

MEASURING MĀORI CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

A discussion paper

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Abstract

The Annual Child Poverty Monitor reports on child poverty measures and child-poverty-related indicators. Around one in three Māori children are defined as living in poverty. While the Monitor is a prompt for government action to reduce child poverty, it has been criticised as presenting a negative view of the lives of Māori children and whānau. This paper considers whether a fuller picture of the lived realities of Māori children can be gained from routinely collected data, using a lens of tamariki Māori wellbeing. A mauri framing for the indicator set is proposed, with three components reflecting the ihi, wehi and wana of tamariki. This paper is intended as a resource that can inform discussion of Māori-centric indicators of Māori children's wellbeing as individuals, within the context of whānau and wider society.

Keywords

wellbeing, capability, child-centred, culturally responsive indicators

Introduction

The monitoring of child poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand was one of 78 recommendations made by the Children's Commissioner's Expert

Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty when they reported in 2012. This recommendation provided the impetus for a collaboration between the Children's Commissioner, the J R McKenzie Trust and the University of

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Otago to produce the Annual Child Poverty Monitor (“the Monitor”). The Monitor uses existing, routinely collected data (e.g., Census data and income data) to report on poverty and material hardship (Children’s Commissioner, J R McKenzie Trust, & the University of Otago, 2015). Around one-third of Māori children live in poor households (Simpson, Duncanson, Oben, Wicken, & Pierson, 2015), and the Monitor is intended as a prompt for government to act to ensure that children in this country do not have their lives constrained or stifled by poverty.

Acknowledging that Māori children are disproportionately (i.e., 33 per cent of Māori children compared with 16 per cent of New Zealand European children) affected by household poverty identifies a breach of their Treaty of Waitangi citizenship rights. It does not, however, provide insight into what Māori, including tamariki themselves, consider to be a good life for tamariki. The question has therefore been raised about how the Monitor might be balanced by a fuller consideration of the lived realities of Māori children, within the context of whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities. In this way “official statistics” might provide a better description of Māori children and inform policy outcomes that recognise and facilitate Māori aspirations for the lives and wellbeing of tamariki (Kukutai & Walter, 2015).

The need for a complementary set of Māori child wellbeing indicators is part of a bigger movement for nation-state statistics to be more culturally responsive (Durie, 2006; Expert Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty, 2012). For example, the expert group assembled by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2006) to discuss Indigenous indicators observed that “there should be a balance of comparative indicators . . . and indigenous-specific indicators based on indigenous peoples’ visions and understandings of well-being” (p. 8). From a Treaty of Waitangi perspective, this is analogous to recommending a balance of citizenship (comparative)

indicators and rangatiratanga (Indigenous-specific) indicators to gain insight into Māori wellbeing (Cram, 2014).

The aim of this paper is to suggest an indicator set that can be built from routinely collected data that better reflects the wellbeing of our precious taonga—our tamariki and mokopuna. The word “suggest” is used here to indicate that there is some way to go to ensure that such an indicator set reflects Māori understandings and serves Māori interests. Routinely collected data is still largely collected by and for government, with Māori having little input into the governance of this information or how Māori are represented in data reports. An exception is the 2013 inaugural Māori Social Survey, Te Kupenga, which took a strengths-based approach to enquiring after Māori social, cultural and economic wellbeing (Kukutai & Walter, 2015). “Suggest” therefore reminds us to remain vigilant about the data being routinely collected (e.g., is it enquiring about deficits or strengths?), about the breadth of that data (e.g., does it cover all that we want to know about in order to fully represent people’s lives?) and about what needs to be put in place so that Māori data rights and interests are safeguarded (Māori Data Sovereignty Network, 2016).

This paper will also inform discussion about whether the current investment statement from the Treasury (2018), *Investing for Wellbeing*, is responsive to the wellbeing of tamariki Māori. Currently, wellbeing is conceived by the Treasury as consisting of financial, social and human capital within the context of natural capital. This signals a broadening of the social investment agenda of the previous government, which was solely focused on fiscal returns to the exclusion of social wellbeing (Baker & Cooper, 2018). However, wellbeing is still not being seen within the context of a Treaty of Waitangi partnership that acknowledges Māori rangatiratanga. There is therefore some way to go before this notion of “wellbeing” is responsive to Māori, let alone to tamariki.

After a brief look at how wellbeing is measured, some of the frameworks available in this country for measuring Māori children's wellbeing are discussed to highlight their limitations and provide further rationale for the proposed indicator set.

