

Maori, ethics and health promotion

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Ethics and Evidence in Health
Promotion Symposium.

Introduction

- Purpose:
- To discuss the meaning of ethics in health promotion from a Maori perspective
- To explore the notion of “moral multi-culturalism” and its implications for a public health code of ethics
- To promote the development of a Maori ethical framework based on “tikanga Maori” for application within the public health sector.

Acknowledgment

To Maui Hudson for his thesis ‘He Matatika Maori – Maori and Ethical Review in Health Research,’ AUT, 2004.

The difficulty in translating cultural concepts.

- Our culture provides the lens through which we view the world.
- Culture refers to a group or community with which we share common experiences that shape the way we understand the world.
- There are six fundamental patterns of cultural difference between cultural groups.
- They are the cause of recurring cross cultural communication difficulties.
- They are often invisible (or not immediately obvious).

The difficulty in translating cultural concepts

- **They are as follows:**
 - Different communication styles
 - Different attitudes towards conflict
 - Different approaches to completing tasks
 - Different decision making styles
 - Different attitude towards disclosure
 - Different approaches to knowing

<http://www.pbs.org/ampu/crosscult.html> (Working on Common Cross-Cultural Communication Challenges)

The difficulty in translating cultural concepts

- Cultural concepts are NOT always translated accurately from one language to another and sometimes there are no alternatives.
- Language A might not have a word for a certain idea that exists in language B, or it might have too many words.
- English *water* Japanese *mizu* (cold water), *oyu* (hot water)
- English *tomorrow* Arabic *bukra*. But *bukra* can mean “some point in the future”
- English *now*. Lebanese *hella* meaning *presently, when I’m done, later*.

Thinking in Tongues. <http://www.cedarseed.com/air/blabla3.html>

The difficulty in translating cultural concepts

- Ko wai koe? Who are you?
- I am my mountain, my river, my waka, my house, my sub tribe and my tribe.
- I am the sum total of all my ancestors before me and the beginning of others to come.
- I am part of the whole.
- And the whole is me.
- Tihei mauri ora! I sneeze, therefore I am.

Ethics in health promotion

- What are ethics? One definition:
 - “*the systematic and critical reflection on the rightness and goodness of human action.*” They seek answers to the questions of:
 - “how should we act in a given situation?”
 - “what should we do or say?”
 - “How should we live our lives?”
 - “What sorts of people should we be?”

Porter, E. (1999). *Feminist perspectives on ethics*. London: Longman Paul. p3

Ethics in health promotion`

- Several developments over the past seven years have given impetus to the development of health promotion's moral and ethical credentials:
 - Public Health Code of Ethics (Public Health Leadership Society 2002);
 - A report on “The Ethical and Social Dilemmas of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention,” (*Hastings Centre and the Stanford University Centre for Medical Bio-ethics – 2000*);
 - Growing literature on the dialogue between public health and the international human rights movement;
 - Ongoing policy debate on health equity and distributive justice occasioned by the *World Health Report, 2000*.

Ethics in health promotion

- In Aotearoa/New Zealand, the public health sector is contemplating the development of a public health code of ethics.
- This has in part been stimulated by the development of the generic public health competencies.
- The Health Promotion Forum has already developed “*Nga Tikanga Manaki – A Values and Ethics Statement from Nga Kaiakatanga Hauora mo Aotearoa – Health Promotion Competencies for Aotearoa/New Zealand* (Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand).

Identity and transparency as part of the ethical consideration

- For the dominant group in a society, their particular identity is transparent, ie. not perceived by them as a specific identity;
- For non-dominant groups, their identity is always experienced as particular, as specific to them as members of a group.
- To assert a minority identity within the context of a dominant group is to challenge what is perceived by the dominant group to be normal.

Identity and transparency

- The basic claim of the identity argument is that race, ethnicity and culture are central to moral identity;
- What is right depends (*at least in part*) on one's identity as a moral agent;
- One's race (or ethnicity, or culture) is central to one's identity as a moral agent;
- Thus, what is morally right depends (*at least in part*) on one's race, ethnicity or culture.

Universal Ethical Principles

- The metaphor of the medical model is quite familiar to those of us who work in public health.
- In 1994 Beauchamps and Childress developed a set of biomedical ethical principles that are widely used in the health sector.
- They proposed that the ethical principles of respect for autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence and justice as universal in nature and applicable to any culture and society.
- But Universal approaches to ethics fails to recognise the impact that cultural difference has on the application of ethical principles.
- This difference does not relate only to a difference in understanding or knowledge, but rather a “*fundamental difference in the conceptualisation of the universe.*” (Hudson, M. *He Matatika Maori – Maori and Ethical Review in Health Research*, AUT, NZ 2004).

