026)

Tēnā rā koutou, The Education and Workforce Committee

Re: Education and Training (System Reform) Amendment Bill

Introduction

I am an educational psychologist with 30 years' experience. I work with a range of minoritised, disadvantaged young people, their schools and families.

The Education and Training (System Reform) Amendment Bill currently:

- Leaves the educational needs of our tamariki to privatisation and the whims of financial markets.
- Gives too much Ministerial control and power to untrained people to politicise the curriculum in our schools.
- Inadequately prioritises protections for those who are different, disabled, and who have high needs.
- Offers no evidence of true partnership with whānau and community advocates to collectively lift the quality of our education system.
- Fails to uphold Te Tiriti by removing Māori voices and te ao Māori education to educate all citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Undermines teacher and other educational professional's autonomy.

I do **not** support the Education and Training (System Reform) Amendment Bill.

Privatisation dictated by financial markets

Charter schools introduce privatisation of our education system by having our schools operated by private sponsors.

An evaluation of Charter schools in Aotearoa New Zealand was unable to conclude that they were successful after three years.

Charter schools lack accountability, for example, they are not required to follow the mandated curriculum.

The literacy and mathematics teaching in Charter Schools tends to rely on prescribed packages from private contractors.

The flexibility for teachers to scaffold and adapt the curriculum for students is highly correlated with effective learning. This is not possible in Charter Schools, where teachers are required to use top-down, scripted approaches that may not be easily adapted for children with different needs at different times.

There needs to be more transparency in the funding of private companies and government procurement in education to avoid allegations of corruption.

The World Bank finds that Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) such as Charter Schools have not translated into a reliable improvement in the quality of education. Furthermore, the "cost-efficiencies driven by lower teacher salaries may not be sustainable in the long-term".

The privatisation of Early Childhood Education in Aotearoa New Zealand and elsewhere provides some important warnings for the expansion of Charter Schools.

For example:

- Maintaining control of profitable markets by serving higher-paying families.
- Undermining universal, publicly-funded systems.
- Focusing on outward signs of quality that are easy to measure rather than essential elements that are difficult to measure, such as human relationships.
- Evidence of reduced salaries, smaller staffing ratios with higher staff turnover, more part-time workers with less continuity of care.

Politicised curriculum

The curriculum of our children is too important to be left to untrained people and Ministers of all political persuasions.

It needs to be transparent and openly debated with evidence carefully reviewed and then evaluated.

The short notice for this consultation period undermines any meaningful democratic process with our citizens, educationalists, and the communities it serves.

Inadequate priorities and protections

Those who are different, disabled, and who have high needs are likely to require highly trained teachers with better teacher-child ratios to provide the time and quality to help these students.

There is no evidence that these are priorities within the new Charter schools, nor any mention of protections for including students that might be different or have a disability.

The Bill references the requirement for tightening the rules regarding exemptions but no acknowledgement of the range of needs or disabilities that might lead to a student not wanting to be at school and the requirement to address these matters. Inclusive education benefits all disabled and non-disabled children when properly resourced and implemented.

Lack of meaningful partnership

This Bill ignored the recommendations from the IHC and Ministry of Education to design a fair and inclusive education system for all disabled students.

There has been no meaningful consultation with specialist support services who help disabled students learn in educational settings, such as Educational Psychologists, Speech-language therapists, Vision or Hearing experts.

There is good evidence that where the values and intentions of a school align with the community, outcomes are improved. The time to consult with the immediate and extended communities has been inadequate, especially with families, whānau, and disabled communities. The success of introducing a new school into the area will depend on a meaningful partnership rather than it being imposed.

This Bill fails to address the required accommodations for disabled students, such as buildings having ramps or putting information in Easy Read formats.

Fails to uphold Te Tiriti

This bill has removed the requirement for boards to "give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi" and therefore reduces the commitment and further marginalises mātauranga Māori and tikanga Māori.

In the face of historic, deliberate erasure of the Māori language and culture practices, this needs to explicitly addressed and not left to chance.

The Treaty Principles Bill failed to pass its second reading in Parliament due to overwhelming opposition. Over 90 per cent of the 300,000 written submissions on the bill opposed it. Citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand have delivered a mandate to uphold our foundational document.

The School Boards should continue to be required to uphold Te Tiriti by actively promoting Māori voices and te ao Māori education, as well as te reo Māori to educate all citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Māori perspectives in decision-making and curriculum development need to be upheld so we have an education system for all our young people that is fit for purpose.

Conclusion

Citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand want an education system that is fair and equitable for all young people. This requires prioritising funding for those of greatest need so they can learn. This bill fails to do this.

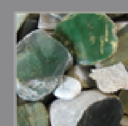
I recommend:

- The money being spent on charter schools and curriculum changes should be used to meet the needs of all students in the public sector to improve their learning rather than a well-resourced, select minority.
- Greater transparency in the funding of private companies and government procurement to avoid allegations of corruption.
- Seek a cross-party coalition of all political parties to ensure the public has equitable access to resources and services.
- Provide more time for consultation to review the evidence for what works in our schools for all children.
- The Bill should recognise and implement the IHC and Ministry of Education Framework for Action.
- Inclusive education requirements should be legally binding across all schools and agencies.
- Disability expertise should be gathered to inform educational policy.
- Schools must have the flexibility, resources, and autonomy to meet individual learner needs.
- Meet the wish of our citizens to uphold our Te Tiriti obligations by meaningful partnership and acknowledgement of mana motuhake.
- Provide a strong Te Tiriti-based, inclusive public education system, designed with Māori, educators, experts, and communities.
- Make te reo Māori and tikanga provision a school requirement, thus increasing accountability for supporting Māori culture and language.

Nāku iti nei

Quentin Abraham
BSc PGCE MA CPsychol MNZPsS
Registered Educational Psychologist, Greenstone Consultants

*Note that references were included in the original submission but are not provided here. They can be made available upon reasonable request to the author.



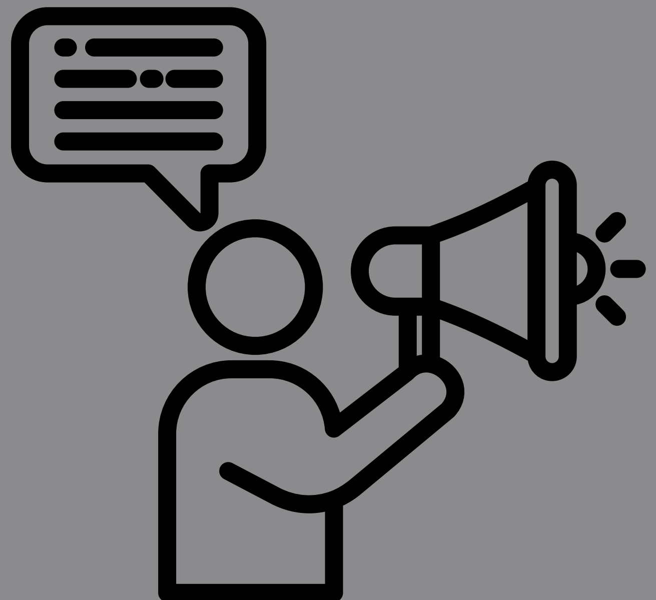
Principles for writing a submission

There are no strict rules for writing a submission. However, here are some considerations:

- Read the Bill and other related documents.
- Select five to seven key points.
- State at the start whether you support or do not support the Bill.
- Avoid jargon or too many references.
- Write two to three pages concisely.
- Use your own professional headed paper.
- Submit in a pdf format.
- Refer to your submission in the text boxes.
- Include examples, especially for an oral submission.
- State your recommendations for a way forward.
- Rehearse your oral submission (if you are making one).
- Engage colleagues and others.

Conclusion

It is not ethical to “treat” individual clients without challenging those systems that perpetuate harm. We need to use our power, privilege, and expertise to inform policymakers about better ways forward or remain complicit within these systems.



If we can mobilise the 4857 registered psychologists in Aotearoa to speak up collectively we can have a formidable influence. This time-consuming and unpaid work is part of the role of being a professional.

Increasingly there are pressures for professionals to remain silent. The Healthy Futures (Pae Ora) Amendment Bill strengthens the requirement for health workers to remain “politically neutral”. Many fear that this will be used by Ministers and their employers to silence them.

Perhaps even more insidious are the pressures of self-censorship. Each of us is weighing up the risks to speaking out, being visible: the fear of intimidation, the reputational risk, the potential legal threats, the reduced job opportunities, to no longer be seen as a team player, and to face the uncomfortable feelings of engaging in conflict. This self-censorship risks there being fewer voices of dissent with limited and cautious questioning about societal injustices.

Tūwhitia te hopo, mairangatia te angitū.

International

Bridging Cultures, Connecting Regions: Social Psychology Across Asia and Aotearoa

Wendy Li (PhD) is an Associate Professor of Psychology and a senior mental health researcher and academic leader at James Cook University (JCU), Australia. She is the Founding Chair of the AusAsian Mental Health Research Alliance (AMHRA), founder and Head of the Mindfulness Lab @ JCU, and President-Elect of the Asian Association of Social Psychology (AASP). These roles reflect her sustained leadership in advancing culturally responsive, community-engaged social and mental health research across the Asia–Pacific region.

In an increasingly interconnected world, understanding how culture shapes human thought, behaviour, and wellbeing have never been more important. Social psychology, as a discipline, offers powerful tools to explore these dynamics, but its development has historically been dominated by Western perspectives. The Asian Association of Social Psychology (AASP) was established to address this imbalance, creating a vibrant platform for culturally grounded scholarship and meaningful global dialogue. For colleagues in Aotearoa New Zealand, where cultural diversity, bicultural foundations, and growing engagement with Asia are central, AASP represents not only a scholarly community but also a bridge connecting research, people, and ideas across regions.

From Vision to Voice: The Story of AASP

AASP was founded in 1995 with a clear and ambitious mission: To provide scholars in Asia and the Pacific with a collaborative forum for capability building and the discussion, promotion, and publication of their research. It promotes research on Asian traditions, philosophies, and ideas that have scientific merit and practical applications, and expands the boundary, substance, and direction of social psychology by supplementing and integrating Western psychology's focus on intra-individual processes with a broader and more holistic view from culture and society. AASP is dedicated to peace within and among all countries and societies in Asia and the Asia-Pacific region and is committed to growing human relations of friendship and care. Read more at AASP web page: https://www.asiansocialpsych.org/about-us/

AASP founders recognised that understanding social behaviour requires attention to cultural, historical, and societal contexts, and that Asia, with its vast diversity, offers unique insights into human psychology. The association was thus built on a dual commitment: fostering locally grounded research while contributing to international conversations.

Over the past three decades, AASP has grown into a dynamic and internationally recognised community. Its biennial conferences, hosted across major cities in the Asia-Pacific region, have become key events in the global social psychology calendar. These conferences not only showcase cutting-edge research but also cultivate collaboration, mentorship, and cross-cultural exchange, particularly for early-career scholars.

The association's official journal, the Asian Journal of Social Psychology, further advances this mission by publishing high-quality research that foregrounds cultural context and theoretical innovation. Together, these initiatives have positioned AASP as a leading voice in promoting a more inclusive, globally relevant social psychology.