Measuring wellbeing

General (non-Indigenous-specific) measures of wellbeing are often holistic, including an acknowledgement of the importance of spiritual components of wellbeing. However, these measures tend to focus on individuals as independent beings, and invariably omit the historical, societal and cultural context that affects the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010). Wellbeing for Indigenous peoples is related to being First Nations peoples, who have an ethic of care for the environment, who have language and cultural protocols along with community roles and responsibilities, and who possess spiritual beliefs. Rather than focusing on individuals, Indigenous people value family structures, interdependence and connectedness (Robinson & Williams, 2001). These values need to be acknowledged within any discussion of Indigenous wellbeing.

The development of a set of Māori-centric child wellbeing indicators is mostly about objective wellbeing, assessed at a population level through routinely collected data (e.g., general surveys, Census data or government agency databases), for example, educational achievement and health. The measurement of subjective wellbeing, on the other hand, usually focuses on how individuals, couples or families are experiencing life (Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern, & Seligman, 2011), for example, satisfaction with life and happiness. Objective and subjective wellbeing measures can both provide evidence of this country's responsiveness to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 2008). Article 2 of the Convention

requires New Zealand "to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being", while the preamble stresses the "importance of the traditions and cultural values". The implication is that any measurement of Māori children's wellbeing—whether objective or subjective—must be a good "fit" with Māori cultural values.

Current measurement of Māori children's wellbeing

This section canvasses some of the ways in which the wellbeing of Māori children has been examined and assessed. General Māori wellbeing frameworks that prioritise the whānau and consider children's wellbeing in relation to whānau wellbeing are described, as well as surveys that specifically examine the wellbeing of children and young people.

Māori Statistics Framework

The Māori Statistics Framework ("the Framework") adopts a capability approach (after Amartya Sen, 2000, 2009) to defining Māori wellbeing that "conceives of people directing their lives according to what they themselves value. Capabilities are a means to an end. [Capabilities] reflect opportunities, access and informed choices or in other words, the freedoms to function effectively" (Statistics New Zealand, 2002, p. 5). Within the Framework, Māori wellbeing is seen as a function of Māori individual and Māori collective capability to live the sort of life they wish to. The dimensions of the Framework are listed as sustainability in te ao Māori, social capability, human resource potential, economic self-determination, environmental sustainability, and empowerment and enablement (Statistics New Zealand, 2002).

Children are mentioned three times within the Framework. In the Area of Interest: Families and Households, the social capability of Māori households includes two indicators: "With

children in Māori-medium education” and “With children attending university or post-school training” (Statistics New Zealand, 2002, p. 15). In the Area of Interest: Social Problems, the goal dimension of human resource potential includes the measurement dimension of “Children in care” (Statistics New Zealand, 2002, p. 21). While the Framework provides insight into whānau capability and was the impetus for the Māori Social Survey, Te Kupenga (see below), the focus on the wellbeing of children is solely within the context of whānau wellbeing rather than on tamariki as individuals in their own right. While whānau are an important context for nurturing children's wellbeing, Tā Mason Durie describes layers of wellbeing that provide a rationale for an individual focus as well.

Tā Mason Durie on Māori wellbeing

Professor Sir Mason Durie has written extensively on Māori health and wellbeing (see, e.g., Durie, 1985, 1994, 2001), including a paper entitled *Measuring Māori Wellbeing* that is based on a guest lecture he gave to Treasury in 2006. His framework for measuring Māori wellbeing includes the wellbeing of individuals, of collectives (i.e., families and groups) and of populations. He therefore provides a way of examining the wellbeing of children as individuals, within the context of their whānau, within society. While the focus of Durie's (2006) paper is the wellbeing of populations and he does not specifically touch upon children's wellbeing, his framing of Māori wellbeing measurement is valuable. He also endorses combining “universal” (e.g., life expectancy) and Māori-specific indicators (e.g., wairua), and describes whānau wellbeing as capacities (e.g., manaakitanga and whakamana) in a way reminiscent of Amartya Sen (2000, 2009). He also recommends four principles for measuring Māori wellbeing: indigeneity (i.e., seeing the wellbeing of humans as intimately connected to their natural environment), integrated development (i.e., cohesive

development across cultural, economic, social and environmental contexts), multiple indicators, and commonalities (i.e., even though diverse, Māori share characteristics). These principles can “test” whether any suggested Māori wellbeing tool will serve Māori interests well, and are revisited below in the discussion.

Ministry of Social Development

In 2008, the Ministry of Social Development released its second report on indicators of children's wellbeing. The report quotes the 2002 Agenda for Children as having developed a broad consensus about children's wellbeing.

The wellbeing of children matters to us all. How well they do affects how we as a society do . . . Children have the right to be treated as respected citizens, to be valued for who they are, and to have their views considered in matters that affect them. (Ministry of Social Development, 2002, p. 10)

The indicators included in the Ministry's second report span health, care and support, education, economic security, safety, civil and political rights, justice, cultural identity, social connectedness, and environment (Ministry of Social Development, 2008). The report is useful as it provides details about routinely collected data related to children and young people's wellbeing. However, it is also open to the criticism that Indigenous “problems” rather than strengths are focused on in a report that is primarily for government (Kukutai & Walter, 2015).