Towards a moral multiculturalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand

- Ethics are implicitly related to a culture's values and beliefs
- Therefore, cultural values influence the process of ethical deliberation
- In an increasingly pluralistic society the values from a single culture, religion or disciplinary perspective cannot be assumed
- The challenge in developing and articulating a moral framework for health promotion is not only to acknowledge but more importantly to give effect to different cultures' perceptions of what is good or desirable.
- Multiculturalism accepts that ethical principles are relative and are contextually bound rather than absolute.

Towards a moral multiculturalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

- Moral multiculturalism is comprised of two principles:
- The acceptance of moral principles as binding upon people because they are accepted by the people who hold them, and;
- The acceptance by different cultures of the different moral principles as binding because of cultural norms .(Baker, 1998)
- This contrasts with the universal approach which is inflexible on the issue of cultural orientation

Maori Ethics

- Much of the work in relation to Maori ethics has been conducted by Maori researchers frustrated at the application of mainstream ethical frameworks in the ethical critique of their work.
- It has been the development of Kauapa Maori research approaches that has instigated the examination of Maori ethics.
- Although *tikanga* Maori is proposed as an integral part of Maori ethics, the relationship between *tikanga* and *ethics* continues to be clarified
- The translation of the two concepts across cultural boundaries is not always precise, and how precise that translation is, is a function of context.

Maori Ethics

- Hudson categorises *tikanga* into two levels, as values and as ethics
- Values – concern aspects that Maori value and believe to be good
- They correlate with Maori philosophy and knowledge about the nature of the universe
- Ethics – express values in principles or behaviours, or are the cultural link between philosophy and action.
- ‘*Tika*’ means “*to be right*” and thus “*Tikanga Maori*” focuses on the correct way of doing something. This includes moral judgements about appropriate ways of behaving and acting in everyday life.” (Mead, 2003) p 6

Maori Ethics

- *Tikanga Maori* is informed by precedent, that is, decision making made on the basis of previous experience;
- *Tikanga* frameworks have been constructed to provide guidelines for the application of *tikanga* as decision making tools including in the area of ethics.
- Hudson summarises the following *tikanga* concepts for consideration in the context of the ethical review of research:

Maori Ethics

Values based and ethics based tikanga

Values- based tikanga	Ethics- based tikanga
Io/whakapapa Mauri Tapu and noa Mana Wairua/hau	Whanaungatanga Manaakitanga Kaitiakitanga Mana Wairuatanga Kotahitanga Take –utu - ea

Maori Ethics

- The *tikanga* described in the table emphasise connection with the spiritual realm, respect for all things, control and the significance of reciprocity in human values.
- Connection with the spiritual realm is a fundamental part of the Maori ethos
- Respect for all things refers to the recognition of Maori as *tangata whenua* and respect for Maori cultural knowledge and traditions;
- Control refers to the right of Maori people to be self determining, to be able to make decisions about themselves, by themselves and for themselves, even where this might be contrary to the prevailing philosophy;
- Reciprocity means ensuring there are mutual benefits and they are realised equitably to ensure the maintenance of balance and harmony;
- It also demonstrates how Maori values and philosophies are not only evident and applicable today but continue to resonate powerfully throughout Maori society.

Maori Ethics

- The Treaty of Waitangi/te Tiriti o Waitangi has been identified as a possible ethical framework as it “*establishes the relationship between Maori and the Crown.*” (“Nga Tikanga Pono Wahanga Hauora: Health Sector Ethics, Mechanisms for Maori into Ethical Review.” (Te Puni Kokiri,) 1994.)
- The following principles were suggested to guide an ethical system responsive to Maori:
 - Health is a *taonga* to protect and enhance;
 - The Treaty of Waitangi is the basis for the ethical framework
 - Maori and the Crown share responsibility for ethical structures
 - A Treaty of Waitangi framework is necessary to protect and promote the wellbeing of Maori and of all New Zealanders as a *taonga*, and
 - Equitable resources should be allocated so that Maori can participate as autonomous contributors to the processes.

Maori Ethics

- The National Ethics Advisory Committee identified the following three key issues in relation to ethical review and the development of a Maori ethical framework:
- Treaty of Waitangi – integral part of an Aotearoa/New Zealand ethical framework
- Universal ethics – universality of the western model of ethics was challenged as being unresponsive to Maori issues;
- Maori ethics – the need for a Maori set of ethics that would reflect Maori ideas and accountabilities is essential. (Cram, 2003).

Conclusion

- Maori are a young people
- We are and will be the recipients of significant public health interventions now and into the future
- Universal ethics don't work for Maori
- Therefore, any ethical framework that contemplates the moral issues surrounding public health interventions involving Maori, must incorporate a Maori ethical framework;
- There are a number of Maori ethical frameworks from which a Maori public health ethical framework can be developed.
- Now is the time to do so.

Tena koutou katoa.