Shared Future: AASP's Vision for Collaboration and Impact

As AASP looks to the future, its vision extends beyond academic exchange toward deeper collaboration, broader impact, and meaningful engagement with communities. Central to this vision is the recognition that complex social challenges, such as mental health disparities, migration, climate change, and social cohesion, require culturally informed, interdisciplinary, and cross-regional responses.

AASP has emphasised strengthening partnerships with regional and international organisations, including psychological societies, universities, and community groups. By fostering these collaborations, AASP aims to co-create knowledge that is both scientifically rigorous and socially relevant.

This vision includes conducting the longitudinal Asian and Pacific Social Survey, expanding opportunities for joint conferences, collaborative research networks, and capacity-building initiatives such as summer schools and training workshops. Importantly, AASP is also committed to supporting early- and mid-career researchers, recognising that the sustainability of the discipline depends on nurturing the next generation of scholars.

Engagement with communities is another key priority. Increasingly, AASP is exploring ways to translate social psychological knowledge into practice, whether through public education, policy engagement, or community-based initiatives. This reflects a broader shift toward "social psychology in action", where research not only advances theory but also contributes to societal wellbeing.

For Aotearoa New Zealand, these priorities open valuable opportunities for collaboration, particularly in areas such as Indigenous psychology and multiculturalism. The shared interests and complementary expertise can drive innovative and impactful work.

A Personal Journey: My Connection with Aotearoa New Zealand

My connection with Aotearoa New Zealand is both professional and deeply personal. I first came to New Zealand to pursue my postgraduate studies, completing both my Master's and PhD degrees in psychology. These formative years shaped not only my academic trajectory but also my understanding of culture, identity, and community.

I had the privilege of working with diverse research teams at the University of Waikato, an institution known for its strong commitment to biculturalism and community engagement. My time there reinforced the importance of grounding psychological research in local contexts while remaining open to global perspectives, a principle that continues to guide my work today.

Beyond academia, I have been actively involved in community initiatives. I served as the founding president of the Hamilton Golden Age Society, an organisation dedicated to supporting the wellbeing and social connection of older adults, particularly within migrant communities. This experience deepened my appreciation for culturally responsive approaches to community building and mental health.

More recently, I have continued my engagement with New Zealand through my role as a Senior Advisor to the Beacon Aroha Trust, contributing to initiatives that support mental wellbeing, empower communities through education, and foster connection and care. These ongoing connections reflect my enduring commitment to Aotearoa and its communities.

Walking the Path Together: My Journey with AASP

My involvement with AASP has been a significant part of my academic and professional journey. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to contribute to the association in various roles, including serving on its executive committee and, more recently, being elected as President-Elect.

Through AASP, I have witnessed firsthand the power of community in advancing scholarship and supporting researchers across diverse contexts. The association has provided a platform not only for sharing research but also for building lasting collaborations and friendships that transcend geographical boundaries.

As President-Elect, I am particularly committed to strengthening AASP's global engagement while maintaining its core focus on cultural relevance and inclusivity. This includes enhancing connections with regions such as Aotearoa New Zealand, where there is strong potential for collaboration in areas such as Indigenous and cross-cultural psychology, mental health and wellbeing, and community-based research.

I am also passionate about advancing initiatives that bridge research and practice, ensuring that social psychology contributes meaningfully to addressing real-world challenges. In this regard, AASP's growing emphasis on community engagement and applied impact aligns closely with my own work in mindfulness-based interventions and population mental health. Looking ahead, I see AASP not only as an academic association but as a platform for collective action, bringing together scholars, practitioners, and communities to co-create knowledge and promote wellbeing across cultures.

Looking Forward: Strengthening Connections Between Asia and Aotearoa

As the world continues to navigate rapid social, cultural, and environmental change, the need for culturally informed, collaborative approaches to understanding human behaviour is more pressing than ever. AASP stands at the forefront of this effort, offering a space where diverse perspectives can come together to enrich the discipline and contribute to societal good.

For researchers in Aotearoa New Zealand, engagement with AASP offers opportunities to connect with a broader regional network, share insights from unique cultural contexts, and collaborate on research that addresses shared challenges. At the same time, AASP benefits immensely from the perspectives and expertise of scholars in Aotearoa.

Importantly, Asian social psychology is no longer simply contributing to the global discipline; it is increasingly shaping it. Building on the intellectual foundations laid by scholars such as Professors James Liu and Li Liu, both former Presidents of AASP, whose leadership and scholarship continue to shape the field, AASP is committed to advancing Asian social psychology from a "third force" to a leading force in global psychological science. This shift reflects a broader transformation in psychology: from a historically Western-centric discipline to a more inclusive, pluralistic science that values diverse ways of knowing. AASP plays a central role in this transformation, not only by amplifying Asian perspectives but also by fostering dialogues that redefine the contours of social psychology worldwide.

One such opportunity to deepen this connection will be the upcoming AASP 2027 Conference that will be held on 6–8 August 2027 in Cairns. Bringing together scholars and researchers from across Asia, Oceania, and beyond, the conference aims to create a vibrant space for dialogue, collaboration, and the sharing of ideas that reflect the diversity of our region. It will also be accompanied by community-engaged initiatives designed to extend conversations beyond academia and into practice.

Whether through conference participation, collaborative research, or simply staying connected with the work emerging from the region, there are many ways to engage with AASP. I warmly invite colleagues in Aotearoa to be part of this growing community, contributing your perspectives, sharing your work, and helping to shape a more inclusive, globally relevant social psychology.

More details about the conference can be found on the flyer below and on AASP conference page: https://www.asiansocialpsych.org/conferences/

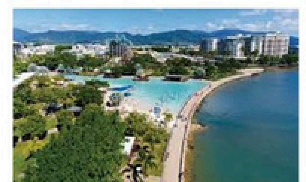
UPDATE: AASP 2027 BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The AASP 2027 Biennial Conference, to be held 6–8 August 2027 at James Cook University's Cairns campus in Far North Queensland, Australia.

Conference Theme:

Advancing Social Psychology in a Transforming World
It will be followed by a two-day Post-Conference Immersion Programme (9–10 August 2027) designed to connect social psychological scholarship with community engagement through nature-based and wellbeing-focused experiences.

Abstract Submission



Abstract submissions will open in two stages:
Symposium Proposals Open: May 2026
Close: End of September 2026
Individual Presentation Abstracts Open: July 2026
Close: End of October 2026

Symposium proposals will open first to encourage the development of thematically aligned sessions that help define the intellectual direction of the conference.

Further details regarding submission guidelines will be circulated in April 2026.

We look forward to welcoming the AASP community to Cairns in August 2027 and to continuing to build a conference that advances social psychology across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Infinite scrolling, finite caring: The psychology of doomscrolling

Salman Sami Munim is a final-year psychology student at Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation, Malaysia, who is interested in mental health and psychological wellbeing. His topics of interest include psychological wellbeing, mental health, and issues affecting young adults.

Raihan Munira Moh Sani is a psychology lecturer at Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation with a background in Educational Psychology from Universiti Putra Malaysia. Her research interests broadly encompass areas of education and wellbeing of secondary school students.

The Psychology Behind Doomscrolling

Doomscrolling has satisfied itself as a defining habit of digital life of this century. A lot of us open social media thinking we will just check a few updates, only to find ourselves scrolling for much longer than we planned. This tendency is often formulated in terms of a problem of weak self-control (Simsir-Gokalp & Akyurek, 2024), but such an explanation neglects the structure of the digital environment itself. Modern platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube are intentionally becoming thousand-fold more focused at capturing and keeping attention from everyone (with forever scrolling, personalised recommendations, and unpredictable rewards). When these features interact with a natural facility in the brain to respond to novelty, uncertainty, and threat, the act of scrolling can be hard to break (Roberts & David, 2025; Shabahang et al., 2024; Özmen, 2026). At the heart of this process is reward (Wang & Wang, 2025). This relates to operant conditioning, because behaviours are more likely to be repeated when they are followed by reinforcing outcomes. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, X, and YouTube, are based on small but psychologically robust reinforcers such as 'likes', 'comments', 'shares', and 'recommended'. Research has suggested that online interaction could be interpreted based on traditional reward-learning principles, especially if rewards occur unpredictably rather than at fixed times (Lindström et al., 2021; Wang & Wang, 2025). As social rewards or the potential to gain or access rewards on a social media platform become irregular, users are more likely to check platforms more often and stay longer, driven by the possibility of receiving a reward or stimulation (Lindstrom et al., 2021). In this sense, the feed functions in ways like other reinforcement system variables: the reward is not money, but attention, approval, novelty, or relevance.

This reward-driven interaction is compounded by infinite scroll. In traditional media, such as newspapers, magazines, radio shows, and television shows, the natural cessation of an article page or the end of a programme was usually the logical ending. These cues are eliminated in endless feeds. The content keeps on loading without a discernible end, which makes it more difficult to stop and assess whether one wants to go on (Culp, 2023). Consequently, scrolling is supported not only by the promise of a reward but also by the lack of a meaningful finish. The depression risks are more significant when the content that is being consumed is a detrimental one. In this case, detrimental means content that is psychologically threatening or upsetting, like content that increases anxiety, fear, sadness, or emotional exhaustion. The general user does not go online with the purpose of repeatedly exposing oneself to unpleasant content. But when feeds filled with crisis updates, political outrages, disasters, and emotive commentary become the order of the day, standard scrolling can become doomscrolling. In these cases, some may likely continue scrolling and trying to find some clarity, assurance, or even control. Yet subsequent content rarely provides relief; instead, it often aggravates the distress. The developing studies have indicated that the pattern of doomscrolling has serious psychological effects. The outcome of a cross-cultural study of Iranian and American students (Shabahang et al., 2024) found a positive association between doomscrolling and higher existential anxiety and, in one sample, higher misanthropy/distrust of

other people. Such findings indicate that doomscrolling with excess time spent online is not necessarily the main issue of concern, although it may be that their emotional health, view of the world, and beliefs about the social reality were insufficiently developed. Equally, research on the usefulness of the Doomscrolling Scale in the context of other cultures found that it helps identify positive or negative relationships between doomscrolling and mental distress and diminished wellbeing (Satici et al. 2022, Yang et al. 2024, Soraci et al. 2025).

Numerous studies have made a case that doomscrolling is a measurable behavioral pattern as opposed to just a popular label for excessive media use. Part of what makes doomscrolling so relentless is the fact that it often seems 'purposeful' as it occurs. At a time of uncertainty, such as during a pandemic, a natural disaster, political unrest, or an ongoing war, it may be a logical endeavour to be in control and know more. People may have an illusion that the next update will deliver much-needed context, reassurance, or resolution. In practice, however, digital feeds hardly meet that need. Instead, they will frequently provide more emotionally arousing material, perpetuating a cycle in which users scroll to relieve the anxiety, only to find themselves exacerbating it. What starts out as an attempt to manage distress can gradually become a cause of further distress. Short-form video platforms compound this loop. Reels, TikToks, and others combine speed, novelty, and unpredictability in powerful ways. Every swipe is an opportunity for something entertaining, shocking, emotional, or relevant. The variability of these rewards makes it reinforced. EEGs demonstrate that increased susceptibility to short video addiction is linked with diminished frontal theta waves that are brain correlated to the ability to attain executive functions in attention-related activities (Xie et al., 2023; Yan et al., 2024).