Whānau Ora initiative

In 2009–2010 the Taskforce on Whānau-Centred Initiatives (Taskforce, 2010) engaged in an extensive public consultation and developed community provider case studies in its bid to lay the groundwork for a whole-of-government commitment to family wellbeing within a Māori cultural context. The Whānau

Ora initiative that was subsequently developed by Māori inside (e.g., policy writers) and outside (e.g., health leaders) of government is strengths based, multidimensional, cultural, and about whānau functioning, agency and transformation (Boulton & Gifford, 2014).

The Taskforce (2010) prioritised changes in the wellbeing of whānau as the primary indicator of the success of initiatives designed to deliver Whānau Ora services. They included examples related to children when whānau objectives were described, for example, “that all children in the whānau attend education services regularly” (Taskforce, 2010, p. 21). Similarly, negative outcomes were used to illustrate the stress some whānau are under, for example, “leaving the children unsupervised” (Taskforce, 2010, p. 24). While the whānau was seen as the site for nurturing children so they “grew up with positive values, healthy lifestyles, secure cultural identities and an ability to participate fully in society” (Taskforce, 2010, p. 32), there is little additional information provided about what it means for tamariki to grow up as Māori and as citizens.

Te Ara Hou and He Korunga o Ngā Tikanga

Te Ara Hou was written as “a call to action . . . [to] seize the opportunity to re-create a future of possibilities for the children of Māori and Pasifika families” (Kaa, 2011, p. iii). The two key messages of the report are, first, that Māori and Pasifika children are unfairly affected by poverty, low living standards, welfare dependency and the low paid employment of their parent(s), and family violence, and second, that measures of wellbeing do not take into account Māori and Pasifika worldviews. The authors propose three “traditional Māori terms” as an alternative, Māori-centred understanding of child poverty (Henare, Puckey, Nicholson, Dale, & Vaithianathan, 2011): pōhara—poor or cut off from opportunity; tōnui—prosperous or prolific in the quest for a good life; and

kōkiri—moving forward, with purpose, as a group (p. 5, their definitions).

The authors use a capability approach (after Sen, 2000, 2009) to interrogate what a Māori “good life” is, stating that the mauri of Māori children is being starved by poverty (Henare et al., 2011). As Barlow (1991) wrote, “Everything has a mauri . . . [it] is that power which permits these living things to exist within their own realm and sphere” (p. 83). If the mauri of Māori children is not nourished, then their opportunity and capability for a good life is undermined. Henare et al. (2011) proposed a mauri model, after Morgan’s (2006) environmental mauri model. However, it is unclear what Henare and colleagues intended with Morgan’s mauri model as soon after introducing it they move to describing “He Korunga o Ngā Tikanga. Spiral/Matrix of Ethics—The Good Life” (see Figure 1). This framing of wellbeing is also based on Sen’s (2009) capability approach and incorporates the teaching of Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, a teacher of Samoan religious tradition. In He Korunga o Ngā Tikanga Māori achieving a good life is presented as a combination of what Sen calls functionings, namely, states of being (e.g., mana, mauri) and doing (e.g., manaakitanga or atawahi, and whanaungatanga). Capability to live a good life depends on how much access people have to these functionings. For example, poverty can stifle a person’s capability for “doing” manaakitanga (Hohepa, 1998). The authors, however, report that there is a lack of data for investigating Māori wellbeing from the capability approach explored in He Korunga o Ngā Tikanga.

Te Kupenga

In 2013, Statistics New Zealand carried out its first survey of Māori wellbeing, *Te Kupenga*. While ostensibly about whānau wellbeing, the survey was completed by a household member. The survey did, however, enquire after Māori capabilities and cultural wellbeing (as well as

