

Community perspectives and responses to potentially establishing an ethnic community – led research and evaluation centre

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The views, opinions, findings, and recommendations expressed in this report are reflections of data collected from the study. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Fikun Trust.

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings from a study conducted to get community perspectives and responses to potentially establishing an Ethnic Community-led Research and Evaluation Centre in Aotearoa, New Zealand. As part of this study, we also reached out to organisations that carried out similar research to find out how they have been established and run their organisations.

The report is based on findings from interviews, focus groups and a community survey conducted in 2021. As it stands, Aotearoa New Zealand has a number of small research centres that have some focus on ethnic communities. These exist within university institutes as well as independent organisations such as the Centre for Asian and Ethnic Minority Health Research and Evaluation (CAHRE), the Centre for Applied Cross-Cultural Research at Victoria University and the Migrant and Refugee Research Centre at Auckland University of Technology. In the last decade, there has been an increase in community and grassroots initiatives that collate ethnic community research, such as 'Community Research,' and 'Changemakers' who partnered on collating a research collection from refugee-background and ethnic migrant communities. However, a gap exists for a dedicated ethnic community-led research and evaluation centre that is committed to the production and dissemination of ethnic community research.

Overall, findings and evidence from interviews, focus groups and the community survey suggest that the establishment of an Ethnic Community-led Research Centre would add value to the community, government, NGOs and policy makers. Data from interviews and the community survey recommend the following:

- Establishing an Ethnic research and evaluation Ethics Panel within a Centre
- Framing community-led research and evaluation to incorporate Te Tiriti o Waitangi (TToW) principles
- The Centre undertakes a redesign of the current Statistics NZ Ethnicity standards and developing a strategic programme for ethnic research
- Using the Centre as a place to explore identity and other indigenous methodologies
- Innovating how cross-cultural research and evaluation are undertaken in Aotearoa
- Putting measures in place to ensure equitable outcomes within an Ethnic Research Centre.

Findings from the data also recommended strong governance and policies to ensure that a Centre is sustainable. If a Centre is to be established data indicates that further community engagement is to be undertaken regarding governance, naming of the Centre and focus areas.



1 Introduction

1.1 Defining ‘Ethnic’ in Aotearoa, New Zealand

In Aotearoa New Zealand, over 200 ethnicities are represented, speaking 170 languages, and comprising of 39 ethnics ‘subgroups’ (Statistics NZ, n.d.). In the 2018 Census, ethnic communities were made up of 70,332 people including new and temporary migrants, former refugees, asylum-seekers, long-term settlers, and those born in Aotearoa.

According to The Ministry for Ethnic Communities (2021), Aotearoa New Zealand’s ethnic communities include those who self-identify their ethnicity as:

- African
- Asian
- Continental European
- Latin-American
- Middle-Eastern.

However, for the scope of this study, the focus is on African, Asian, Latin-American and Middle-Eastern communities.

Ethnic peoples and migrants to Aotearoa have been defined and categorised in several ways, including ‘Tuiwi’ and ‘Tuiwi of Colour,’¹ ‘Tuiwi’ as a term recognises the connection with Tangata Whenua as Indigenous people, albeit our lands may be oceans away (Quinn, 2013). It also recognises the similarities in our struggles as Indigenous peoples and the solidarity we have with Tangata Whenua in resisting colonial structures for transformational change.

Recognising the unique space that migrants, and descendants of migrants hold in Aotearoa is foundational to establishing a research centre. Understanding and fostering the relationship between Tangata Whenua and tuiwi can enable a strong foundation should a research centre be established.

2 Background

2.1 Defining Community-led research

The term “community-led research” is used in many ways, and other terms such as “community-wide research,” “community-involved research,” and “community-Centred research” are used interchangeably, although they mean different things (Altman et al, 2020).

In recent years the concept and field of community-led research has grown to ensure the perspectives, experiences and voices of communities are considered in research (Collins, et al., 2018). Community-led emphasises conducting research with a community as a social and cultural entity with the active engagement and influence of community members in all aspects of the research process (Israel, et al., 1998). The community members contribute unique strengths and shared responsibilities to enhance understanding of a given phenomenon and the social and cultural dynamics of the community, and integrate the knowledge gained with action to improve the well-being of community members.

¹ Tuiwi is defined as foreigner, European, non-Māori, colonist, person coming from afar (Te Aka Māori dictionary)

Research Centres that are community-led have the potential to bridge the gap between community-led solutions, academic theory, and literature, as well as build the capability and capacity for communities to undertake research that can inform local and national politics (Collins, et al., 2018). Being community-led places power back with communities to lead projects from their own perspectives and enables a space to tap into otherwise untapped knowledge. Additionally, it provides the ability to create grassroots led transformation that is respectful and sustainable (Strand, 2003).

A fundamental characteristic of community-led research is the emphasis on the participation and influence of community members in the process of creating knowledge. It is collaborative, change-oriented research that engages researchers and community members in projects that address a community-identified need. Community-led research is not a method per se but an orientation to research that may employ any of a number of qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Strand, 2003).