Factors and Effects of Doomscrolling

Findings from literature correlate short-video overuse with poor attentional control and higher academic procrastination among undergraduate students. These studies should not be overstated; they do not warrant the easy assumption that short form media causes disorders such as ADD, based solely on their findings. However, taking these findings in conjunction with a larger body of scholarship on algorithmic feeds and reward systems, they outline a plausible route for how repeated exposure can result in disrupted attention, lack of self-regulation, disrupted sleep, and lowered mood in the longer term (De et al. 2025; Metzler et al., 2023). The presence of the social environment within digital platforms is a factor that serves to intensify these effects, for example, through visible social measures such as likes, comments, shares, follower counts, and ongoing exposure to others' reactions, judgments, and social comparisons. Social media is not about presenting information, but instead it is about delivering social signals at a constant rate. Faces, reactions, metrics, and comments all beg for comparison. Over time, this provides an evaluative climate, and users get the habit of being constantly exposed to status, approval, and belonging cues. For people already tired, stressed, or personally vulnerable, such exposure can increase tension and dull mood. Doomscrolling, therefore, is not only about consuming negative news. It proceeds in a digital setting in which threat, comparison, and reward interact.

Although these systems are powerful, research has suggested that these systems can be minimised in their effects. One promising approach is to reintroduce stopping cues gradually. Research of human-computer interaction has shown that even low-friction steps, like disabling autoplay, introducing a take-a-break feature, or clicking on 'load more' or a confirmation screen, are sufficient to disrupt the automatic behavior of a flow and effort to slow down scrolling sessions without misalignment in using this technology (Meinhardt et al., 2025). This can include turning off auto copy, minimising notifications, turning off your notifications, removing your recommendations, or determining more specific time limits to set around the usage of apps. These strategies are important as they help restore moments of choice, which are lost in endless feed. This is especially important not only for individual users, but also for parents and caregivers, who play a role in shaping children's digital environments and patterns of media exposure. Another way that might help is to be more deliberate about when and what you compare, and when and what you expose your children to. Research shows that helping people with social comparison in terms of processing social comparison information on digital platforms can help to improve mood and reduce the reclamation of engagement (Andrade et al., 2023). Existing studies go one step further to suggest the psychological effects of social media aren't a simply a function of length of media use, but what is consumed again and how that content is interpreted (Valkenburg, 2022; Irmer & Schmiedek, 2023). Curating feed, muting accounts that are the source of distress on a regular basis, and passing on the feed consumption passivity could be key to reducing the emotional cost of scrolling.

Cross-Cultural Relevance of Doomscrolling

Mental Health America (2025) emphasises the importance of algorithm-specific tactics, because these tactics help in reducing exposure to triggering content, break triggering patterns of reinforcement, and enhance user control over their interactions with digital platforms. These include concealing repeated triggers, curating who can follow, organising social media use, and social media-related sleep by having stronger nighttime boundaries. These approaches are effective because the algorithms react to user behaviour. A feed is made or moulded by clicks, pauses, searches, and selections. It is therefore something that can be retrained in time. Ultimately, doomscrolling is more accurately defined as the result of a collision between the normal human psychology of *Homo sapiens* and highly optimised digital systems. The brain is doing what it evolves to do, it detects threats, seeks information, and responds to reward. The trouble is that in modern feeds we exploit these tendencies and never provide stopping points. By recognising this, it becomes possible to develop a more compassionate and accurate understanding of the problem. Rather than treating doomscrolling as a personal failure, it might be helpful to think of doomscrolling as a design problem, and one that needs the help of intentional boundaries, environmental changes, and more mindful engagement. The point is not total detachment from digital life, but a better relationship with information that we access – one determined more by choice rather than by compulsion.

In Malaysia, research on doomscrolling seems to be still minimal. According to the existing local literature, a recent study based in Malaysia, which investigated the doomscrolling behaviour among Malaysian young adults, revealed that doomscrolling was a strong predictor of anxiety, which indicates that the behaviour is already relevant in the Malaysian context despite the local evidence base being small (Ping et al., 2025). Collectively, this indicates that doomscrolling remains a developing field of study in Malaysia. It has already started to be studied in a direct manner, yet the local research is still underdeveloped.

To conclude, we briefly situate these conceptual insights within Aotearoa New Zealand and highlight where locally grounded research partnerships could strengthen both evidence and practice. While New Zealand–specific empirical doomscrolling remains limited, the behavior is likely relevant in Aotearoa, because the major social platforms used to access news are globally standardised and rely on similar attention capture architectures such as infinite scroll and algorithmic ranking. Theoretically, such designs minimise the natural stopping points and resurface emotionally salient negative information, which maintains threat monitoring (a greater tendency to continue searching to find any evidence of danger, crisis, or negative outcomes). The empirical results have linked doomscrolling with poor mental health in terms of diminished mindfulness and secondary traumatic stress (Taskin et al., 2024). This renders doomscrolling a timely perspective of prevention and psychoeducation in Aotearoa, where online harm discussions among the populace are growingly demanding algorithmic governance and digital literacy as instruments of wellbeing (Te Hiringa Mahutga Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission, 2026).

Future Directions for Research

We recommend researchers focus on three practical directions: validating doomscrolling measures and proposed mechanisms across diverse populations (including Māori and Pacific communities) to ensure cultural relevance; mapping how crisis-related news exposure, local media ecology, and individual differences in anxiety and uncertainty shape engagement patterns. We also recommend co-designing and evaluating low-burden interventions that restore stopping cues and agency, such as mindful news routines, 'good enough' information thresholds, and attention-protective digital wellbeing toolkits. The collaborations between universities, health and wellbeing services, and online safety organisations would speed up the process of turning theoretical evidence into culturally sensitive advice and policy-driven prevention strategies.

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One-on-One

One-on-One with Carrie Clifford

Carrie Clifford (PhD) whakapapa to Kāi Tahu, Waitaha, Kāti Māmoe. She is a clinical psychologist and clinical lead – mental health at Ora Toa Mauiraora, an iwi-led, kaupapa Māori mental health and addictions service based in Porirua. Her PhD research explored the use and holistic wellbeing benefits of pūrākau and Indigenous storytelling practices in mental health settings.

In 2025, Carrie became the current Tumuaki (President) of He Paiaka Tōtara, the Māori psychology association. She values the space that He Paiaka has created to develop knowledge in this discipline and to support akonga Māori throughout their studies. Aligning with this kaupapa, she continues to support interns in their final year of clinical placements.

One aspect of your role(s) that you find really satisfying

In my day-to-day mahi as a psychologist working with whaiora, I value the ability to create and hold safe spaces for our whānau, in particular for those who may have rarely had positive and supportive experiences in healthcare systems or systems more broadly. I also enjoy the problem-solving and formulation side of our mahi, and gaining a rich understanding of what is taking place for whaiora. Broadly, in my roles as a team lead and tumuaki o He Paiaka Tōtora, I appreciate the space to think critically and implement changes at a wider systems level. The balance of face-to-face and systems mahi ensures I don't lose sight of the very real and immediate needs of whānau and psychology kaimahi, yet also feel like there is hope in systems developments.

One event that changed the course of your career

Completing a US Fulbright exchange at the University of Colorado and Johns Hopkins was a significant privilege. Not only was I able to learn about Native American tribes, knowledge systems, and health models, the experience also allowed me to position psychology in Aotearoa in the wider global landscape, and grow my understanding of the foundations and practise of psychology in America. Through these learnings, the influence of importing psychology from America (and other Western nations) on psychology here in Aotearoa was clear, gaining a great appreciation of why challenges around cultural appropriateness, dominance of Western worldviews, and gaps in services and research meeting community needs continue to persist in Aotearoa. Positively, I was also able to see how Māori research, in particular, was relevant and of keen interest to others internationally.

One alternative career path you might have chosen

In high school and early university years, I had a keen interest in biology and the ways plants and animals adapt to their unique environments. It continues to fascinate me. Our taiao and environment provide many valuable metaphors that we can apply to hauora, as well as rongoa itself.

One learning experience that made a big difference to you

Before the majority of my clinical psychology training, as part of my kaupapa Māori PhD research project, I interviewed kaimahi with expertise in using pūrākau and other Indigenous storytelling traditions in their mental health mahi.

Consequently, throughout my training, I was constantly considering what this psychological knowledge meant in relation to these interviews and the topics discussed (i.e., Māori communities needs, Indigenous ways of working, hierarchies of knowledge), as opposed to coinciding application of culture after. I am very grateful for these kōrero and my kaupapa Māori rangahau to be my foundation and introduction to psychological practice, as it continues to shape my day-to-day mahi.

One challenge that you think psychology faces

Fear around innovation and the need to continue to do things as done in the past are key factors that hinder the development of Māori psychology and prevent progress in creating curriculum and

workforce plans that are brave, ambitious, and have potential for real, immediate impact.

Courageous innovation will allow us to truly embrace and fulfil the potential psychology has to offer, and to ensure that we continue to refine and advance the discipline, to achieve Te Tiriiti justice, and meet community needs in Aotearoa.

One thing that psychology has achieved
Psychology as a discipline continues to maintain robust practice around evidence-informed interventions. As practitioners and researchers, we must also understand limitations in the production of research that informs evidence-based practice (EBP) in order to have nuanced, informed discussions, and ensure implementation of EBP serves and benefits all whaiora.

One aspiration for New Zealand psychology
We allow the space, resourcing and support required to explore and implement what an Aotearoa-specific psychology could look like. When we harness this potential, we lead internationally.

One social justice issue psychology should focus on
Poverty in Aotearoa is a persistent issue. As psychologists, there is a need to acknowledge that our work lives within broader societal impacts. Limited access to the fundamentals of wellbeing, including kai and healthy homes, increases stress and distress in the home, presents competing demands for whānau accessing services, and is directly and indirectly linked to serious physical and mental health outcomes.

While there is an increased recognition of the impact of socio-cultural, political, and historical factors impacting mental health and psychology, the depth of discussion continues to need to be developed, and service adjustments are yet to be made to ensure all in our community can access psychological support and healing.

The NZ Code of Ethics for Psychologists explicitly speaks to social justice, and implores psychologists to be aware and use our power, positionally and privileged, to speak on and actively help reduce social justice breaches, to ultimately improve health outcomes, and reduce whaiora needing our support.

One big question
How can we create training pathways that sustain a kaupapa Māori, or matauranga Māori-informed psychology, that can be of community benefit?

One regret
Not learning Te Reo Māori earlier in life. The little that I do know brings a richness to my life and practice.

One proud moment
When whaiora have that moment of realisation or pride in themselves or their whānau, that's the best feeling for me as a kaimahi.

One thing you would change about psychology
Our current confines. We need to think beyond the current parameters of what psychology looks like in each respective scope, in my case, a psychologist at a clinic, and consider how we can take our unique skill set and make this directly more accessible to the community.

One piece of advice for aspiring psychologists
To find what you are truly passionate about. There are many pressures and hierarchies within psychology, and determining what is meaningful to you, your whānau and community within that, and remaining grounded and steadfast will ensure you have a fulfilling and nourishing career.

In 2025, Dr Carrie Clifford and colleagues, Professor Waikaremoana Waitoki, Dr Luke Rowe, and Dr Elle Brittain, launched Rima Rau ki Tua, a Māori workforce development strategy and aspiration of 500+ new Māori psychologists by 2035. The Rima Rau ki Tua kaupapa aims to promote Māori psychology workforce development to achieve transformational change within the discipline and Māori communities. We encourage all in psychology to consider ways they can support Māori workforce development.