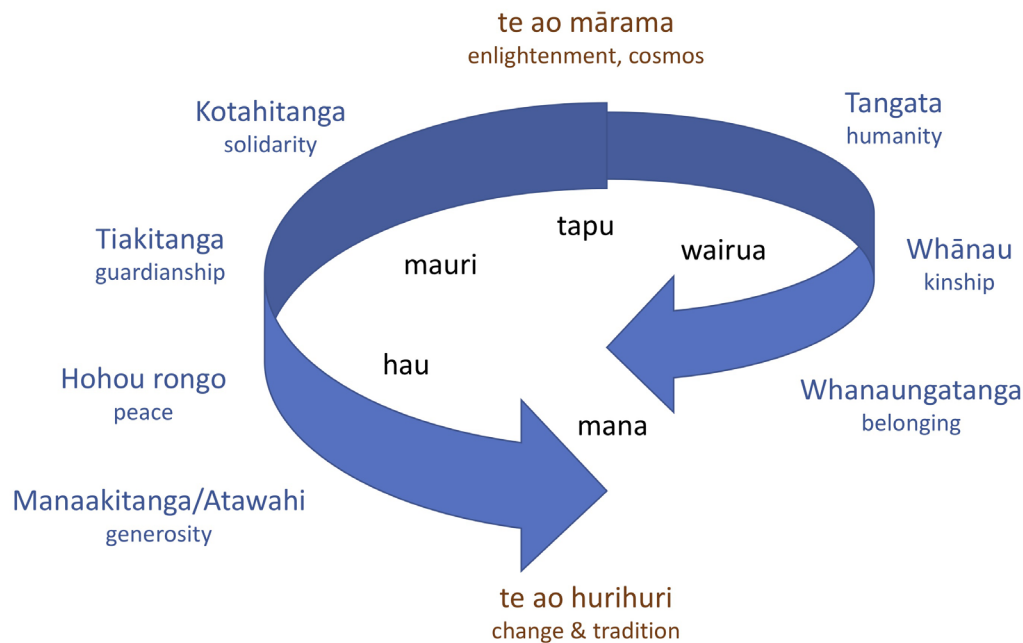


FIGURE 1 He Korunga o Ngā Tikanga. Spiral/Matrix of Ethics—The Good Life

subjective, social and economic wellbeing). The questions about respondents' children covered their educational enrolment (kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa or whare kura, wānanga). There were also questions about the language(s) respondents spoke with their children, and respondents' childcare responsibilities. While the survey provides a great deal of information about adult respondents' capability and their views about their whānau's capability, there is minimal insight into the wellbeing of Māori children from tamariki themselves.

Youth2000 Survey Series

The Youth2000 surveys acknowledge that young people are important informants about their own subjective wellbeing and that the information they provide should be used to inform policies about them and social changes that they will be living with as they age (Casas, 2010). Three national health and wellbeing surveys have been carried out with New Zealand secondary school students, in 2001, 2007 and 2012 (Adolescent Health Research Group,

2016). In the 2012 survey, there were several questions related to young people's general sense of belonging and sense of identity and ethnicity. Māori students were also asked about their cultural knowledge (e.g., attendance at and understanding of tangi or unveiling, and understanding of and ability to speak Māori). The repetition of the survey across time provides insights into how the lives of young people are changing, making Survey2000 like other routinely collected data (e.g., the General Social Survey) that tap into the lives of New Zealanders at regular intervals, with the findings informing policy and social service provision. A key difference is that Youth2000 is housed within a university setting (rather than Statistics New Zealand) and its future is very dependent upon funding (Spink, 2017).

Wellbeing for tamariki Māori

In December 2013, the Māori Affairs Select Committee (2013) reported on its inquiry into the determinants of wellbeing for tamariki Māori. The first two principles underpinning

the committee's findings are "the wellbeing of tamariki Māori is inextricable from the wellbeing of their whānau [and] acknowledging the importance of collective identity for a Māori child is a first step in realising the potential of a whānau-centred approach to their wellbeing" (p. 5). The committee endorsed the Whānau Ora approach, in which whānau are engaged in decision-making about their future, as fundamental to the wellbeing of tamariki. They also endorsed the importance of Māori succeeding as Māori, noting that the factors contributing to it were cultural (e.g., language, cultural identity and awareness of whakapapa), social (e.g., a healthy lifestyle) and economic (e.g., a stable living environment). The committee recommended that more research be undertaken into the wellbeing of tamariki to inform health and social service policy and service provision. In this way, the committee noted the gap in knowledge about the wellbeing of tamariki Māori, while at the same time acknowledging the importance of whānau for the wellbeing and future outcomes of the children in their care.

He Puāwaitanga o Ngā Tamariki

In 2016, the researchers at Te Whānau o Waipareira talked with whānau in West Auckland about the wellbeing of their tamariki (Jellyman & Allport, 2016). They found that whānau were enthusiastic about talking about tamariki wellbeing, and there was much laughter in the focus group discussions. These discussions were more about whānau dynamics than about individual children, with participants expressing the importance of shared wellbeing. Participants also reflected on their own upbringing to share that bringing children up in an urban environment was not ideal when they were not able to travel home as often as they would like. The findings from their research include themes about what supports wellbeing (e.g., connection, love and collectivity) and what hinders it (e.g., hardship and being stereotyped) (see Figure 2). Jellyman and

Allport (2016) concluded that "alignment with worldview is essential for meaningful appreciation of wellbeing, particularly in the way it is inherently socially defined" (p. 20). As they are at the start of their journey to describe tamariki wellbeing, they call for more research that includes community participation in the articulation of children's wellbeing.