2.2 Te Tiriti o Waitangi and ethnic communities

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (TToW) is argued to be New Zealand's first immigration policy and can be seen to be inclusive of all immigrants (Walker, 2004; Kukutai and Rata, 2017; Nakhid, C. and Devere, H. 2015). As ethnic tauiwi, it is important to acknowledge that not all iwi signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi. However, TToW has a place in ethnic communities, the principles laid out enable a foundation of relationship building, peace, inclusivity, protection of culture and belonging for our communities settling in new lands.

To many people Te Tiriti extended that authority to immigrants from overseas. It clearly required the Crown to regulate the conduct of its citizens but did not cede the authority of rangatira to determine the overall flow of immigration. Of course, the Crown usurped that authority, but it has not diminished the sense that all immigrants still come here because of Te Tiriti and therefore have a Tiriti relationship with Māori. Te Tiriti is their immigration visa (Mutu and Jackson, 2016:76).

When innovating ethnic community-led spaces there is potential to frame these through the five Te Tiriti o Waitangi informed principles. These are, partnership, equity, tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty), active protections, and options. Te Tiriti-based approaches to ethnic community-led initiatives are required. Doing this acknowledges the many Māori that share whakapapa with various other ethnicities.

3 Methodology

The study adopted an exploratory perspective and used a mixed method approach. Empirical data were gathered via focus groups and one-on-one interviews of participants. From the months of October and November 2021, participants were recruited after the researchers did a web-search to get the list of research institute/centre that have community engagement, individuals who have conducted community-based research, individuals who have interest in ethnic community research/engagements and also individuals who run a research centre/institute. Over 50 individuals/centres were identified. Emails were sent to all intended-participants for interviews, and reminders sent after a week to participants who did not respond.

3.1 Data Collection

At the end of the period allocated for recruitment, 27 interviewees responded. Consent was gained from each participant before interviews or survey data was collected. We conducted one-on-one interviews with two international research institutes based in Canada and Singapore and twelve research consultancies and institutes based in Aotearoa New Zealand. This included community researchers and educators, those that worked in NGO's, a Kaupapa Māori organisation and community leaders and members. Thirteen interviews were conducted with 14 participants and two focus groups were facilitated with 13 participants. The first focus group consisted of 10 participants and the second had 3 participants.

3.1.1 Interviews

Open-ended questions were used in interviews to gather data about the participant's perception of what community-led means, insights on potential governance of such a Centre, potential risks and risk mitigation and potential funding sources to ensure a Centre's sustainability. Broad questions such as what participants understand community-led to mean, were constructed to encourage open dialogue (see Interview Guide Appendix B). Probes were used to better understand nuances and clarify responses.

Participants were recruited by e-mail, phone, social media posts, and word of mouth. All participants completed an informed consent process. In some cases, consent forms were sent to participants prior to the interview date, while others gave verbal consents. All focus groups and interviews were conducted online via Zoom or Teams. Both lasted approximately one hour respectively.

Table 1: Overview of Study	
Focus	Community perspectives on an ethnic led research centre
Research approach Methodology	Exploratory Qualitative - Semi-structure interviews, focus groups, 12 interviews with 13 participants, 2 focus groups with 13 participants Quantitative - Survey
Overview of the data set Methods of data analysis	130 survey responses Qualitative data - Thematic analysis, Quantitative data - descriptive statistics

3.1.2 Survey

A community survey was developed for community members to have their voice inputted in the study. This focused on the first research objective - identifying the scope and potential benefits of a potential research centre. We acknowledge the limitations of online surveys, such as, people without access to technology would not be able to participate the survey. However due to time constraints this was chosen as a way to ensure we reached community in a safe, and timely manner. The quantitative data was collected via SurveyMonkey. Statistics New Zealand level ethnicity data was used as a dropdown to self-identify ethnicity, a comment box was added for people who identified with multiple ethnicities. The survey was distributed through social media, messaging apps such as WhatsApp, word of mouth, and through community groups email lists using our own networks. The survey was live for 17 days, from 10 November 2021 to 27 November 2021 and received 130 responses.

4 Findings and Discussions

In this section, discussion of interview and survey findings is carried out. The discussion includes responses from participants regarding the meaning and expectations they have of ethnic community-led research, governance and technical requirements of a Centre, a risk analysis, costing overview and the survey results.

4.1 What does community-led mean to you?

It is imperative to understand what ethnic community-led research meant to participants. One of the introductory questions that was put forward to participants in interviews and focus groups was “What does community-led mean to you?”. Interview data indicates that participants understand ethnic community-led research to be community driven and focused,

- Research led with you, by you and rather than to you.
- It is research that is informed by the community and centres the voices of those impacted by a malfunctioning system.
- Community-led means to me people who have lived experiences in a relative community and are therefore in charge of making the decisions about what the Centre does, what happens in the Centre, what’s prioritised and what’s not including the goals and visions of the Centre. So, when it says community based it means that its emerging from the needs and desires of the community and run by the community. This means whatever knowledge comes out of it is directly impactful to the community and the community also decides how that knowledge gets disseminated.

Interview participants noted that while the element of collaboration is imperative in the research process, to them ethnic community-led research also encompasses equitable outcomes. This means that community’s involvement is inclusive of the research process as well as the governance and day-to-day operations of a Centre.