Video seminar here: Māramatanga Indigenous Psychologies seminar with Dr Carrie Clifford and Dr Elle Brittain – Centre for Indigenous Psychologies.

Research paper here: Marginalisation, Migration, and Movement: Responding to the Underrepresentation of Māori in the Clinical Psychology Workforce in Aotearoa New Zealand | Published in Journal of the New Zealand College of Clinical Psychologists.

A poster was created below to summarise the key findings from the research paper.

Clinical Psychology in Aotearoa

WORKFORCE DATA

6% of clinical psychologists in Aotearoa are Māori

19.6% of the total population in Aotearoa are Māori

33% of all youth (under-25s) in Aotearoa are Māori

OF THE 2003 REGISTERED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS IN AOTEAROA IN 2023, 125 WERE MĀORI

6 CLINICAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES NATIONALLY

56 NZ TRAINED NEWLY REGISTERED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS PER YEAR

57% OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS ARE NZ TRAINED*

43% OF NEWLY REGISTERED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS IN AOTEAROA ARE TRAINED OVERSEAS*

7% OF NEWLY REGISTERED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS ARE MĀORI*

*data is an average from 2018-2023

6% OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS IN AOTEAROA ARE MĀORI

Waitoki, W., Rowe, L., Brittain, E., Clifford, C., & Skirrow, P. (2025). Marginalisation, migration, and movement: Responding to the underrepresentation of Māori in the clinical psychology workforce in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Journal of the New Zealand College of Clinical Psychologists*.

Event Review

International Seminar on Promoting Asian Psychologies in Aotearoa New Zealand

Minh-Hieu Nguyen is a Senior Lecturer at Massey University, specialising in the intersection of social entrepreneurship, I/O psychology, and sustainable wellbeing. Her research focuses on sustainable social and organisational change, community empowerment, and inclusive growth. Holding executive roles with the Vietnam Association of Psychology (2024–2028) and the Asian Association of Social Psychology (2023–2025), she integrates local and regional perspectives into global research. Published internationally, she also spearheads the Learning & Knowledge Sharing pillar for the CatalystNOW Vietnam Chapter.

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The Asian community in Aotearoa New Zealand made up 19% of the total population in 2023, with projections suggesting a significant increase of up to 33% over the coming decades (Stats NZ, 2025). However, academic engagements from disciplines such as psychology have not kept pace with this demographic shift to the point that community members cannot see themselves reflected in the psychologies we teach. Asian communities remain subject to prejudicial perspectives and are often characterised in public discourse and policy as either silent or 'model' minorities. Cultivating and promoting Asian psychologies in Aotearoa is both an ethical responsibility and a practical necessity for ensuring that psychological research, teaching, and service provision meaningfully reflect the lived realities of an increasingly diverse society.

Doing so challenges the dominance of Western-centric frameworks and creates space for culturally grounded ways of understanding wellbeing, relationships, and identity. It also supports more equitable and responsive practices by recognising the knowledge systems, values, and experiences of Asian communities, rather than treating them as peripheral or 'other'. In this way, integrating Asian psychologies strengthens the cultural relevance, inclusivity, and potential impact of psychology in Aotearoa.

There are promising signs of change in the academy and professional areas of psychology, with new appointments of psychology faculty in several universities and a growing number of homegrown Asian graduates. From 2000 to 2024 approximately 600 publications focused on Asian communities in Aotearoa New Zealand (Aquino et al., 2025). What we see here is the emergence of increased capacity for deepening our knowledge of the needs of Asian communities, staff, and students. This requires us to open up unique networking spaces for cultural knowledge exchange that features multi-directional dialogues that enrich both the broader psychological landscape of Aotearoa and our disciplines' contributions to an inclusive and caring society.

Supporting such moves towards wider recognition of the importance of Asian communities and cultures in psychology in Aotearoa, in November 2025 staff from Massey University and the University of Auckland collaborated with members of the Asian Association of Social Psychology (AASP) to co-host the international seminar on Promoting Asian Psychologies in Aotearoa New Zealand. The event attracted more than 70 attendees representing 20 different organisations and higher educational institutions across Aotearoa New Zealand and the broader Asia-Pacific region, representing 13 countries and territories, including Australia, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, India, Japan, Guam, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. The seminar also achieved a balanced representation of academic seniority, fostering a rich environment for cross-generational dialogue. Nearly a quarter of the participants (24%) were senior academics, including Associate Professors and Professors, while the majority (41%) were established PhD holders. Notably, a significant 35% of the cohort consisted of PhD candidates and graduate students, ensuring that the discussions remained grounded in the needs and perspectives of the next generation of scholars and practitioners. This diverse academic mix also facilitated intentional mentorship opportunities, bridging the gap between established experts in various domains of our discipline, from clinical to community, social and organisational psychologies, and the next generation of emerging Asian scholars and practitioners.

The three-day seminar featured a rich programme, including four keynote speakers from Aotearoa New Zealand, the Philippines, Indonesia, and China/Australia, alongside 16 individual or group presentations. Throughout the event, participants engaged in deep-dive sessions focused on research and practice psychologies, community-led approaches, and social regeneration. Emergent were four key foci: Asian wellbeing, navigating professional and personal identities as psychologists, navigating chaos and structural crisis, and contextualising work psychology.

Presentations on Asian wellbeing showcased a diverse range of culturally grounded interventions and socially engaged research across the Asia-Pacific region. These presentations explored how socially and community responsive psychologies can be mobilised in service to underserved populations (Li, 2025), including fostering resilience in urban-poor mothers (Martiarini, 2025), and people navigating chronic illness and the stressors of migration (Sombrea, 2025). By utilising participatory approaches, for example, arts-based efforts to revitalise local culture and environmental health interventions (Undarwati, 2025), presenters demonstrated a commitment to moving beyond one-size-fits-all models toward more community-led solutions (Hestyanti, 2025). The holistic view of wellbeing that underpinned such efforts was further enriched by a return to the historical and spiritual roots of Asian psychologies. This extended to work on Buddhist-inspired mindful solitude as a therapeutic antidote to modern loneliness (Waila & Kempton, 2025). Together, these sessions underscored that sustaining Asian wellbeing requires a deep respect for Indigenous knowledges,

relationally ethical engagements, and the importance of a dual focus on both social and spiritual regeneration.

A second core focus was on the professional and personal navigation of identities, specifically addressing the challenges and opportunities for ethnic minorities within the Aotearoa New Zealand context. These sessions delved into the psychological complexities of the migrant experience, from the nuances of Japanese lifestyle migration (Maemura, 2025) to the broader process of Asian New Zealanders understanding their responsibilities as part of becoming tangata Tiriti (people who are non-Māori and whose belonging is established through the Treaty; Dam, 2025). A significant portion of this dialogue addressed the systemic barriers faced by practitioners themselves, examining how impostor syndrome and a fractured sense of belonging often intersect with cultural identities for Asian psychologists (Du, 2025). By exploring these internal and external tensions, the presentations highlighted the need for more inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive pathways within the discipline. Ultimately, these discussions spoke to the need to move beyond mere practices of professional inclusion, seeking instead to strengthen the visibility and resilience of Asian and migrant communities within the national psychological landscape.

The third core focus, navigating chaos and structural crisis, examined the role of psychology in addressing intractable conflicts, political displacement, and environmental disruptions. These sessions extended beyond the importance of personal coping mechanisms to critique the structural conditions, including colonial legacies, neoliberal policies, and practicalities of exclusionary governance, which create vulnerabilities for marginalised groups and relations with host communities. From the displacement of Russian asylum seekers in Guam (Baquiano, 2025) to the everyday inequities that heighten disaster risk for South Asian migrants in Aotearoa (D'Silva, 2025), the presentations highlighted how policy failures are often the result of systemic choices on the part of the host society. By exploring community-based conflict transformation models in the Philippines (Perez, 2025) and climate resilience in Vietnam (Nguyen et al., 2025), the researchers emphasised disciplinary moves towards decolonial praxis and disaster justice. Ultimately, these discussions advocated for a relationally ethical, collective approach to crisis management, focused on enhancing communication (Das, 2025) and building procedural justice to support communities facing the frontlines of global and local complexities.

The final core focus was on contextualising work psychology. Here, contributors challenged the application of universalistic psychological theories within Asian research and professional practice environments, advocating for nuanced and culturally sensitive and ethically grounded orientations. Using the Philippine experiences as a primary case study, these sessions explored how indigenous perspectives and local socio-economic factors profoundly reshape organisational constructs such as leadership, motivation, and team dynamics (Teng-Calleja, 2025). A significant portion of the dialogue focused on the burgeoning field of entrepreneurship psychology, critiquing the positivity bias that often glorifies resilience while obscuring the high risks of burnout, isolation, and psychological strain. By integrating perspectives from both organisational, health, and clinical psychologies, presenters called for a more nuanced framework that captures the dualistic nature of the entrepreneurial experience as a means for balancing autonomy with emotional labour. Ultimately, the theme of these discussions underscored the necessity of developing an Asian Entrepreneurship Psychology to address the specific structural and health demands faced by workers and innovators across the region (Tan, 2025).

The overarching goal of the seminar was to provide a platform for participants to share their experiences as Asian psychologists and to reflect on the various theories, research approaches, and practices that populate their work with Asian communities, with an emphasis on sustaining Asian psychologies in Aotearoa New Zealand into the future. With support from senior Asian keynotes from China/Australia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, the seminar also concentrated on refining research skills and career strategies for emerging scholars related to effective engagements with Asian communities and publishing research (Lee, 2025). Central to the seminar was the promotion of relational ethics and the foundational principle that research must begin with trust and long-term relationships rather than mere data extraction (Cassim & Nguyen, 2025). The primary goal was to provide a platform for sharing theory, research, and practice, with a focus on sustaining Asian psychologies into the future.

In addition, during the seminar, two pivotal panel discussions on promoting Asian psychologies in Aotearoa New Zealand were led by members of the Asian Psychology Collective Aotearoa and the Enhancing Participation and Inclusive Change (EPIC) Collective (website). Sessions focused on strategies for strengthening international partnerships for joint publications and the critical need for visibility and advocacy to amplify Asian voices within the New Zealand psychological landscape.

A key highlight was the collaborative brainstorming sessions, where participants developed potential research synergies under the guidance of both senior scholars, including Professor Linda Waimarie Nikora, Professor Wendy Li, Professor Mendiola Teng-Calleja, Associate Professor Shiloh Groot, Associate Professor Mohi Rua, and Professor Darrin Hodgetts, as well as emerging leaders from the Collectives. This multi-generational exchange fostered a unique environment for cultural and knowledge sharing between scholars and practitioners from across Asia and Aotearoa.

The seminar concluded with overwhelmingly positive feedback, with participants emphasising the transformative value of these cross-border exchanges. There was a unanimous call to sustain this momentum, ensuring that the dialogue and networks established during the event continue to grow and shape the future of the field.

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Student Forum Editorial

Kia ora koutou katoa

My name is Paolo Aquino, and I am honoured to serve as Student Editor for *Psychology Aotearoa* this year. I am currently a postgraduate clinical psychology student at Waipapa Taumata Rau The University of Auckland.

