Kaupapa Māori and the PATH research tool in a post-colonial indigenous context

A report for Nga Pae o Te Maramatanga as part of the 2011/2012 Summer Internship

Programme

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Person centered planning

Person centered planning (PCP) is a term that describes a range of approaches used to help individuals and groups make and execute plans for their future (Kincaid, 2005). PCP developed out of work with people with disabilities throughout the 70s, 80s and 90s (O'Brien & O'Brien, 2002), and has since been applied with youth and adults for educational, community and career planning (Kincaid, 2005). However, the majority of research still considers populations with disabilities.

PCP approaches focus on treating people as individuals, and supporting them to take control of their own lives, rather than defining and treating deficits by providing services. For example rather than viewing a disability as a problem requiring professional intervention, PCP focuses on removing barriers and achieving independence. Key themes across the range of PCP approaches are honouring the people involved by privileging their voices, avoiding labeling people with a range of 'problems', positive and high expectations, and a focus on human connections and relationships (O'Brien & O'Brien, 2002). Kincaid (2005) suggests that:

> Unlike traditional service plans, such as rehabilitation plans and individual care plans, which focus on the services the system can offer, person-centered-planning is based on positive underlying values such as choice, respect, self-determination, and positive approaches to addressing problem behaviors.

> (Kincaid, 2005, p. 1416)

Research focusing on the efficacy of PCP suggests that PCP approaches lead to an increased rate of improvement when compared with traditional planning processes.

Holburn et al. (2004) compared two groups of individuals with intellectual disabilities. One group received traditional interdisciplinary service planning while the other received PCP. In the PCP group 18 of the 19 participants moved to community living arrangements, while 5 from the 18 in the traditional planning group did. The results suggest that the PCP approach was more effective at helping people with disabilities move into living arrangements where they have more independence and require less day-to-day support. These results cannot provide evidence for applying PCP with other populations, however they do support further research into the use of PCP as a promising approach to helping people improve their living situations.

While PCP approaches are similar, they embody differences borne of the context within which they were developed. This work focuses on an approach known as Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH)[1]. A PATH session takes a positive holistic approach to planning. It starts with the Pathfinder(s) visualising a positive future, and then facilitates them analysing their current situation, leading to a form of SWOT analysis and identifying actions leading to a positive future. PATH uses a unique graphic approach, along with traditional facilitation. The participants and facilitator draw images representing concepts that resonate with them, resulting in a series of images, and a final overall image representing their own PATH.

The PATH model has been examined for its responsiveness to different cultures. In 2007 Trainor published research regarding two facilitators implementing PATH with different groups from different areas: one Spanish speaking, lower socioeconomic area, and one English speaking middle- and upper- socioeconomic area. Trainor identified some areas of the PATH process that could lead to cultural conflicts such as how family relationships are perceived, and the degree of autonomy expected from different age groups. For example, a PATH process may assume autonomy from people who

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[1] See O'Brien & O'Brien, 2005 for a short introduction to other types of PCP

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traditionally are not expected to display such autonomy. However Trainor also considered it possible that the PATH process could transcend cultural boundaries, and be grounded within the culture.

Trainor's study provides evidence that facilitators take flexible approaches to using the PATH model to address the cultural needs of the families they worked with. Facilitators would change the way they facilitated the PATH process depending on whom they worked with. However she notes that the models used by the facilitators may have in fact differed from the traditional PATH approach, and therefore PATH as a specific strategy for planning with diverse cultures is not necessarily supported. Trainor suggests that perhaps it was the facilitators who made the PATH process work within the different cultures. Therefore training and working with community members as PATH facilitators, who are embedded in the culture that they are working with, could be an important factor in implementing PATH successfully. This perhaps supports a double-pronged approach where members of the community use planning models developed to be responsive to different cultural contexts. One aim of this research project is to investigate specific strategies for engaging in PCP with whānau.

In New Zealand PATH has been used with a range of Māori individuals, and groups at iwi, hapū and whānau level. Examples of issues addressed include dealing with addiction, fundraising, community development and passing on knowledge. Anecdotal evidence supports the use of the PATH process, mainly through verbal feedback from participants and informal case studies that show what people have gone on to do with their PATH. This project aims to illuminate how PATH works in a whānau context by observing PATH workshops and surveying participants and PATH facilitators. Ultimately a uniquely whānau based PCP approach is envisioned where whānau are supported to make plans for themselves. Research into effective planning processes is crucial in this endeavor.