Te Whatu Pōkeka

Te Whatu Pōkeka is the name given to the Ministry of Education's Kaupapa Māori Learning and Assessment Exemplar project, within early childhood education. While not strictly focused on wellbeing, Te Whatu Pōkeka gives insight into a culturally responsive assessment that "privileges and empowers Māori children, and insists that the concept of a powerful, rich child be at the heart of understandings of learning and assessment" (Walker, 2008, p. 5). Te Whatu Pōkeka starts from a tauparapara that identifies three themes of children's knowing: mōhiotanga, mātauranga and māramatanga. These inform the first part of the assessment framework. Indications that a child has a way of "being" are expressed in the concepts of mana, wairua and mauri. These inform the second part of the framework. These ways of being are described by Walker (2008) as

- Te wairua o te tamaiti: The child is an emotional, spiritual being
- He mana tō te tamaiti: The child has power and potential
- He mauri tangata: The child as an energetic life force. (p. 7)

These concepts create an image of "a Māori child as an emotional, spiritual being; as a powerful person with untapped potential and as an energetic life force" (Walker, 2008, p. 9). The third part of the assessment framework reflects adult responsibilities for providing a learning ecology for the child. The holistic approach to tamariki and their learning encompasses



FIGURE 2 Major themes identified by focus groups in Jellyman and Allport's (2016) research

hinengaro, wairua, tinana and whatumanawa, with whānau seen as an important part of their learning environment. In this way Te Whatu Pōkeka places Māori children within the context of their learning environment and the adults who nurture them and provides insight into how the wellbeing of tamariki Māori is separate from, but in the context of, their whānau.

Summary

Different authors speak in different tones about comparative statistics, and about whether the wellbeing of individuals can be explored separately from their whānau. Durie (2006) set the scene by providing permission to explore both—individual wellbeing layered within a context of whānau wellbeing—when he spoke

to the Treasury about measuring Māori wellbeing. The importance of both individual and whānau wellbeing was reiterated by Cram (2014), within an updated look at the state of Māori wellbeing measurement. The collection of information about the wellbeing of Māori children has, however, been sparse. Official statistics focus on “problems” rather than capabilities, while Māori-driven indicators and surveys have focused on the capability of adults and whānau rather than children. The closest we have come to a commentary on the wellbeing of Māori children has been the recent Māori Affairs Select Committee inquiry, but the inquiry—as well as many of the authors—identified the need for more research into Māori children's wellbeing. If the Youth2000 survey series is treated as routinely collected data, it

offers insight into the lives and wellbeing of Māori youth. The analysis and representation of Māori findings from Youth2000 have also been under the control of Māori researchers. This is an added bonus when the general context for the collection of routine information about Māori remains locked within colonial structures that place restrictions on the scope, analysis and use of data on Māori wellbeing (Kukutai & Walter, 2015).

Proposed tamariki Māori wellbeing indicator set

The goal of this discussion paper is to establish what the wellbeing of tamariki Māori might look like if it is assessed in a culturally responsive way, within te ao Māori. For our purposes, being culturally responsive is about putting tamariki at the centre of our deliberations and asking whether and how an indicator set might represent their wellbeing in a way that is mana enhancing, nurturing and aspirational (i.e., laying the foundations for them fulfilling their potential) (UNICEF, 2002). The “difficulty” with establishing a set of tamariki wellbeing indicators is the overwhelming belief that the wellbeing of tamariki is intricately connected to the wellbeing of their whānau. The indicator set developed here does not override this connectivity between individuals and collectives but seeks to focus on tamariki and ask what indicators will give us insight into how well they are doing (Durie, 2006).

It is proposed here that for a person to thrive, their life principle or mauri must have vitality. Mauri is the building block of life (University of Otago, 2002), an essential essence (Marsden, 2003) and the “spark of life” (Mead, 2003, p. 363). The whakataukī “Mauri tū, mauri ora. Mauri noho, mauri mate” also captures the importance of mauri. A translation is “The life force is established. The life force is inert, the life force dies” (University of Otago, 2002). This whakataukī has also been translated as

“Industry begets prosperity (security); idleness begets poverty (insecurity)” (Parker, 1966). Mauri is sent to us, through our whakapapa with the first woman, Hine-Ahu-One (Thorpe, 2015). “Tihei Mauri Ora!”—Let there be life!—is the first sneeze of a newborn baby that marks their breathing and their independence from the womb (Mead, 2003). “Mauri . . . imbues Māori thinking, knowledge, culture and language with a unique cultural heartbeat and rhythm” (Pohatu & Pohatu, 2006, p. 1).