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I would also like to acknowledge Charlene D'Silva, who led the Student Forum last year with care, and who has a strong commitment to student scholarship. Through her work, the Forum held space for pieces on Indigenous psychologies, decolonising knowledge, centring communities, and psychology's responsibilities in uncertain times. I am grateful to be continuing this work and building on the thoughtful foundation she has left.

For this issue, I wanted the Student Forum to reflect the range of student scholarship currently being developed across psychology. Rather than centring one specific theme, this section brings together different student projects and reflections. The pieces speak to different areas of psychology, but each shows students thinking carefully about people, practice, and the worlds that psychology is part of.

I would like to thank all of the students who contributed to this issue. It takes care and generosity to share your research and writing with a wider audience, and I am grateful for the trust each of you placed in the Student Forum.

Finally, I am pleased to bring you this issue of the Student Forum, which is filled with thoughtful research, reflection, and critical writing from students across psychology. I hope readers find something in these pieces that stays with them.

I warmly encourage students to send through their research, reflections, reviews, creative work, and other pieces for the November issue. I look forward to working with you all this year, as contributors, readers, and colleagues.

E mihi ana

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"He Mindian ahau"? The joys and complexities of identifying with multiple cultural identities in Aotearoa

Student Author Kelsey O'Connor
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Ki te taha o tōku māmā, he uri ahau nō Inia, nō Gujarat, ki te taha o tōku pāpā, he uri ahau nō Ngāti Hauiti, nō Mokai Patea nui tonu, nō Aerana hoki. Ko Kelsey tōku ingoa. I am a first year Doctorate of Clinical Psychology student at Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa (ki Pukeahu), and member of the Asian Psychology Collective Aotearoa. My multicultural whakapapa informs my passion for decolonial and Indigenous approaches to psychological research and practice. My master's thesis explored perspectives of what it means to be wāhine Māori in contemporary Aotearoa. For my doctoral research, I will explore the experiences of wāhine who are both Māori and Indian. This article establishes the topic of dual and multicultural identities by sharing some of my own experiences and reflections, alongside some key findings from my master's research.

Being mixed race[1] is an area of growing interest within the field of psychology. Within the context of Aotearoa, more and more people, Māori and non-Māori alike, are questioning what it means to belong to diverse cultural groups. While Māori are often discussed as a homogenous group (often in contrast to Pākehā), we know that this collective narrative is more complex. For example, more than half of Māori identify with another ethnicity (Statistics, New Zealand, 2025). Most commonly known (and researched) are the experiences of people who are both Māori and Pākehā (Collins, 2012; Moeke-Maxwell, 2003, 2005; Webber, 2008). However, the experiences of people who are Māori and identify with another ethnically minoritised community are less known, despite this population doubling since 2001 (Statistics, New Zealand, 2025). My doctoral research seeks to address this gap, by exploring the experiences and meaning-making of people who are both Māori and Asian.

In this piece, I will share a personal reflection as someone from this context (Māori, Indian, and Pākehā). My aim is to shed light on the topic through my own experiences, and offer examples of the cultural intricacies that can be present for people who go beyond the more common examples of people with dual cultural identities, such as Māori and Pākehā.

He Māori-Indian ahau

My mum is a first generation New Zealand Indian, and my dad is Māori and Irish. Growing up, the Indian side of my whānau would often go back and forth between Aotearoa and India.

[1] The terms 'hybridised', 'mixed heritage,' and 'dual cultural identities' are used to describe people who belong to multiple ethnic groups.

I was elated when they returned and I was showered in bangles, saris, stick-on bindis, and all other sorts of beautiful incense-smelling curios. My mother and I took great joy in dressing up in all of our jewellery, outfits, and prized possessions for no real reason. My favourite sari was a beautiful blue and gold number that was only worn on special occasions. On the other side of my whānau, the Māori-Irish side, I had more cousins than I knew what to do with. This made for epic games of backyard cricket and fun at the beaches on whānau trips away. In this setting, my prized possession was my two-piece swimsuit, also electric blue, with large, yellow sunflowers. Due to the shape of these togs (and despite my mum's greatest efforts), after months of running around in the sun, a dark, perfectly defined band would gradually develop across my torso. In my whānau, we joked that this was my Indian part, and the lighter contrasting parts of my skin that didn't get exposed to the sun were my 'Māori-ish' parts – a combination and representation of my Māori and Irish side (our whānau was fairer skinned). This became our collective way of making sense of my mixed-ness. These fun quips shed light on our individual differences, but also normalised them as part of the whole that made up our family.

As I got older, I began to see that the world beyond our whānau was a little less accepting of people who were 'different'. Growing up, not that I understood it at the time, I became variously racialised depending on the context. Firstly as an Indian person, secondly as a Māori person, and thirdly as an 'ethnically ambiguous mixed-race' person.

All three constructs had unique tropes, impacts, and expectations surrounding them that influenced my worldview today. In one moment, I was an exotic from some nondescript far-away land that people made a game out of trying to guess, or next I could be the daughter of a dairy-owner if I disclosed my heritage, or, when I was in a group of other Māori, I was increasingly likely to be a shoplifter. All of these positions were partial, transient, and often contradictory. They were contingent on my environment, the disclosure (or lack of) of certain information, and the attitude of the individual for whom I was the subject. Lateral violence (often by way of casual racism) prohibited me from garnering a full sense of belonging, affiliation, or understanding of what it meant to be Indian or Māori. Yet, I felt these instances of racism wholely. What was once easy for me, to be many things at once represented innocently through my tan lines, had become a challenging negotiation of multiple identities that were becoming exceedingly disallowed from existing simultaneously.

What it means to be wāhine Māori

Given my experiences, I decided to focus my Master's thesis around meaning making and identity for contemporary wāhine Māori, hoping to highlight the diversity in our experiences. To consider our experiences today, it was pertinent to first look to the past. The marginalisation of Māori identities and culture that occurred through the efforts of colonisation is well established, as well as how wāhine Māori were uniquely impacted (Mikaere, 1994, 1999; Pihama, 2001, 2020; Simmonds, 2011; Smith, 1992). During the colonial process, oppressing wāhine was seen as a necessary component. Removing the rights of wāhine and relegating them to an inferior status significantly weakened Māori society. In particular, the sanctioning of nuclear families through the Native Land Act 1909 and the urbanisation of Māori in the late 20th century all contributed to the cultural displacement of many Māori and the displacement of many wāhine Māori from their whānau, whenua, and customary roles and responsibilities.

Skipping ahead to the 1970s, when the Māori cultural resurgence was emerging, there was a major focus on establishing a nationalist Māori identity in response to the invisibilisation of Māori culture (Moeke-Maxwell, 2003). The utility of existing within a binary of Māori-Pākehā afforded Māori space to establish a collective way of being that was different to the Western way of being. The ramifications of this strategic positioning are complex. On one hand, focused efforts towards the revitalisation of Māori culture became possible, facilitating kura kaupapa Māori and other revitalisation movements, but also, this resulted in many Māori who were 'in-between' becoming further excluded and marginalised (Ahuriri-Driscoll & Blake, 2021). The 'essentialised' identities being promoted meant that more diverse notions of what it means to be Māori were discounted, maintaining challenges particularly for people who had been culturally displaced.

Now in our current contexts, efforts to acknowledge the diversity of Māori identities and culture are increasingly wide ranging (Kukutai & Webber, 2017). Sentiments invite many Māori to understand the potential and possibility within their own being Māori, reminding us of the fundamental importance of whakapapa. These narratives were reflected in the pūrākau of my Master's research, where the potentiality and diversity of mana wāhine could not be understated. Many wāhine who participated were able to find themselves and see themselves in reclaimed notions of mana wāhine, through atua wāhine and Māori cosmogony. Whakapapa was paramount, and through the relational ways that many made sense of their everyday lives, their wellbeing was lifted through whānau and maintaining intergenerational responsibilities.

At the same time, many others also expressed challenges negotiating multiple identities or feeling pressures and expectations to 'be' a certain way. Not to mention, the after-effects of an essentialised Māori identity continued to influence how many wāhine felt they 'should' be. One story that particularly struck me was a Māori-Pākehā wāhine who would choose 'other' on forms that required her to select a single ethnicity, as the choice between designating herself as Māori or Pākehā was impossible. The symbolism of her othering herself in order to identify herself authentically was not lost on me. I related to this strongly, given my own position of having multiple 'boxes to tick' and often faced with choosing who I wanted to be for the sake of the form. For others, they felt prescribed ways of being, presenting ,and talking were indicative of a more regimented and fixed notion of being wāhine that still prevailed. In spite of this, many wāhine employed strategies to express their identities in more fluid ways, such as engaging in 'hybrid' identities that enabled multiple facets of self to co-exist.

Having dual cultural identities

As I now move towards my doctorate, I aim to integrate these ideas. What does it mean to be Māori and another ethnic minority? Over the years, others have asked these questions and tried to challenge the Māori-Pākehā binary. Senka Božić-Vrbančić (2005) explored the processes of identity construction for Māori-Croatian women. The idea of mixedness and hybridisation are central, and Senka

speaks of the complex meaning-making that is made at the various 'subject positions' that the two wāhine in her research occupied. Many will be familiar with Jenny Bol Jun Lee's (2007) pioneering Master's thesis, Jade Taniwha, that explored the intersection of being Māori and Chinese. Jenny's work sits alongside Manying Ip's (2008) work that explores having mixed identities as Māori and Chinese too. More recent work has explored mixedness within Māori-Jewish people (Ore, 2018), Māori-Italian people (Giorgio & Houkamau, 2019), and Māori-Pasifika whānau (Si'ilata, 2017; Smith & Paranihi-Anae, 2025). Edwina Pio (2023) also released a book that created space for Māori and Bharat Indian experiences. While this list is not definitive, it is certainly not long, and it leaves us with more unanswered questions than answered. Most importantly, all begin by casting a historic lens over how various cultural groups arrived in Aotearoa, and resultantly, how society treated them.

By sharing a small part of my own story, I hope to provide a small anecdote for how coming from a whānau that has both a migrant background and an Indigenous one can be both a joyful location and create complexities in terms of identity construction and belonging. The established complexities present for many wāhine Māori negotiating what it means to them to be Māori are also uniquely present for those wāhine who whakapapa to other places too. While some work exists that explores the lives of those who are both Māori and from another ethnically minoritised background, literature is still scarce. As more and more Māori identify with multiple ethnicities and cultural groups, the need to understand these experiences alongside other wide-ranging cultural experiences is important. This research will offer insight into meaning-making and identity construction for Māori with dual cultural identities, which will subsequently support clinicians to enhance their cultural competency when working with clients from these backgrounds.

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Frameworks and Theories for Programme Evaluation: Ensuring the Effectiveness of Clinical Training in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Jacky Siu is a Hong Kong-born Doctor of Clinical Psychology candidate at Massey University. Alongside his clinical training, Jacky is completing a doctoral thesis that will evaluate a university-delivered Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) training programme. Jacky works as an online and telephone counsellor for children and adolescents in Aotearoa, crisis counsellor for a UK-based service, and postgraduate assessment marker for Massey University's School of Psychology. Prior to pursuing psychology, Jacky completed undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in classical music performance (cello), leading to freelance work with the London Symphony, New Zealand Symphony, and Auckland Philharmonia Orchestras.