- It’s important to hire people from the community to interview people as it creates more trust, which leads to the community feeling a sense of ownership [to research].
- Community-led has to be from governance up.

Another aspect of community-led that was discussed by participants was the importance of information being accessible. If community is leading and is involved in the process, there should be limited barriers to accessing data and findings. For example, research should be in multiple and accessible languages, platforms and feedback processes should be in accessible and multiple formats.

- The Centre needs to move away from a Western academic framework as some of the language adopted is inaccessible.
- There is not enough accessible research as some of it is government research that no one sees.
- When we have connected researchers with participants, there is sometimes no follow up about the findings. There needs to be a process of dissemination and implementation of findings that involve community.

4.1.1 Being in partnership with Tangata Whenua

All research undertaken in Aotearoa is of relevance to Tangata Whenua. Ensuring that Tangata Whenua are consulted and involved throughout the process of establishing an ethnic community-led research Centre and beyond was discussed by participants in the interviews and survey.

The survey found that 91% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would lead to improved collaboration between Tangata Whenua and ethnic communities. However, this is highly dependent on how well a Centre engages Tangata Whenua from the start.

One of the questions we put forward to some participants was “What does an ethnic community-led research and evaluation Centre that honours Te Tiriti look like?”. We heard in both interviews and from the survey that we need to build relationships with Tangata Whenua as part of the initial process of setting up a Centre.

Survey Participant: It is important for different ethnicities to not feel they have to assimilate or conform to “kiwi ways” - there is such thing as a growing nation of migrants we need to acknowledge and be thankful to the Māori ancestors/tipuna who have allowed us to migrate into this country. Be mindful of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and grow each ethnic culture alongside this. There is this huge idea that Kiwi culture belongs to Pakeha socially as well as at workplaces which can be confronting to any new migrant. The fact that in Wellington we have a diverse and transient ethnic community flourishing is encouraging. It would be useful for ethnic communities to have a meaningful dialogue with first nation people of this country, so they are brought along in the journey.

Building these relationships honours Tangata Whenua who may also identify with ethnic identities as well as highlights the potential for a Centre to be a space for those who want to explore their identity further but who don't know where to start.

We have tangata whenua with multiple ethnicities and the Centre [if viable] needs to be welcoming of them too so they can have access to their cultures (Interview participant).

Being in partnership with Tangata Whenua could look like building relationships with Māori research institutes and inviting them to be on the board, or in an advisory capacity and paying them for this. This can also look like innovating the research space. Community survey participants highlighted the potential to innovate and grow within the Kaupapa Māori space.

- *I would love to see a Centre liked this realised and especially in its potential to foster and grow possibilities for research for decolonisation and kaupapa Māori.*
- *There is a huge need for a research centre like this - I'm excited for its potential and if there is space for Kaupapa Māori methodologies or to be informed by those approaches in this research Centre*

4.2 What is the value of a community-led research centre?

The establishment of a community-led Research Centre supports the development of research that is reflective of the lived experiences and expertise of communities. Findings indicate that an Ethnic Community-led research and evaluation Centre could:

- Provide a safe space for ethnic researchers and evaluators
- Innovate research methodologies that foster localised and cultural knowledge
- Provide support to ethnic researchers and evaluators
- Provide employment and partnership opportunities for ethnic researchers and evaluators
- Provide a space where research is easily accessible.

Currently there is a gap of robust research that can influence government policy in the ethnic community space. Many research centres find their data is not used in the decision-making process or published (Conrad and Hilchey, 2011), which can impact decision making and result in the misrepresentation of policy. A Centre has the potential to add value to policy makers, NGOs and government as decision makers can access up to date information to inform decisions.

- *94% of people strongly agreed or agreed that the Centre should provide up to date research and evaluation about ethnic communities (Community Survey)*
- *92% of people strongly agreed or agreed that the Centre should be a place to inform policy decision in government (Community Survey)*
- *I think there definitely needs to be recognition of us in policy and not just "other". (Interview Participant)*
- *Policy makers pick and choose what data they want, and most times, they do not have recent or accurate data about various ethnic communities. (Interview Participant)*

The survey also found that the community also felt a Centre has high potential to innovate research and that it would be different to current research institutes in Aotearoa,

- *92% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would be a place to innovate research*
- *85% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would be different to other initiatives*

In addition, community survey participants agreed that a Centre has high potential to provide employment and grow ethnic community research expertise in Aotearoa.

- *94% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would provide pathways to employment for researchers and evaluators*
- *93% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would provide tools and training in research and evaluation*

4.2.1 Enhancing community well-being by fostering identity through a Research Centre

The survey found that 95% of people strongly agreed or agreed that having a Research Centre would offer a sense of community in the ethnic community research space. This is particularly important for people's well-being and for those that are seeking to access knowledge about their own cultural identity or whakapapa. There is potential to connect with culture and histories through the research space.

A Centre could also be a place to explore indigenous methodologies to support people's identity journey. Particularly for those that may be disconnected from their cultures. The survey found that 90% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would help foster identity.