Three elements—ihi, wehi and wana—are proposed here as a way of exploring the mauri of tamariki Māori:

The ihi, the wehi, the wana encapsulate the beliefs [Māori] have about children . . . Ihi is a vital psychic choice, or a personal essence. Wehi is the awe, respect or wonder in children which they should never lose. Wana is the thrill, exhilaration, and excitement which describes the child’s love of life. (Jenkins & Harte, 2011, p. 29)

Using a framing of ihi, wehi and wana should prompt enquiries into the wellbeing of tamariki that use a Māori-centric lens, based on Māori values and principles. This is explored next.

Kia mau i a rātou te ihi

Ihi is defined as an essential force or personal magnetism. It is conceived of here as the confidence and esteem a child has to move in the world—both te ao Māori and te ao hurihuri. The esteem of tamariki, in turn, is rooted in their connectedness to people and place through whakapapa. The whakapapa collective most tamariki have their closest relationship with is their whānau. The indicators that enquire after this relationship are birth registration, whether tamariki live in a multigenerational household, and the sort of relationship they have with their family (see Table 1). Woolley (2009) describes birth registration as “the permanent, official record of a child’s existence” (p. 398). It is a

TABLE 1 Description of ihi indicators

Indicator title	Age ¹	Survey item	Measurement	Source
1. Birth registration	0–17	Birth registration	Count of Māori children (0–17 years)	Department of Internal Affairs
2. Living in a multigenerational household (as main home)	0–17	Names, ages and relatedness of members of a household	Proportion of Māori children living in 3+ generation households	NZ Census Dwelling Form Te Kupenga 2013—adult report Youth Survey
3. Relationship with family	11+	Not getting on well with people in your family can make life difficult. How do you view your relationship with your family?	Proportion of Māori children (12–18 years) reporting they are happy with how their family gets on	Youth2000
4. Te reo spoken at home	0–17	How much te reo is spoken in the home?	Proportion of Māori children living in households where te reo Māori is spoken	Te Kupenga 2013—adult report
5. Knowledge of whakapapa	0–17	Knows and can recite their whakapapa	Proportion of Māori children who know their whakapapa	NZ Census Te Kupenga 2013—adult report
6. Connection with marae	0–17	Knows the name(s) of their marae and where they are located	Proportion of Māori children who are connected with their marae	Te Kupenga 2013—adult report
7. Importance of spirituality	0–17	How important is spirituality to you?	Importance of spirituality for Māori children	Te Kupenga 2013—adult report

Note. 1 = age; indicates the age group that data has been collected for, for each indicator. Modelled after SuPERU (2016).

first step in the recognition of a new life, and a new life force. The multigenerational household indicator is included in recognition that whānau is much more than a nuclear family. It does box whānau into a single dwelling, however, and is limited because of this (Cram & Kennedy, 2010). Having a good relationship with their whānau is central to tamariki feeling nurtured and loved (Jenkins & Harte, 2011; Māori Affairs Select Committee, 2013).

The wellbeing of tamariki Māori extends from their whānau out to their marae, hapū, iwi and waka. Panelli and Tipa (2007) wrote

that “a geographical approach to well-being enables the linking of culture and environment for future indigenous research into both ecosystems and human health” (p. 445). The Māori Affairs Select Committee (2013) recognised that cultural security is central to the wellbeing of tamariki. Ihi is therefore also about children knowing where they come from, so that their sense of belonging is fostered, and they have a secure place, or tūrangawaewae, from which to explore their world. The indicators included to capture this belongingness and connection to te ao Māori are te reo spoken at home, knowledge

of whakapapa and connection with marae. These might be considered primary markers of cultural identity (Te Huia, 2015).

Kia mau i a rātou te wehi

Wehi is defined as something awesome—a response in reaction to ihi. Barlow (1991) defined wehi as respect, fear or awe brought on by the recognition of another person’s power or ihi. People can also be awestruck if they

experience the wehi within themselves, startled that they could generate such thoughts or power. For Jenkins and Harte (2011), “kia mau i a rātou te wehi” is about tamariki holding the awe of life. Three indicators related to the health of tamariki—self-rated health, living in a smoke-free house and feeling safe at home—are included here as proxies for tamariki holding the awe of life (see Table 2). Good health of the body (e.g., smoke free) and of the mind (e.g., feeling safe) mean that the tapu of tamariki is