In their Tertiary Education Strategy, the Ministry of Education (2025) outlined five priorities, including a focus on providing students with skills that support pathways between training and the workplace. Consistent with this objective, accredited tertiary-level mental health training programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand are required to teach trainees the competencies needed for clinical practice, including the culturally responsive application of evidence-based interventions (New Zealand Psychologists Board, 2016). Additionally, implementation scientists – scholars aiming to enhance the uptake of evidence-based treatments in community settings (Bauer & Kirchner, 2020) – have described training as the primary strategy for disseminating efficacious therapies to people in need (Edmunds et al., 2013). Although training programmes are considered critical for preparing mental health practitioners to support clients, their impact at the coalface of healthcare delivery cannot be assumed. This article discusses three programme evaluation frameworks, with an emphasis on the Kirkpatrick Model and its application to a training programme delivered by the University of Otago, Wellington (UOW). In doing so, it demonstrates how programme evaluation can promote public access to evidenced-based therapies delivered by clinicians whose training has been validated for competency, cultural relevance, and community impact.

Programme Evaluation Frameworks and Theories

Experimental and quasi-experimental approaches to programme evaluation are grounded in the reductionist view that programme success can be predicted once the components contributing to this outcome are identified (Frye & Hemmer, 2012). Accordingly, they aim to identify causal relationships between programme components and outcomes, such as by comparing skills across two groups who completed the same training but in distinct formats (e.g., in-person vs online; Chong et al., 2023). However, training programmes comprise multiple interacting factors (e.g., learner characteristics, stakeholder needs), making it difficult to assume linear causality between training elements and results (Cooper & Geyer, 2008).

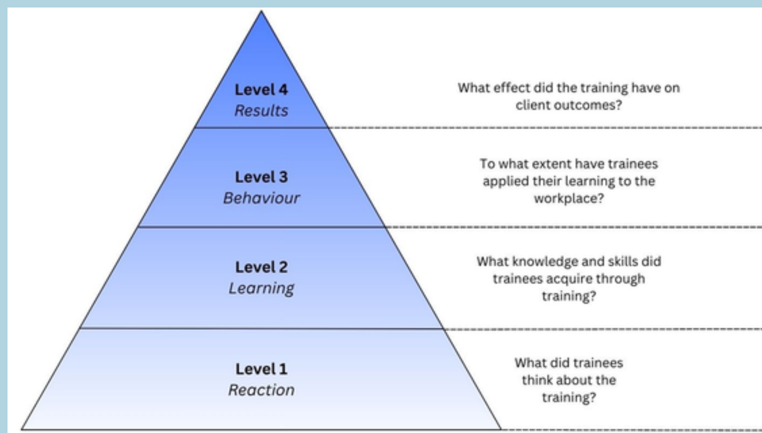
Complexity theory moves beyond the cause-effect paradigm by conceptualising elements of systems as inherently relational, making this theory well-suited for evaluating the holistic nature of training (Mennin, 2013). One framework informed by complexity theory is the Context Input Process Product (CIPP) model (Gandomkar, 2018). The model evaluates Context (identifying programme goals); Input (planning the programme delivery); Process (examining the programme delivery); and Product (assessing programme outcomes; Lee et al., 2019). Complexity theory's assumptions are reflected in the interplay between the model's components (Gandomkar, 2018). For instance, programme outcomes (Product) are measured against the goals identified in Context studies (Zhang et al., 2011). Although the CIPP model acknowledges relationships between training components, some authors have critiqued its resource-intensiveness (Iqbal et al., 2021). Meanwhile, others have suggested that, despite facilitating retrospective evaluation, the CIPP model is most effective for programme planning (Frye & Hemmer, 2012).

The Kirkpatrick Model

Whereas the CIPP model calls for evaluations before,

during, and after training, outcomes-oriented approaches focus on what programmes have achieved, thus holding educators accountable to institutions and consumers (Lee et al., 2019; Schalock, 1995). One outcomes-oriented framework is the Kirkpatrick Model, a four-level approach to programme evaluation (Figure 1; Gandomkar, 2018; Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006). Level 1, reaction, measures learners' impressions of training; Level 2, learning, examines the knowledge and skills acquired through training (Allen et al., 2022). Moving from classroom to community, Level 3 assesses behaviour – the transfer of learning to the workplace (Steinert et al., 2006). Finally, Level 4 explores results, which considers clients' outcomes (Yardley & Dornan, 2012).

Figure 1
The Kirkpatrick Model



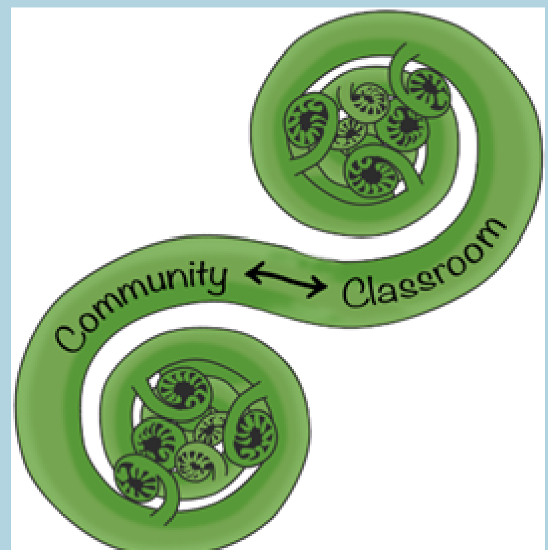
Applying Kirkpatrick's Model

Over the past three years, researchers from Massey University and the UOW have been evaluating a university-based Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) training programme using the Kirkpatrick Model. Introduced by the UOW in 2023, the programme teaches the applied practice of EMDR, an evidence-based psychological therapy for post-traumatic distress (Bell et al., 2024; Shapiro, 2007). It was established to address critiques regarding the depth and cultural relevance of the predominant EMDR training model, which involves intensive, short-form workshops developed by a North American institute (Bell et al., 2024; Farrell & Keenan, 2013).

Level 1 (learner reaction) evaluations of the UOW EMDR training programme were conducted using trainee surveys co-designed by a research team and Stakeholder Advisory Group (Mansoor et al., 2025). Content analysis of open-ended responses suggested that high-quality teaching was central to enhancing trainees' confidence in practising EMDR therapy (Mansoor & Bell, 2025). Similarly, thematic analysis of trainee and educator experiences generated the theme 'Extraordinary Learning Opportunity', with participants highlighting the programme's comprehensiveness (Volkova et al., 2025). Providing Level 2 evidence (knowledge and skills acquired), the programme's inaugural cohort averaged a first-class pass (Mansoor & Bell, 2025). Additionally, their summative grades were 10 per cent higher than their formative grades, suggesting that the programme supported trainees' development over time (Jardine et al., 2025). Critically, these grades were based on assessments containing culturally informed learning outcomes, such as understanding how cultural influences relevant to New Zealand intersect with EMDR therapy (T. Flewett, personal communication, October 9, 2025). Moving beyond these classroom-level analyses, Rendell et al. (2025) used thematic analysis to explore the experiences of a small group of clients undertaking EMDR therapy from trainees. Every client interviewed agreed that EMDR therapy delivered by the trainees improved their wellbeing, culminating in the theme 'EMDR works'. This qualitative data offers encouraging Level 4 evidence (client outcomes); however, triangulating it with converging quantitative results would enhance its validity (Heale & Forbes, 2013).

Two additional studies will complement the literature reviewed to complete an evaluation of the UOW EMDR training programme consistent with the Kirkpatrick Model (Siu et al., 2025). Study One – currently underway – is examining Level 3 (transfer of learning to the workplace) using a survey that explores the post-training uptake of EMDR therapy and the barriers and facilitators to uptake among graduates of the programme.

Figure 2
'Community to Classroom and Back'



Note. Co-designed with the UOW EMDR training Advisory Group. Reproduced with permission.

Clinicians who received their EMDR training elsewhere in New Zealand are also completing the survey to generate a broader understanding of how EMDR training transfers to the workplace. Study Two aims to supplement Rendell and colleagues' (2025) Level 4 (client outcomes) research by using psychological measures to assess clients' wellbeing before, during, and after receiving EMDR therapy from graduates of the UOW programme. Together, Studies One and Two have the potential to establish the long-term effectiveness of the UOW EMDR training programme by examining its real-world impact (Kusmiati, 2025). Moreover, an important concept that emerged during the Mansoor et al. (2025) co-design project was the bidirectional process of ensuring the relevance of classroom learning to the community, while also using community outcomes to inform classroom approaches (Figure 2). Consistent with this idea, examining the post-training uptake of EMDR therapy and its impacts on client wellbeing enables community experiences to inform ongoing refinements to EMDR training at the UOW and beyond.

Conclusions

Various frameworks support the evaluation of clinical training, from experimental designs, to models grounded in complexity theory, to outcomes-oriented approaches. Drawing from implementation science and the Kirkpatrick Model, the evaluation of the UOW EMDR training programme demonstrates how programme evaluation frameworks can guide the assessment of clinical training using metrics relevant to training providers and the wider community. While clinical trials establish whether treatments work, informed programme evaluation can help ensure the public is accessing practitioners who have undergone evidence-based training in efficacious, contextually relevant, and culturally responsive therapies.

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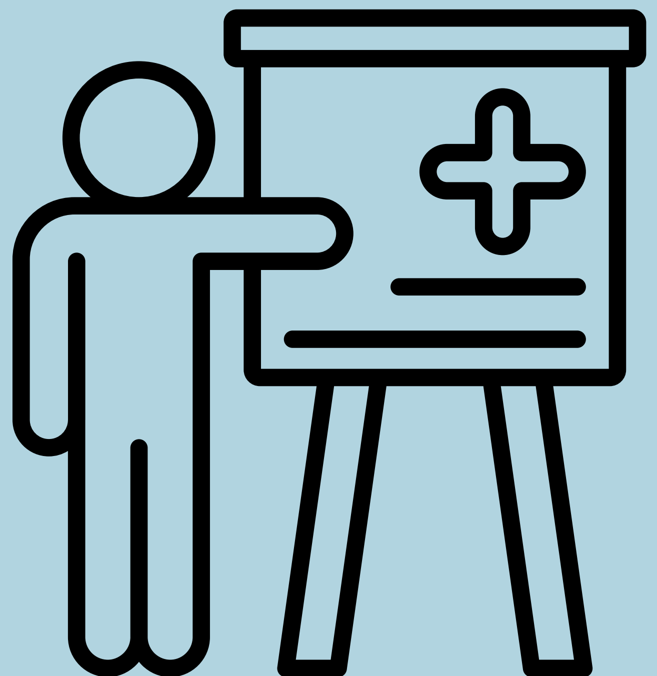

The Production of "Good Queers" in Aotearoa New Zealand: Discourse, Hierarchies, and Homonormativity

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Ko Chris tōku ingoa. I'm a queer Tauiwi man (he/they) who grew up in Poland, where my mum and grandma reside. I moved to Aotearoa with my partner, Guy, in 2020. Originally, I studied media, and for the past 10 years I worked in product development and research-adjacent roles. I came back to university in pursuit of registration as a psychologist to support and give back to my communities. I volunteer for OutLine Aotearoa and the NZ Howard League. I'm interested in critical and clinical psychology, and their intersections. Currently, I'm working on an Honors project pertaining to Man Up & masculinities.

This article is an abridged critical examination of how hierarchies of sexual value and the politics of homonormativity shape queer experiences in Aotearoa, revealing the persistent influence of normative power. Central to my analysis is the role of media, the proliferation of violence against queer communities, and the opportunistic distortions of queer experience within public and political sphere. Furthermore, I interrogate how normative structures not only operate externally but also permeate queer communities themselves.