4.2.2 Building social cohesion and inter-ethnic cohesion

Survey results found that people see a Centre as having the potential to build social cohesion in Aotearoa:

- *91% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would help build inter-ethnic cohesion*
- *95% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would increase knowledge promote diversity of communities*
- *91% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would help foster self-determination of ethnic communities*

Having more knowledge about communities and their aspirations through a Centre would provide an evidence base in which we can build better cohesion both between various ethnic communities, within our own communities and with Tangata Whenua.

4.2.3 Some people are over-researched, but communities are under-resourced

Some participants we interviewed are researchers who are involved in commissioning research or utilise research to inform their work. So, we asked, "How well is research and evaluation on issues affecting ethnic communities being undertaken in Aotearoa at present? What is being done well? What are the gaps?" This section provides insight into the current research and evaluation landscape regarding issues affecting ethnic communities in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

- *Research is done well, whether it is trustworthy or reflective of communities is another story.*
- *There is broad research available but there's nothing that pulls it together, which means that a lot of the research is ad-hoc and lacks a strategic focus.*
- *There is a prevalence of institutions that have data but don't understand what the data means. I think there is generally a lack of how to use data in New Zealand so while some data might be available [on Tauwi of colour] there is a lack of sensemaking.*

While interview participants agreed that the lack of a strategic focus was due to little or no community involvement in the design stage, others noted that because there was no feedback process, at times projects and initiatives were repetitive. The repetition of research projects results in data that focuses on certain aspects and groups within the wider ethnic community. Ultimately, data is not reflective of the diversity within ethnic communities.

- *Some people are over researched, but communities are under researched. For instance, the South Island is really missing from research, what do we really know about the experiences of [Taiwi of colour] dairy farmers.*
- *The lack of intersectionality and lumped data sets result in the flattening of experiences and nuances.*
- *Research really needs to have action or outcomes otherwise we are asking the same people the same questions over and over again. I always think about the ethics in terms of has there been consideration of the well-being of our communities when we share our stories? What is the cost of engagement on our well-being?*

In terms of the data that is available interview participants noted that the majority of projects are conducted in tertiary institutions as part of the requirements to gain a qualification. Due to this, most research projects were not followed up with action or evaluation. The results from research can sit in inaccessible university spaces and not be used.

- *We don't know any research centres that are dedicated to ethnic communities, apart from the ones based in universities but they are not responsive to community needs.*
- *There is a need to connect researchers to doers, those that will implement the recommendations from the findings.*
- *More evaluation is needed, so is quantitative research including the stories behind the data. There is a need for strong data.*

Additionally, interview data indicates that the ethnic research space is under resourced, which means there are no resources to action findings. Plus, there are barriers in communities being commissioned for research or accessing tenders. This will be examined in the risk section, as all participants mentioned lack of resources and access to funding as a risk. Participants also mentioned the importance of ensuring people are paid adequately as it is vital to the success and credibility of a Centre.

There is not enough accessible research, plus we are under resourced, there's a lack of financial resources and we're highly pressured. There is not enough time to do everything that needs to be done.

4.2.4 Opportunities for a Centre

A Centre presents an opportunity for ethnic researchers to have the ability to access their own indigenous methodologies. Participants highlighted that there is a current gap for ethnic researchers accessing indigenous methodologies when undertaking their studies at university in Aotearoa.

Another opportunity is the ability to reach those in the ethnic community that are defined as 'hard-to-reach'. By employing researchers and interviewers from the community and adopting indigenous research processes and methods that might be more familiar, there is the creation of a safe space and trust. As one interview participant noted,

'There is a level of trust and openness that occurs when people are speaking to others who share similar experiences or backgrounds as them'.

Additionally, researchers who are also cultural insiders may know intuitively what is being alluded to in what may seem like an offhand comment to an 'outside' researcher. Thus, researchers from the community may focus on the nuances of an issue, or ask follow up questions that 'outside' researchers would not necessarily be privy to.

As researchers from the community are "on the scene" all the time, in the sense that their lived experience is not separate to some of the phenomenon they are exploring, their contact both with the issue or intervention

and with the population affected by it is ongoing. As a result, they may find information even when they are not officially engaged in research.

Finally, establishing an Ethnic Community-led Research and Evaluation Centre may mean that findings receive more community support as community members know that the research was conducted by people in similar circumstances as their own. A Centre could also be a depository for research that ensures there is no double up of research, amongst other things that are articulated in the following section.

4.3 What can governance look like for such a Centre?

This section highlights participants perspectives regarding the skills, capabilities and technical requirements needed for an Ethnic Community-led Research and Evaluation Centre to be successful, including what good governance of a Centre would look like.

4.3.1 An opportunity for a decolonised governance structure

Interview participants challenged us to think innovatively and be visionary about how a Centre is governed. This included suggestions such as having a non-hierarchical leadership structure, having intergenerational representation on the board, circulating the chair of a potential board around every couple of months to manage representation.