Relevance to Māori

Why focus on using the PATH model with Māori? In this section we consider the macro environment within which PATH planning takes place, including socioeconomic positions of Māori and the current climate of social service provision (Whānau Ora Taskforce Report, 2009). Māori are disproportionately represented in lower socioeconomic groups, and social service provision is changing in response to a call for an approach that supports Māori independence and maintains the mana of people using such services.

High Māori representation in low socioeconomic groups leads to lower standards of living that then feed upon each other. For example hardship can lead to a range of co-existing problems 'affecting health, employment, behaviour, education, and lifestyle' (Taskforce document, 2009, p. 15). Being in a lower socioeconomic group is correlated with lower standards of personal health, less attention to preventative health measures and reduced access to quality education. This generates a classic downward spiral of families struggling on many fronts. Coupled with a poorly interconnected welfare system, whānau end up working with many different services.

In addition to the correlation of socioeconomic status with adverse outcomes such as poor health and less access to quality education, there is some unexplained factor that results in Māori individuals faring worse than non-Māori. The whānau ora taskforce state that 'being Māori introduces a risk factor that cannot be entirely accounted for by social or economic disadvantage' (2009, p. 15). They suggest that this may be due to cultural or ethnic lifestyle differences that increase exposure to risk factors, or to the way society reacts to Māori. Whatever the reason, those that identify as Māori face a range of unique challenges related to the structure of society.

The 2009 report to government titled 'Whānau Ora: Report of the Taskforce on Whānau-Centred Initiatives' outlines some key themes relating to proposed changes to

government funded social service interventions with Māori. The taskforce engaged with whānau, iwi and service providers across the country. Their key point is that services must work with whānau rather than individuals, and that whānau require self-determination (Taskforce, 2009). Some quotes from participants resonate particularly strongly with the PATH and PCP approach, endorsing the perspective of participants, and autonomy leading to unique solutions for each whānau.

> 'Encourage whānau to be part of the solution'
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>> (Taskforce report, 2009, p. 45)
>
> 'When we look deep into our own culture, we have our own unique way of doing things that works for us'
>
>> (Taskforce report, 2009, p. 46)
>
> 'Every whānau has the capacity to care for itself. Any service should…support them to find the ways to do this. And because every whānau is different, they will find different ways to do so.'
>
>> (Taskforce report, 2009, p. 33)

PCP and specifically PATH is one way that service providers are engaging with whānau to help them determine actions to improve outcomes in areas such as health, education and employment. However as stated research into aspects of the PATH model that address cultural differences is at a very early stage, and none exists focusing on whānau, and Māori cultural norms. This research project aims to examine the use of PATH with whānau, to develop a research base and ultimately develop Māori-centric PCP approaches. We are working with individual whānau, and Whānau Ora providers to generate case studies of PATH in practice with different types of whānau in different situations.

This research is highly relevant at the current time, with the focus on whānau ora. The research is grounded in participant and facilitator experience through surveys and interviews. Ethnographic observation of workshops allows the researchers to form their own interpretations, which they can compare with participant views.

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Methodology

We chose a case study approach to answer the questions posed by the research. These questions are: How effective is the PATH approach for whānau? How does the PATH approach work with different whānau? What elements of the whole process contributed to its effectiveness (where whānau feel the PATH has been effective)? These questions relate to particular instances where facilitators have taken whānau through the PATH process and focus on the experience, relationships and processes involved in a PATH session. Case studies gather in depth data about specific PATH sessions to answer the questions we pose (Denscombe, 2007), helping to explain and understand the causes of positive outcomes from PATH sessions.

Whānau engaged in PATH planning find it to be a positive experience (Pipi, 2010), although the desired outcome is positive action. Within this study we touch upon whānau actions, and the results of these. However it is not within the scope of this research to further analyse the outcomes of the PATH process. This exploratory study lays the groundwork for further work extending across the full breadth of the PATH process, from pre-PATH processes to the long-term outcomes of actions resulting from PATH sessions. Data is collected primarily from participant perspectives, and ethnographic observation of PATH workshops in action. We consider participant perspectives regarding the effectiveness of the PATH workshops.

Two case studies were generated in two diverse contexts. One was a Māori social service provider organisation while the other was a whakapapa (genealogy) based whānau.

Triangulation

Regarding research, triangulation can be defined as employing "multiple methods, measures, researchers, and perspectives" (Patton, 2003, p. 247) or any combination of these. Triangulation is built on the premise that no single method is ideal, so by using

triangulation a researcher can test for consistency across their study (Patton, 2003). Combining methods can improve the validity of the study, which refers to how well the study measures what it claims to (Patton, 2003). In the case of the current research, triangulation is achieved through employing different sources of data. Semi-structured in-depth interviews provide a wide-ranging source of data. Additionally ethnographic observation of PATH workshops provides a second source of data, which the researcher can use to consider their own interpretations from the interaction in light of the interpretations of the participants.