Queer safety and public apathy

In early November 2024, Julian Suarez was brutally attacked in the bathroom of Auckland's Family Bar (Smith S., 2025). The assault was at times minimised, labeled as "alleged", and quickly faded from public attention. The dismissive language and lack of coverage reflect a persistent degree of apathy toward anti-queer violence. This apathy garnered scholarly attention. Language used in the media often dehumanises queer experiences and perpetuates negative stereotypes, e.g., by equating queer experiences with deviance (see Osborn, 2021; Morrison et al., 2019; Mitchell et al., 2024).

Media, power, and sexual hierarchies

Institutions play a significant role in delineating acceptable sexual practices while classifying others as deviant. This productive aspect of power means that sexuality is continually subject to regulation (Foucault, 1978). It is constructed, defined, and stratified by mechanisms that claim either to liberate or to suppress it. The media is one such institution, holding a tight grip over public discourse. On the one hand, media play a role of gatekeeper, who gets to decide, which material will be published, how extensively and for how long (see Jacobs & Spanje, 2022). On the other, media are the architects of the public perception, actively influencing how people understand reality through the language and angles they choose (see Morrison et al., 2019). But the values the media follow to decide what to publish and how to describe it are reflective of a deeper structure: a structure with qualitative hierarchy that sees certain sexualities as "normal" or "good" and others as the opposite.

The attack on Suarez is notable given the influx of similar incidents: straight men frequenting Family Bar and engaging in abusive behaviour toward women (Lal, 2023; Nichol, 2019a; Nichol, 2019b); the assault on the drag queen Miss Chocolate in 2017 (NZ Herald, 2017); violent intrusion of Destiny Church into a West Auckland library and the subsequent disruption of the Auckland Rainbow Parade, demonstrate a willingness to publicly challenge and intimidate us (RNZ, 2025a; Franks, 2025). Each of these incidents serves as a reminder that public safety and sexual freedoms remain precarious for some of us.

These patterns reveal that queer venues are targets of threats and prejudice; that we are not safe in ostensibly safe spaces; that we are persistently vulnerable and subjected to violence. And that the violence against us often goes insufficiently addressed. Viviane K. Namaste (2006) argues that the violence against queer people in the public sphere is motivated by perceived transgression of gender norms. In her view, the perpetrators infer "who is queer" from gender presentation, not confirmed sexual identity. Conversely, the confirmation of sexual identity – for example, by same-sex couples holding hands in public – exposes queer people to attacks because of the violation of the same normative rules. Given the ongoing overt violence, evidently, we live in a society in which

sexualities are structured into hierarchies (Rubin, 1984) and public spaces are policed by normative rules (Namaste, 2006). Those who find themselves at the bottom of the hierarchies and transgressing the norms will be seen as "abnormal" and disrupting the heteronormative order, therefore deserving punishment and violent rebuke.

Moral panic and the policing of queer difference

At the time of writing, Green Party minister MP Benjamin Doyle resigned from their position in Parliament following reports of ongoing abuse and vitriol (McCulloch, 2025). Earlier in 2025, Doyle, the first openly nonbinary MP in Aotearoa New Zealand, experienced significant public scrutiny. The scrutiny followed comments made by Winston Peters, Minister of Foreign Affairs, regarding Doyle's private Instagram account, along with further allegations and insinuations directed at Doyle (RNZ, 2025b). These events resulted in harassment and a hate campaign against Doyle, including death threats, and ultimately led to their resignation (Smith A., 2025).

What unfolded around Doyle is the effect of an assemblage of cultural and linguistic ignorance, political ideology, and opportunistic distortion. Gayle Rubin (1984) reflects on how sex scandals and moral panics, especially surrounding child protection, have historically been used to legitimise oppression against queer people. Rubin (1984) notes that appeals to child protection have previously influenced legislative and cultural responses, framing certain sexual politics as matters of public morality. In such circumstances, the fear is being actively attached to a subject. Despite societal changes that have occurred since the article was written, such discussions continue to appear in contemporary contexts, including in Aotearoa. What took place was a politically motivated attempt to destroy a parliamentary representative, not because of any substantive wrongdoing, but because of their difference from the normative vision upheld by New Zealand First.

Rubin's (1984) idea of a "charmed circle" is particularly relevant to the queerphobic discourses surrounding the described incidents. Rubin (1984) demonstrates how sexuality is not treated equally but instead arranged along what she calls a "hierarchical system of sexual value". In this hierarchy, "good, normal, natural" expressions of sexuality, in other words, monogamous, reproductive, heterosexual practices, are culturally and legally privileged. Meanwhile, other practices and identities, such as, queer sex, non-monogamy, BDSM, or sex work, are pushed to the margins, subject to stigma, surveillance, and criminalisation (Rubin, 1984). These heterosexist and heteronormative attitudes are not only problematic, but also invalidating and destructive to the communities (Fahs & McClelland, 2016).

Agents of power, like politicians or media, prescribe what is "normal", "legitimate", or "healthy" (Foucault, 1978). These prescriptions are the Foucauldian productive power of discourse; he claims that instead of repressing, power produces subjects in a particular way by naming, classifying, and regulating practices. In Rubin's (1984) account, sexual hierarchies qualify certain forms of sexuality as "good" (domestic, reproductive, monogamous, heterosexual) and stigmatise others. When Winston Peters insinuates Doyle is a threat to their child, his rhetoric does not silence (repress) Doyle. He aims to shape the public discourse around family in a way that upholds to his normative standards. Equally, he aims to uphold the hierarchies, which villainise and pathologise Doyle.

The attack on Julian Suarez and the vitriol aimed at Benjamin Doyle are not isolated incidents. They reflect how queer people continue to be judged and ranked, even in spaces that are supposed to be inclusive. When queer people fall outside of what is deemed acceptable and aligned with some dominant social values, they fall prey of violence and exclusion. This symbolic valuation seems to indicate existing social hierarchies that render certain queer lives as legitimate and free, while casting others as threatening or excessive. This aligns with the concept of a "charmed circle" (Rubin, 1998), where certain sexualities or identities are regarded as normative – often because they align more closely with heteronormative standards – while others are viewed as excessively different or extreme.

Homonormativity and conditional inclusion

Homonormativity, on the other hand, is a form of queer politics that celebrates and upholds the heteronormative institutions: monogamy, property-owning, consumerism, amatonormativity. Homonormativity promises a privatised gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption. Behind the curtain, homonormativity is a cultural front for neoliberalism, which aims to reduce the scope of democracy and reposition equality as access to the market and private life, instead of structural change and redistribution (Duggan, 2002). Neoliberal subjects are expected to be autonomous entrepreneurs in the economy of the self, responsible for self-management of "personal KPIs", profit and surplus value (Braidotti, 2022). In terms of a sexuality economy, neoliberalism shrinks the queer public sphere under the guise of equality framed as domestic privacy, "free" market, and patriotism (Duggan, 2002), leading to diminished democracy and recentering on subjects' conduct and "values".
White, middle-class, cisgender gay men in coupled

households, whose ambitions align with the privatised market and welfare achieved through the normative family, tend to thrive and benefit most within the reality of homonormativity (Duggan, 2002). Meanwhile, those outside – trans, nonbinary, queer, BIQPOC, poor and working-class people, sex-radical, kink, and nonconforming people – get marginalised, deemed politically inconvenient or framed as obstacles (Duggan, 2002). Previous efforts for the expansion of public democratic space with resources, access, and visibility for everyone gets side-lined, while homonormativity secures a narrow arena of domestic respectability and abandons egalitarian commitments.

What Duggan (2002) identifies as homonormativity – the neoliberal narrowing of queer politics to the sphere of domestic privacy and market participation – can be seen as a contemporary reformulation of the sexual value system Rubin (1984) described earlier. Rubin (1984) shows us the historical roots of this process: the regulation of sexuality through cultural hierarchies that distinguish between "good" and "bad" sex(ualities). The hierarchies of "good" versus "bad" did not disappear with the rise of neoliberal inclusion. They were reconfigured so that some queer subjects could be repositioned at the top, given they conform to norms of respectability, property, and consumption. In the twenty-first century, queer life is permitted recognition and protection when it mirrors heterosexual norms (Duggan, 2002) and sticks to the lane of prescribed hierarchy (Rubin, 1984). These hierarchies are never neutral: they are political instruments that shape whose lives are protected and whose remain vulnerable to violence, exclusion, or erasure. In this sense, the harassment of Doyle, or the violence against Suarez, are not accidental. They are symptomatic of a broader system in which queer liberation depends on proximity to normative standards.

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The Recognition Gap: Male Binge Eating Distress in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Sam Lavender is an Australian-born postgraduate student in Health Psychology at Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington. He holds an undergraduate degree in Psychology and is completing a Master's thesis in Critical Health Psychology under the supervision of Dr Gloria Fraser. His research examines male binge-eating distress, focusing on masculinity, stigma, and the recognition gap that can make men's experiences harder to name, legitimise, and seek help for. Using qualitative methods, his research centres men's lived experiences of binge eating and self-understanding within wider social and diagnostic contexts. Sam is the father of two primary-school-aged sons.

Men's binge-eating distress remains under-recognised
Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is now recognised as the most prevalent eating disorder internationally, yet research and public understanding continue to lag behind its clinical significance, particularly in relation to men (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Giel et al., 2022; Halbeisen et al., 2024). Epidemiological evidence suggests that men experience binge-eating distress in substantial numbers, but their experiences remain comparatively absent from research participation, clinical discourse, and public narratives of eating disorders (Brown & Keel, 2023). In Aotearoa New Zealand, this absence is especially striking. While eating-disorder scholarship has expanded in recent years, there remains little qualitative research examining how men here experience, interpret, and negotiate binge-eating distress in everyday life (Cleland et al., 2023; Manatū Hauora, 2025).

The closest local qualitative evidence comes from adjacent work on male body image. Mitlash et al. (2024) found that young men in Aotearoa often framed body image as a "women's issue", minimised male distress, and described help-seeking as difficult because it risked appearing weak or inadequate. Although this study focused on body image rather than binge eating specifically, it is highly relevant because it shows how male distress around the body may already be culturally difficult to name, legitimise, and disclose in the local context. Read alongside Tylka's (2011) refinement of the Tripartite Influence Model for men, these findings suggest that body-related distress does not emerge in isolation, but is shaped by interpersonal and cultural pressures that influence how men evaluate, manage, and speak about their bodies.

Why male eating distress is difficult to name
Historically, eating disorders have been culturally associated with thinness, dietary restraint, and femininity. Such assumptions shape expectations about what eating-disorder pathology "looks like", often positioning male presentations as atypical or secondary (Brown & Keel, 2023; Sala et al., 2024). This is compounded by the relatively recent formal recognition of BED as a diagnostic category. Prior to its inclusion in the DSM-5, binge eating without compensatory behaviour occupied an uncertain classificatory position, often subsumed within broader diagnostic frameworks (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Heaner & Walsh, 2013). The legacy of that diagnostic history continues to shape contemporary recognition practices, influencing which forms of eating distress are seen as clinically meaningful.