- *This is an opportunity to look at decolonised governance structures and move away from hierarchies.*
- *Challenge the norms of how governance is traditionally seen - do something different.*
- *Be mindful that certain names pop up most of the times and that they are other people who can do the same roles and bring fresh perspectives.*

4.3.2 Ethnic representation and governance of a Centre

A theme that was prevalent in interviews was the need for a board that would be representative of the diverse ethnic communities. It was noted that leadership needed to be able to address the nuances and complexities of the varying communities. One of the institutes that we interviewed uses a governance structure whereby they have a [subgroup] of around 50 people that represent different communities on which they can draw on in an advisory capacity. This is one potential solution to the risk of having overrepresentation of a few ethnicities or areas of the community dominate this space.

- *People want representation and in our earlier years (before we were registered as a Trust) we had a whānau board with representative from the different iwi and hapu.*
- *As our focus is on harmony building and advocacy, each faith gets a turn to sit on the Board as Chair.*
- *You need a leadership with people who have no personal agendas, who have a good sense of humour and are representative of the many communities we have.*

4.3.3 Skills for governance

A mix of skills and expertise for those in governance was suggested for a Centre to be successful including:

- Influence in government
- Research
- Relationship with Tangata Whenua
- Strategy and Implementation
- Marketing and Communication
- Human Resources
- Auditor
- Community Connectors
- Language expertise
- Legal
- Fundraising

It was also noted that technical skills can be acquired and taught as part of capability training. A suggestion that was put forward, was to check in and ask at each stage: “Do we need those skills right now?”

While technical skills are important it is also important to have people on the board who have a willingness to be a part of the kaupapa (initiative).

4.4 Community perspectives of risks of a Centre

This section provides a more specific look at the risks, challenges and barriers, which relates to the development and maintenance of partnership between a Centre, other centres and community members that might be encountered and some guidance on how they can be mitigated. For coherence, this discussion is organised into two broad categories, but not necessarily mutually exclusive categories: (a) Internal Risks and (b) External Risks. Within each category, key challenges and risks are examined, followed by a discussion of recommendations or ways to mitigate related challenges.

4.4.1 Internal Risks and Challenges

Internal risks are risks faced by a Centre from within its organisation and can arise any time during the operations of a Centre (Kaplan and Mikes, 2012). Table 2 summarises the internal risks and suggested risk mitigation from the study participants.

Table 2: Summary of internal risks and suggested risk mitigation.

Internal risks	Potential risk mitigation
Inequitable distribution of power and control within the Centre	Strong governance processes to ensure equity and conflict resolution purposes (for example, restorative/nonviolent approaches)
Conflicts over funding	Strong processes and people with financial knowledge
Managing community expectations	Transparent guidelines/policies
Catering to the mainstream narrative	Strong decolonial voices throughout the Centre
Health and well-being	Good governance that can identify and mitigate burnout etc

4.4.1.1 Inequitable distribution of power and control within a Centre

The history and presence of power differences among governance board and operational staff was mentioned as a potential challenge, including the relationship that governance will have with management. These inequalities affect who attends, who participates, whose opinions are considered to be valid, and who has influence over decisions made. They may be exacerbated when decisions need to be made. Interview participants noted,

- *The relationship between governance and management needs to be a good one as it can make or break an organisation.*
- *Something to note is taking on philosophies that don't match the work you are trying to do. They will be community leaders that feel like they are professionals that need their perspectives considered.*

Another risk that was mentioned during the interviews relates to conflicts that can occur between those working within a Centre and those that will be stakeholders of a Centre. These conflicts may be associated with differences in overall philosophy, decision-making styles, values, priorities, assumptions, beliefs, and use of language. They may also be associated with diversity in gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, and sexual orientation (Maguire, 1987). Conflict may also arise when there are pre-existing conflicts between different groups due to tribalism, religion and other historical influences.

- *A challenge to be aware of is global issues taking place in Aotearoa, New Zealand especially relating to faith and belief. What is bound to occur when bringing in people from different backgrounds together is what you see as high priority might not be the other's priority.*
- *We've all heard certain things about other groups within ethnic communities including who we should stay away from and who we shouldn't be like.*

Ensuring that there are strong internal policies and processes to mitigate this will be crucial. This includes conflict resolution processes and approaches that are restorative and nonviolent. A strong advisory board will be fundamental to ensuring there are robust and fair policies in place.

4.4.1.2 Funding

The most common risk mentioned by all the participants was funding. Within this included the challenge of generating and distributing funds, conflicts over who holds the funds, what amount of funds is provided to different partners, how budget-related decisions made, and what happens when funders reduce initial budgets.

- *While funding is going to be very important, be mindful when attaching monetary value to knowledge in terms of what ends up being prioritised versus what the needs are.*
- *Funding and sustainability of the Centre is a risk, especially when considering funding that isn't conditional.*

4.4.1.3 Managing Community Expectations by ensuring this is not performative

We heard that the community have concerns about performative action due to a history of non-ethnic people undertaking research and embedding themselves in ethnic community spaces. Community expectations for such a Centre may be high as there has not been a Centre like this before. Therefore, people may expect a lot that is out of a Centres scope. Ensuring a Centre does not over promise to the community and has a clear, highly visible strategy and purpose with clear boundaries will be key to managing this risk.