Methods

As Hammersly (1992) suggests, decisions about what types of data are collected should be based on the nature of what is being described, the likely accuracy of the descriptions, and the purpose of the study. In this study data is collected using interviews and ethnographic observation.

In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were semi-structured. The key goal was to gather narrative about PATH workshops, how people interpret them, what meaning they put into activities of the workshops, and why they are useful for them. This provides for a wide ranging discussion. In-depth interviewing gives "access to knowledge – a knowledge of the meanings and interpretations that individuals give to their lives and events" (Minichiello, Aroni & Hays, 2008, p. 1).

Ethnographic observation of PATH workshops

We observed several PATH workshops in action and this gave us opportunities to develop our own interpretations of the interactions, relationships and process of the PATH. We also checked the interpretations from participants and facilitators with our

own observations, allowing us to check how consistent our observations were with participants' own experiences.

Kaupapa Māori

This research project was born out of Pipi's work delivering PATH planning workshops and training PATH facilitators. PATH workshops have been used in a wide range of contexts, including with social service providers and whānau, and as a planning tool and an evaluation and research tool. It became clear that more research into how the PATH operates with whānau was required. As the initiator of PATH with Māori in Aotearoa Kataraina has a unique responsibility to ensure that it is used honestly and effectively with whānau.

The research participants have meaningful relationships with Kataraina through her ongoing work with them running and implementing the use of PATH within their whānau (both kaupapa and whakapapa). We work to achieve engagement with participants by aligning the project to their tūmanako (aspirations) (Hudson et al., N.D), leading to tangible benefits for them. These benefits include assisting them to examine how their PATH implementation is going and to support them to continue with the positive actions they identify. Throughout the project we worked with over five different whānau and organisations using the PATH tool in different ways. We present two case studies from these five, although all have contributed in some way. Before, during and after the research process we remain involved with each group, continuing to support their moemoea (dreams) for the future. The research is a snapshot of an ongoing process, which feeds into changes to that process. The overarching intention is Māori self-determination.

Results

Case Study A (Social service provider to rangatahi (youth))

Background

Case Study A are a Kaupapa based organisation, meaning they are an organisation based on a common purpose. They provide sexual health and teenage pregnancy support to rangatahi (youth) aged from 9 – 19 years. They are a small (10 staff) and highly specialised charitable organisation, which makes them unique in the health sector. They are independent, and have had premises in Manurewa since 2010. Prior to this they were based at Middlemore Hospital. Being independent and community based means they provide more of a community service, rather than a solely clinical service.

Why the PATH?

Case Study A use PATH planning in many areas of their work. Instead of making traditional professional development plans in 2012, staff each put together a PATH. They clarified their hopes and dreams, and then examined how their work with the organisation meshed with these. They also use PATH planning as part of the service that peer educators provide to rangatahi. The CEO of Case Study A carries out PATH sessions with people when and where they fit best. They are developing a programme providing a range of services for rangatahi in the community. PATH will form some part of this range of services, although where and how has not been decided.

The CEO has found that the PATH is visual and practical. People thrive on what they can see, and on the experience of sharing their dreams and aspirations. Getting goals, ideas and values down in front of people in a way that they can understand and connect with is an important part of the PATH. The PATH

process is easy to use because it is visual, rather than a solely written report. Written plans are in the hands of the person providing the plan, they dictate how things will be and are focused on fixing a problem. The process of doing the PATH is focused on empowering whānau – they own their dreams and are able to bring their dreams to life. The PATH starts with the whānau or individual, focusing on their dreams, and on what is positive and possible. The PATH process shifts the focus from fixing a problem, to normalizing dreaming and figuring out ways to get there. Case study A are able to fit ways of being Māori into the PATH process.

Pre-PATH processes

Prior to doing the PATH the CEO of the organisation talks to people about what is involved, providing a simple introduction. Often showing them what a completed PATH looks like is the most valuable pre-PATH tool. Going into too much detail can be overwhelming for people, so the simple visual aspect of PATH is useful.

Challenges

The organisation has identified their lack of fluency with the PATH process as the biggest and only real challenge to using it. They have only had a two-day training on how to use the tool. This means they are still relatively new in their use of the tool and want to ensure they are using the right process. The CEO works with this challenge by asking an expert to critique PATH plans when possible, and by continuously working on strengthening her knowledge of the process.