Masculinity, stigma, and help-seeking
Stigma appears to play a central role in maintaining this recognition gap. Men experiencing eating-disorder symptoms frequently describe shame, secrecy, and reluctance to disclose their difficulties, particularly where disclosure risks appearing weak, lacking control, or incongruent with masculine identity (Maloney et al., 2024). This dynamic can be understood through hegemonic masculinity, where practices such as self-reliance, emotional control, denial of vulnerability, and reluctance to seek help become ways of demonstrating masculinity rather than merely individual choices (Courtenay, 2000). Courtenay's theory of gender and health is useful here because it links these masculine practices not only to stigma, but also to material gaps in health behaviour, service use, and health outcomes. For men

with binge-eating distress, the recognition gap may therefore operate both culturally and clinically: distress is harder to name because eating disorders are feminised, and harder to act on because help-seeking itself can feel incompatible with dominant masculine norms. Yet recent evidence suggests that stigma is not simply a diffuse atmosphere of embarrassment. Wall et al. (2024) found that, among several stigma- and shame-related variables, the only unique predictor of formal help-seeking was concern that other people believe eating disorders are not real illnesses. This is especially relevant here: for men with binge-eating distress, the problem may not be shame alone, but uncertainty about whether their distress will be recognised as real, serious, and legitimate in the first place.

Emerging help-seeking research strengthens this point. Dixit and Ahlich (2025) found that help-seeking for eating-, weight-, and shape-related concerns was often hindered by self-reliance and a preference for informal rather than professional support. This aligns closely with the local patterns described by Mitlash et al. (2024), where men suggested body-related concerns were difficult to discuss and often managed privately. In the context of men's binge-eating distress, these dynamics may reinforce silence, delay recognition, and keep distress within personal or relational spaces rather than formal care pathways.

Service gaps and limits of recognition

Men's binge-eating distress may be obscured not only by masculine norms, but also by service structures that remain poorly attuned to male experience. Foye et al. (2024), in qualitative research with service providers, found that eating disorders in men remained a "touchy subject", with clinicians describing low male visibility within services, persistent gender bias, and uncertainty about how to recognise and respond to men's presentations. Similarly, Mycock et al. (2025), in a systematic review of men's formal help-seeking for eating and/or body image psychopathology, identified barriers operating across individual, cultural, and organisational levels, including the feminisation of eating disorders, poor recognition of male symptoms, unwelcoming healthcare systems, stigma, and misdiagnosis.

Weight-centred public-health discourse may further complicate recognition. In Aotearoa, where obesity prevalence and metabolic risk feature prominently in health messaging, binge eating is sometimes framed primarily as behavioural excess or lifestyle failure rather than as a complex psychosocial experience (Feraco et al., 2025; Norman et al., 2021). Men with larger bodies may therefore be channelled into weight-management pathways before eating-disorder assessment is considered, while men whose bodies do not align with stereotypical assumptions of eating-disorder pathology may be overlooked altogether. In both cases, the psychological and relational meanings of binge eating risk being marginalised.

Understanding binge eating relationally

The consequences of under-recognition extend beyond clinical detection. From a sociocultural perspective, recognition shapes how distress is understood, narrated, and negotiated within relationships and institutions. Diagnostic language can legitimise suffering, but it can also constrain it by privileging certain narratives of illness over others (Jutel, 2009). Where binge eating in men is culturally difficult to name, individuals may struggle to locate their experiences within available explanatory frameworks. This may influence how men interpret episodes of loss of control, whether they anticipate being believed, and how they evaluate the legitimacy ofseeking help.

Emerging international literature suggests that relational and identity processes are central to this dynamic. The Tripartite Influence Model highlights how appearance ideals transmitted through media, family, and peer environments shape body-related self-evaluation (Thompson et al., 1999; Tylka, 2011). Social Identity Theory likewise suggests that individuals are motivated to maintain alignment with valued ingroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For men, behaviours perceived as inconsistent with dominant masculine norms may threaten identity coherence and social belonging, encouraging concealment or reinterpretation of distress. Within Aotearoa, Te Whare Tapa Whā likewise reminds us that wellbeing is relational and interconnected across physical, psychological, family, and spiritual domains (Durie, 1985). From this perspective, binge-eating distress cannot be understood solely as an individual behavioural issue.

Toward more inclusive eating-disorder care

Recent national reviews have highlighted significant gaps in knowledge regarding both gendered experiences and culturally responsive care pathways (Cleland et al., 2023). The current Eating Issues and Eating Disorders Strategy likewise calls for more inclusive approaches that acknowledge under-served populations, including men (Manatū Hauora, 2025). Yet such policy aspirations remain difficult to operationalise without locally generated qualitative evidence. Understanding how men in Aotearoa interpret binge-eating distress, negotiate stigma, and approach disclosure is therefore a pressing research priority.

Men are clearly present in the epidemiology of binge-

eating disorder. What remains less visible is how that distress is experienced, interpreted, and negotiated within the specific sociocultural landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand. Addressing this absence is not simply a matter of adding male participants to existing research frameworks. It requires careful examination of how recognition itself is shaped by gender norms, diagnostic assumptions, stigma, and relational context. By foregrounding men's own accounts of binge-eating distress, psychology can move toward a more inclusive understanding of eating disorders, one that recognises the diversity of lived experience and supports more responsive pathways to care.

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Students' Abstracts

Student Name Zarya Poulava
(University of Auckland)
Supervisor Dr. Sam Manuela (University of Auckland)

My name is Zarya Poulava, and I am of Cook Islands and Samoan descent. Born and raised in Hamilton, I now live in Tauranga and study psychology. I recently completed my Master's thesis on the translation and cultural adaptation of the Kessler 10 (K10) from English into Cook Islands Māori. My parents, Isaac and Kura, and my younger brothers, Anau and Zaretan, inspire me to further my education and give back to Pacific communities. I aspire to create safe, culturally grounded spaces that challenge mental health stigma and empower Pacific peoples to seek support without fear or judgement.

Developing a Cook Islands Māori Version of the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10): Translation and Cultural Adaptations

This project provides the initial translation and cultural adaptation of the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler et al., 2002) from English into Cook Islands Māori. Our approach integrates Cook Islands relational research practices with cross-cultural adaptation frameworks that emphasise conceptual equivalence and an iterative, multi-stage process, including forward translation, synthesis, back translation, and expert committee review. These stages were undertaken using a culturally adapted approach, where forward and backward translation were conducted through a vānanga (discussion) consensus process rather than independent translators. This approach aligns with Cook Islands relational values, enabling collective dialogue, shared meaning-making, contestation of terms, and iterative refinement. An independent expert reviewer group of language specialists then evaluated the translated instrument to maintain methodological rigour and minimise bias.

The translation and adaptation process highlighted key challenges, including the absence of direct linguistic equivalents for terms such as "depressed", conceptual overlap between items, and structural differences between English and Cook Islands Māori. Addressing these challenges required descriptive phrasing, dialectal negotiation, and repeated iterative refinement to achieve conceptual and cultural equivalence. The decision to use the Rarotongan dialect supported clarity and consistency, while also highlighting the complexity of working across multiple dialects.

This study represents the first step toward a Cook Islands Māori version of the K10 and demonstrates that translation and adaptation for Cook Islands and other Pacific contexts is not a linear process but an iterative and relational practice. Future research will involve pretesting, assessment of operational equivalence, and psychometric validation. By doing so, this work contributes to culturally responsive assessment, enhances linguistic accessibility, and supports ongoing Cook Islands language revitalisation efforts.

Student Name Judith Yeabsley (Massey University)

Judith, MA Cantab, MSc Psychology is a PhD candidate, an AOTA accredited picky eating advisor, an internationally certified nutritional therapist, and neuro-sensory-motor practitioner. She works with 100+ families every year resolving fussy eating and returning pleasure and joy to the meal table.

She is also mum to two boys and the author of *Creating Confident Eaters* and *Winner Winner I Eat Dinner*. Her dream is that every child can approach food from a place of safety and joy, not fear.

Empowering caregivers: Building parent/caregivers' confidence in managing childhood picky eating

In a meta-analysis of recent studies, picky eating (PE; subclinical eating challenges) in children was found to affect between 13 and 50 per cent of families (Pjetraj et al. 2025). Despite its prevalence and the stress PE places on caregivers, there is surprisingly little research into the phenomenon in Aotearoa New Zealand. There also appears to be no locally produced, biculturally sensitive intervention to support families experiencing PE. The current project tested an online group intervention for families of picky eaters aged 4 to 7 years, with the aim of empowering parents to manage PE and mealtimes more effectively. Focus groups conducted with local iwi helped identify what support families needed. This knowledge, alongside analysis of the wider feeding literature and the lead researcher's experience, was used to develop the intervention.

Twenty-two mothers were recruited to participate, with 15 of their male partners also agreeing to actively participate. This was particularly positive, as males are generally underrepresented in feeding research. A model of change was designed to predict and account for behavioural changes with pre- and post-intervention semi-structured interviews used as the main data source. The intervention was delivered live online in small groups for one hour per week over five weeks. The research questions asked whether caregiver confidence increased post intervention and which factors best supported parents in the feeding domain. The data will be analysed using template analysis. Initial analysis suggests considerable improvement in caregiver confidence from pre- to post-intervention, with experiences differing significantly between genders.

Student Name Charmaine Sutherland (Massey University)
Supervisor Dr. Tracy Morison

Charmaine Sutherland completed her Psychology studies with Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University. Her Masters of Arts adds to her qualifications in Sports Management, Personal Training, Nutrition, Hypnotherapy, Neurolinguistic Programming, and Master of Metaphysical Science. Seeing these skills as a strength, along with lived experience, her interests have led to work with Manaaki Tāngata Victim Support, Taranaki Cancer Society, Chronic Complex Illness Support, and in earlier days she operated her own personal training business. Charmaine is passionate about social justice and holistic therapeutic approaches with interests in health psychology. Currently Charmaine is pursuing her Psychology registration in Australia.

Service Users' Experiences of Tele-Health Abortion Services in Aotearoa (New Zealand)

The Aotearoa New Zealand national abortion telehealth service, Decide, was launched in 2022, following abortion decriminalisation in 2020. The safety, effectiveness, and user satisfaction of telehealth abortion services have been reported in a large body of global research. However, service user voices are often overlooked, and little is known about service delivery, especially the extent to which principles of person- and relational-centred care are upheld. This study aimed to address this oversight using a qualitative case study design focused on the Decide service. An online qualitative survey gathered data from 21 service users. These data were analysed thematically alongside relevant textual data, including seven national policy, guidance, and training documents on abortion care in Aotearoa, Decide website content, and researcher field notes.

A reflexive thematic analysis, guided by feminist standpoint theory and person, and relational-centred care frameworks, generated five themes: (1) the "Everything could be done in my lunchbreak"; (2) Feeling seen, heard, and supported: Care is relational, supportive, and attentive to emotional wellbeing; (3) Care acknowledges interdependence and honours diverse support needs; (4) Care affirms autonomy and de-medicalises abortion decision-making; and (5) When person- and relational-centred care falls short: Structural strain and cultural stigma. The findings suggest that Decide services met the intended aims of being inclusive and emotionally responsive. However, pervasive stigma and structural inequalities undermined service delivery, resulting in fragmented care, erosion of trust in the service, emotional vulnerability, and suppressed autonomy. The findings highlight the importance of centring lived experience in service design and delivery, offering valuable insights for addressing service delivery issues and working toward reproductive justice.

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