- *Please ensure that this is not performative but has tangible benefits to the community (survey participant)*
- *When I think about the biggest risk it would be where something sounds good on paper but doesn't hold the varying experiences of people. It is also poor research and analysis (interview participant)*

4.4.1.4 Catering to the Mainstream Narrative

Catering a Centre to appease white voices will compromise the integrity of any such Centre. This theme emerged in interviews when discussing the ways in which underfunding and lack of resources in ethnic spaces has led to having to cater to white audiences in order to be considered or heard. However, catering to mainstream wants and needs means that the experiences of ethnic people who experience multiple marginalisation's continue to be left out. Being aware of how this has been conditioned into people and how this may impact decisions needs to be highlighted throughout a Centre especially from a governance level.

At times we are confined and constrained by having to set up systems that adhere to Western frameworks because we believe that is the best way. This results in lack of accessibility which means we cannot back each other's work or critic and peer review it.

4.4.1.5 Health and well-being of Centre staff

It was noted by participants that community-led research projects are time and resource consuming and require a long-term commitment on the parts of the research team members. They are also underfunded and under resourced, which results in the risk of team members being overburdened with project-related responsibilities. Interview participants highlighted the importance of the health and well-being of those that would be working within a Centre, either in a governance, operational capacity or as volunteers. Ensuring safe workspaces will support the sustainability of a Centre.

- *When I heard about the potential of this initiative, I was really excited and at the same time all I could think about was how much work would be involved. It's important that those involved aren't overworked and underpaid, as burnout and fatigue are real risks. You have to manage expectations and remember that you can't be everything for everyone.*
- *Our communities give so much already so it's important that you are mindful of how much extra work volunteers do.*
- *Someone on the board asked what would happen if there was illness or if I was to die. It's important to also plan for that.*

4.4.2 External Risks and Challenges

These are risks that arise from outside a Centre.

Table 3: Summary of External Risks and Suggested Mitigation

Internal risks	Potential risk mitigation
Lack of trust and respect between a Centre and other Centres, and also between the community and a Centre	Establish trust through building relationships and connecting across the sector
Who represents the community and how is community defined	Strong processes for community to feedback into a Centre and ensure a Centre has strong internal inclusive processes
Competing demands with other Centres and Institutions	Establish trust through building relationships and connecting across the sector
Expectations/demands of funding institutions	Identify the Centres values and vision first so there is clarity on what a Centre wants to achieve
A centre will face resistance from people	Strong internal processes/policies to deal with harmful people/groups

4.4.2.1 Lack of Trust and Respect

Lack of trust and a perceived lack of respect was mentioned by interview participants as challenges or risks that a Centre might face. This distrust can relate to a build-up of a long history of research from which there was no direct benefit (and sometimes actual harm) and no feedback of results to the community (Israel et al., 1998; Hatch et al., 1993; Martin, 1996). This can be an issue between a Centre and other Centres, and also between a Centre and the community. Once again, strong governance and internal policies would help mitigate this risk. Once this challenge is overcome and trust is established, it should not be taken for granted, a Centre and its researchers must continually prove their trustworthiness. Interview participants noted,

- *There is potential to get research wrong as well as poor facilitation fuelled by the attitudes and behaviours of researchers.*
- *They may be feelings of exclusion by some groups and a perception of favouritism of others. Communities might also feel like they're being exploited and not included. This might be happening because of perceptions of the researchers and people working with the Centre*

4.4.2.2 Who represents the community and how is community defined?

Challenges and conflicts related to how the ethnic community is defined can also arise. These issues may include: the extent to which a sense of community exists; who represents the community; the extent to which community participants are members of the community and/or more grass-roots groups and how they relate back to those organisations; who in the community is excluded; the extent to which participants from the community represent and reflect community members; and competition or 'turf' issues between different Centres or institutes. An issue that was raised in interviews and the survey included how the government's ethnic data set is flawed and the adoption of it is a challenge when defining ethnic community. We heard from the community that it missed, misrepresented and erased people, and that people could not identify as they wanted.

The grouping of minority ethnicities e.g. Asian and MELAA misses important differences in service access and health/educational and well-being outcomes. Research by communities for these communities can combine qualitative and quantitative methodologies to identify the determinants of success, and existing resource need to inform community leaders, service providers and ensure all whānau in Aotearoa are supported to thrive (Survey Participant).

4.4.2.3 Competing demands with other Centres and Institutions

There are multiple and competing demands on the resources available across other Centres and institutions (e.g. publishing, grant writing, providing services, increasing community capacity etc.). Starting up a Centre will mean joining in the competition with the disadvantage of not having long term connections or relationships, however we acknowledge that many individuals will have well-formed relationships a Centre could draw on.

There might be clashes with other Centres and the lack of resources which leads to scarcity mentality results in meaningless competition – Interview participant.

4.4.2.4 Expectations/demands of funding institutions

A Centre may face barriers in obtaining funding and in meeting the expectations of funding institutions. Most granting institutions that fund various research have established priorities for studies that are important to them. These studies may not correspond to what is important to a Centre, and there might be the risk of a Centre bending or shifting their priorities in order to obtain funds.