Case Study B (A multi-generational whakapapa whānau)

Background

In Case Study B the PATH planning process involved 55 members in two sessions, not including the tamariki who wandered in and out. These sessions were referred to by the facilitator (a whānau member) as wānanga (learning opportunities). Despite the majority of whānau members being based in Auckland, the sessions were held at their marae in the upper North Island of NZ. The PATH facilitator suggests this was an opportunity for people to return home, and that running the sessions at the marae provided important environmental influences.

The 55 people who participated in person represent about 75% of the whānau. The remaining 25% were unable to attend, as there are significant numbers based in Australia. The pre-PATH survey, video of sessions and a Word document detailing the PATH was sent to those who couldn't attend with the hope that they would be able to contribute and be involved in some way.

Pre-PATH processes

Prior to the PATH sessions a 30-question survey was sent to all whānau members. Questions asked what the whānau would like to see in the future, and how they saw the current state of leadership in the whānau. The idea was to give the trustees an understanding of where the whānau were prior to the PATH process beginning. The survey was sent out a month and a half before the sessions, although some completed it on the day. There was a 77% response rate, with people sometimes responding for their children as well as themselves. Their responses were compiled into a report after the first wānanga.

Whānau self-assessment

The whānau did a self-assessment at the start of the PATH sessions using the Waitangi wheel[2]. They assessed themselves on these seven aspects, from 1 – 10:

1. Matauranga
2. Economics
3. Environment
4. Culture
5. Spiritual
6. Social - including housing
7. Health

The purpose was to define where they were at the moment, forming the basis for the rest of the PATH process. There were some challenges involved in this. They scored themselves as a group, which meant they were less accurate than if they had done it individually. There was also various perspectives in the way people perceive what rates or counts as a '10'.

Challenges

Whānau Trustees were present and could dominate discussion at times. Some were not comfortable with silence and felt a need to fill it. The trustees were busy during the whole session and their focus was more on outcomes than on the process. Where possible the facilitator broke the whānau into groups to bring more voices into the discussions. He also chose the groups carefully to remove any known dynamics such as parent/child relationships. He felt this would further free up people to talk freely.

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[2] The Waitangi Wheel is a self assessment tool based on Mason Durie's Whare tapa wha model and was developed as such by James Takoko and Kataraina Pipi.

The facilitator was solo, with a support person taking notes. Although they missed some sections, the notes formed headings for the Word document outlining what happened in the PATH. Being solo was a challenge with such large numbers (55+). When people were in groups it was hard to support all the groups through tricky PATH related thinking. Having another facilitator would make the whole process easier.

Facilitation – kaupapa Māori

The facilitator suggests that every value that drops out of the PATH process is consistent with tikanga in terms of whanaungatanga. When asked about facilitation that is uniquely Māori, he commented on using language mindfully and the value of metaphor and analogy. He also talked about empathizing and bringing people back to remember where they are and why they are there. Finally he mentioned tikanga, including mihimihi and karakia in the process, and not rushing things. When it was suggested that some of these things could be termed general facilitation skills, such as empathising, using language appropriately and purposefully, and following processes that people understand and expect, he responded that where they become Māori is the way that they are done, and what they mean for people.

Conclusions

The two case studies show different types of contexts where the PATH planning process was used in different ways. Case Study A uses the PATH for staff development and with their young clients, with plans to expand its use. Case Study B uses the PATH to develop plans for their extended whānau over the next several years. One case was a kaupapa-based organisation while the other was a whakapapa-based whānau. The ability for diverse users to apply the PATH in diverse ways is one of its strengths.

Research participants felt that the PATH process itself is consistent with tikanga Māori, or does not provide barriers to tikanga. Participants were able to incorporate mihimihi, karakia and other cultural norms within the process. Participants were also drawn to the moemoea process within PATH where Pathfinders explore their dreams for the future. The experience of sharing dreams and aspirations was a point that research participants mentioned often. Also, the visual nature of the PATH was a point that participants brought up regularly. They suggested Pathfinders were especially drawn to being able to see their dreams and goals in pictures. Additionally the visual nature of the PATH, coupled with the facilitation process used, contributed to empowering whānau and their ownership of their dreams. The process and visual nature also made the process inclusive and positive, rather than problem focused.

Our findings support research by Trainor (2007) suggesting that the facilitator's cultural knowledge is important in making the process acceptable to different cultures. However this also appears linked to the processes used in the PATH tool. That is, the PATH planning process is such that it works with tikanga Māori. This suggests that both the facilitator and the processes inherent in the PATH come together to form a tool that is relevant to whānau.

This project provides an initial investigation into PATH as a tool for Māori self-determination. From here research can continue into specific processes within the PATH that are particularly relevant. Further research can also consider the PATH in practice, that is how to support and train PATH facilitators to implement PATH with more whānau.

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