TABLE 2 Description of wehi indicators

Indicator title	Age ¹	Survey item	Measurement	Source
1. Self-rated health	0–17	Good or better parent-rated health	Proportion of Māori children whose health is rated as good or better	NZ Health Survey
	11+	In general, how would you say your health is?		Youth2000
2. Living in a smoke-free house	0–17	Whānau have decided to not smoke, or to not smoke in their home	Proportion of Māori children living in a smoke-free home	NZ Census
3. Feelings of safety	11+	Do you feel safe at home?	Proportion of Māori youth who report feeling safe at home, most or all of the time	Youth2000
4. Participation in childcare	0–4	Preschool children in formal or informal childcare, including early childhood education	Proportion of Māori pre-school children attending informal or formal care / education	NZ Childcare Survey (StatsNZ) Early Childhood Education (Craig et al., 2013)
5. Attendance at school/kura	5–17	Are children getting to and attending school?	Proportion of Māori children attending school or kura	Ministry of Education
6. Feeling cared about	11+	How much do you feel the following people care about you: mum, dad, brothers or sisters, other family members?	Proportion of Māori youth who have people in their lives who care about them a lot	Youth2000
7. Spending enough time with family other family members	11+	Do you get to spend enough time with your other family members or relatives who do not live with you?	Proportion of Māori youth who spend time with family members who do not live with them	Youth2000

Note. 1 = age; indicates the age group that data has been collected for, for each indicator. Modelled after SuPERU (2016).

being upheld and their mana respected by their parents or caregivers (Jenkins & Harte, 2011).

Wehi is also conceived of here as tamariki having a sense of agency, of being able to initiate actions and elicit responses. Two indicators—feeling cared about and spending enough time with whānau members who do not live with them—seek to capture the experience of whānau interdependency and interconnectedness that tamariki have. In addition to their whānau, childcare settings and schools or kura can enable tamariki to take control over aspects of their lives by supporting and practising good decision-making. Two indicators—participation in childcare for younger tamariki and attendance at school or

kura for older tamariki—ask whether tamariki are participating in these contexts. We should not, however, be naïve about the detrimental impacts on tamariki of participating in childcare and educational settings where they experience racism.

Kia mau i a rātou te wana

Wana is defined as excitement, verve and exhilaration. It is about looking forward with excitement and being able to make decisions about that future and set goals. Jenkins and Harte (2011) describe tamariki as holding the love of life. The indicators of “whānau wellbeing” and “satisfaction with life” are included to

TABLE 3 Description of wana indicators

Indicator title	Age ¹	Survey item	Measurement	Source
1. Whānau wellbeing	0–17	How well is your whānau doing?	Proportion of Māori children living in whānau who rate themselves as doing well	Te Kupenga—adult report
2. Satisfaction with life	11+	Are you happy or satisfied with your life?	Proportion of Māori youth who are happy or satisfied with their life	Youth2000
3. Physical activity	5–14	Activity	Proportion of Māori children who are physically active	NZ Health Survey
4. Cultural esteem	0–17	Whether they feel involvement in Māori culture is important	Proportion of Māori children who are proud to be Māori	Te Kupenga 2013—adult report
5. Feels a part of school	11+	Do you feel like you are part of your school?	Proportion of Māori youth who feel like they are part of their school	Youth2000
6. Has people at school who care about them	11+	How much do you feel that people at school care about you?	Proportion of Māori youth who feel like people at school care about them some, a lot	Youth2000
7. Engages with activities at school	11+	Whether students belong to a school sports team, a non-sport school club or team, or do other activities at school	Proportion of Māori youth how are engaging in school activities	Youth2000

Note. 1 = age; indicates the age group that data has been collected for, for each indicator. Modelled after SuPERU (2016).

capture this. Wana can also be found in Māori children's eagerness to participate in activities and events. Two indicators have been included to look at physical activity and cultural involvement ("cultural esteem").

Wana can also be seen in children's readiness to learn. Janus and colleagues (2007), for example, wrote that "children by nature are receptive to learning, their brains are hardwired from birth to absorb sensory information and use it to shape their understanding and interactions with the world" (p. 2). Three indicators canvass whether tamariki are excited about school or kura—feels a part of school, has people at school who care about them and engages with activities at school.

Discussion

Moves to know more about the wellbeing of Māori children are in line with the recommendations of the Māori Affairs Select Committee (2013) inquiry. They also align with international calls for "good-quality data on the health of Indigenous Peoples" (Commission on Social Determinants of Health, 2008, p. 181) and the utilisation of "holistic indicators of indigenous people's wellbeing" (United Nations General Assembly, 2014, Article 10, with this being done as a matter of urgency (Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2015)). The time is therefore right to assess the wellbeing of tamariki Māori, looking at what their lives are like currently and what they and we aspire for them to be. The goal of this paper was to propose a framework for the monitoring of Māori children's wellbeing. The resulting indicator set for measuring tamariki Māori wellbeing has been framed within mauri, with three components of Māori children's thriving related to ihi, wehi and wana. The rationale for the selection of indicators remains to be tested.