- *There might be some misalignment between government wants and community needs. The larger majority will always be served, and this isn't usually dependent on the overall community's need for instance for focus on trade and business.*
- *There will be gatekeepers within government, including our own people.*

4.4.2.5 A Centre will face resistance from people

We heard from participants to be aware of this as a risk. This may include things such as doxing, which is a type of online harassment that involves exposing someone's personal information – real name, address and other identifying data – publicly. Having strong processes, legal support and community support in place to deal with threats will be important in order to keep our communities safe.

I'm not too sure what the political climate is over there but something to be aware of is the resistance people have to initiatives that Centre people of colour. While I'm unsure of how you would mitigate things such as doxing, it is something to think about (Interview Participant).

4.4.3 Mitigating Strategies and Recommendations

4.4.3.1 Strong governance processes to ensure equity

One of the recommended strategies (although labelled in different ways) is the development of operating norms and procedures that are consistent with and reinforce the key elements of a Centre. Developing norms and ways of operating that promote understanding and demonstrate sensitivity and competence in working with diverse cultures, e.g. with respect to class, gender, race, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation needs to be emphasised on. These norms will encourage respect for group differences and develop mechanisms for constructively challenging group processes that reinforce social inequalities.

Deciding how decisions will be made, whether by consensus or majority vote, and with regard to which issues, for example, budgeting, areas of research, resource allocation etc., is another important consideration. These operating norms will also need to be transparent as noted by interview participants.

- *There is a need for equitable outcomes for instance the Centre should not function like a corporate and there should be no 6-figure salaries for leadership.*
- *Don't undersell yourself, make sure you double the hourly rate. It's important to pay people well, at a consultants' rates and not exploit our own people.*
- *Tikanga should be set from the beginning and it should be followed.*

4.4.3.2 Identification of common goals, objectives/vision, conflict resolution processes and policies

The partnering members of a Centre need to identify a common set of goals and objectives, recognising that each involved ethnicity and community has its own mission, goals, and objectives. Participants have noted the importance of operating in ways that foster attentive listening, openness, caring, inclusiveness, agreement to disagree, identifying and addressing conflicts, opportunity for all to participate, negotiation, compromise, mutual respect, and equality. Examples of such processes provided include:

- Conflict resolution processes that included restorative methods and non-violent communication
- Confidentiality practices
- Risk registers
- Thorough reference checks
- Robust interview questions (for example, what are your views on racism/patriarchy)
- Exit strategies when people are harmful
- Health and well-being guidelines.

In addition, we heard the following from interview participants,

- *Different communities have different needs and the goals and priorities of the Centre need to be established from the beginning.*
- *Community work can be taxing, and it is easy for people to go into the sunset, so you not only need creative ways to attract staff, you also need flexible employment structures. For instance, we've been looking into how the maramataka can guide when we work and have meetings. Such things should be considered when thinking of natural ways of living and also ways of working that take the well-being of everyone into consideration.*

4.4.3.3 Establish trust through building relationships

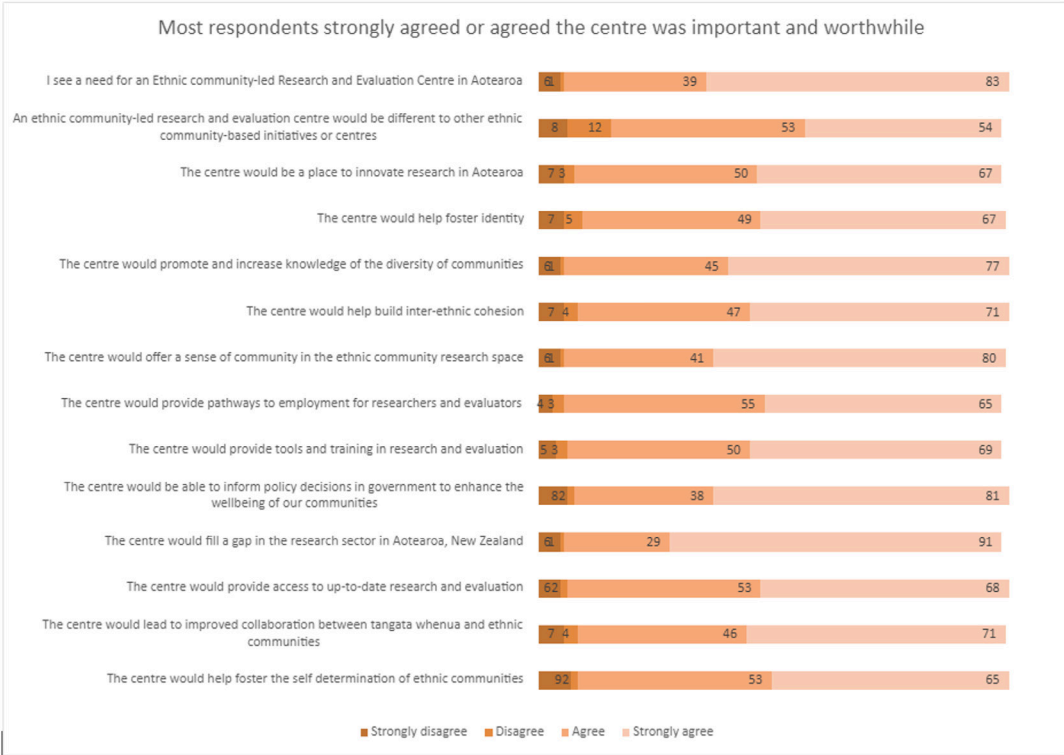
Critical to the success of a Centre is the presence and relationship building with community leaders of various communities. Those who can bring together people in the community, who have a history of community involvement, are respected, have credibility and who are well-integrated in their community. Obtaining the involvement of such representatives is of paramount importance. Their involvement in the research process is also very important, and facilitates good relationship building. This may include, for example, involving community members in the development of research instruments, as well as hiring and training community members as interviewers for a community-based survey. Additionally, recognising the existence of other similar Centres and institutions is very important. Having similar end-goals, it is paramount to collaborate with these Centres as much as possible to avoid conflicts. The following are principles that emerged from the data that could be utilised in order to build trust.