The list of potential indicators under each element is intended to promote a discussion of which key indicators provide the best—most

valid and credible—insight into tamariki wellbeing. The first test of validity should happen with tamariki and be an enquiry about whether or not these indicators have face validity, that is, whether they reflect aspects of their lives that tamariki feel are important. It is essential that a methodology for any future development of the indicator set has tamariki as key participants, using methods that engage them (Casas, 2010). For example, when Young and colleagues (2013) set out to develop a children's health and wellbeing measure for the Aboriginal people of the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve in Canada, they began by seeking the input of the children and young people (aged 8–18 years) of the community. They conducted age-stratified (8–10, 11–14 and 15–18-year-olds) full-day focus groups, where they engaged young people in a number of activities, including storytelling, bicycling their community and photovoice. The engagement with young people then continued throughout the development of the health and wellbeing measure.

Before more validation of the proposed framework occurs, the exercise undertaken in this paper might be considered "sleight-of-hand". Indicators that might otherwise be used to show the disparities between Māori and non-Māori children have been called upon to paint a picture of tamariki Māori wellbeing. In addition, the groupings of indicators constructed only approximates the ihi, wehi and wana of tamariki. The same difficulty has been encountered here as was encountered by Henare and colleagues (2011), namely, that the sweetness of what it means to be a Māori child is not currently captured in our routinely collected data. This has led to the suggestion that the Youth2000 survey be treated as routinely collected data even though the "routine" is dependent upon funding for the university-based team of researchers to regularly survey young people. There are also other indicators from Youth2000 that may be relevant to understanding the wellbeing of tamariki, as the survey canvasses a wide range of high school students'

experiences, behaviours and feelings. The limitation of Youth2000 for the consideration of tamariki wellbeing is that it does not enquire after the health of younger children.

Another gem in the suggested sources of indicator data is Te Kupenga—the Māori Social Survey undertaken by Statistics New Zealand in 2013. The indicators and data from Te Kupenga feel more inherently Māori, as they speak to things that matter culturally in the everyday lives of whānau. While not much specific data is collected about the children in a whānau, the whānau context is explored and so we get a feel for the kind of environments tamariki Māori are growing up in. The optimal next step for Statistics New Zealand would be to extend Te Kupenga to a child and young person social survey (Kukutai & Walter, 2015). The mauri-based indicator set suggested here provides a starting point for thinking about the content of such a component of Te Kupenga. This would provide insight into the wellbeing of tamariki through the security of a government-funded survey. The limitation of this is the “government” component, where a commitment to Māori data sovereignty remains to be fully exploited to ensure that survey findings serve Māori interests.

Finally, the overall aim of this paper was to start a discussion about measuring the objective wellbeing of tamariki. In terms of the principles of measuring Māori wellbeing (Durie, 2006), the proposed framework describes integrated development (i.e., it is inclusive of social, cultural and educational contexts), has multiple indicators and acknowledges commonalities among tamariki. It could, however, do more to connect tamariki with their natural environment (i.e., indigeneity) if a cultural connection (e.g., visiting marae) is not seen as reflecting the fullness of this. Tā Mason Durie (2006) also layers Māori individuals within Māori collectives within populations in his discussion of Māori wellbeing. The strengthening of the collective that has occurred through the Whānau Ora initiative over the past seven or so years

has laid a foundation from which we can now consider the wellbeing of individuals, including tamariki. It is from this strength-based position that we may be best placed to advocate for understanding and enabling the ihi, wehi and wana of tamariki Māori so that they might fulfil their potential.

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Glossary

hapū	subtribe(s) that share a common ancestor
hinengaro	intellectual
ihi	delight of life
iwi	tribal kin group; nation
Kaupapa Māori	a Māori way
kōhanga reo	Māori immersion preschool
kōkiri	moving forward
kura kaupapa	Māori immersion primary school
mana	prestige
manaakitanga	generosity, hospitality
marae	tribal meeting grounds; village common
māramatanga	understanding
mātauranga	knowledge
mauri	spark of life, life principle
mōhiotanga	knowing
mokopuna	grandchildren
pōhara	poor, cut off from opportunity
rangatiratanga	self-determination, autonomy, the right of Māori to be self-determining
tā	sir

tamaiti	child
tamariki	children
tangi	mourning rituals
taonga	treasure
tapu	sacrosanct, prohibited, protected, restricted
tauparapara	incantation to begin a speech
te ao hurihuri	mainstream society
te ao Māori	the Māori world
te reo Māori	the Māori language
tinana	physical
tōnui	prosperous
tūrangawaewae	a permanent place to stand, a place where one has the right to stand and be heard
wairua	spirit
waka	canoe
wana	love of life
wānanga	Māori tertiary education institute
wehi	awe of life
whakamana	give prestige to
whakapapa	genealogy
whānau	Māori family/ies
whanaungatanga	kinship
whare kura	school
whare wānanga	Māori immersion secondary school
whatumanawa	emotional

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