- Negotiating with political and spiritual leaders in the community to obtain their input and their approval for the proposed research and evaluation Centre.
- Ensuring equitable benefits to participants (e.g., appropriate training and hiring of community members) in return for their contributions and resources.
- Developing agreements about the ownership and publication of findings, and the early review of findings by key community leaders.
- Having processes in place for community to provide feedback.

4.5 Survey results

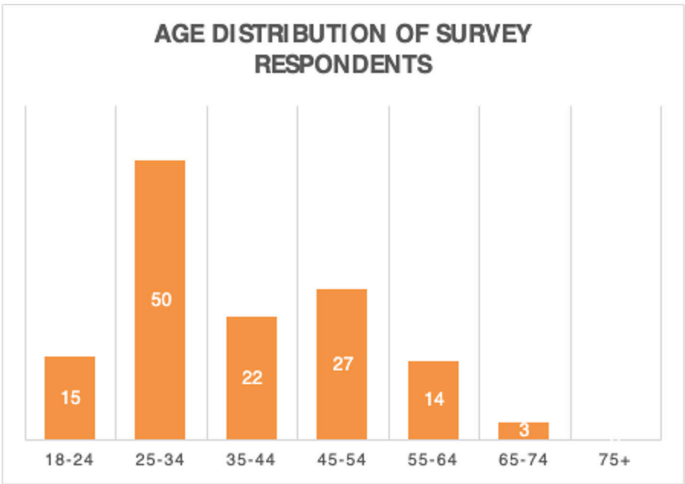
130 people answered the survey, however, not everyone answered all questions. The vast majority of survey participants agreed or strongly agreed that we need a Centre in Aotearoa and people mostly agreed there are a wide range of benefits to having this (see chart 4.1).

Chart 4.1: Likert chart - Potential benefits of a potential research Centre



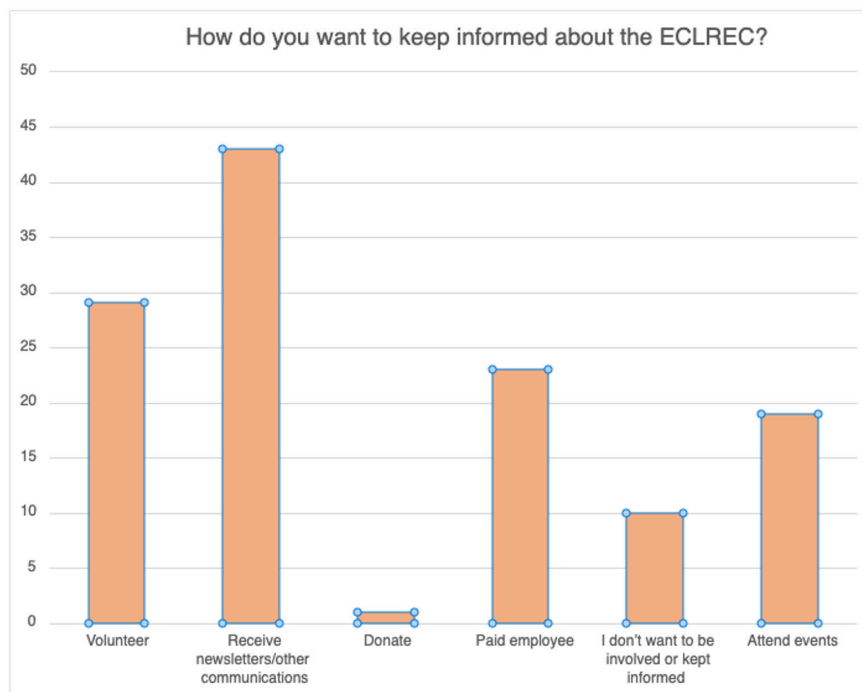
Ethnicity was self-identified in the survey using Statistics NZ level 4 ethnicity code identifiers. In keeping with guidelines for collecting ethnicity, we allowed for people to self-identify and gave the opportunity to specify multiple ethnicities. Survey respondents identified as 29 different ethnicities (see appendix) and people from a wide range of ages answered the survey (see chart 4.2).

Chart 4.2: Age distribution of Survey respondents



A number of survey participants want to be involved in a Centre in a variety of ways. The most common way was through receiving newsletters or other communication (see chart 4.3).

Chart 4.3: Bar graph showing how people would like to be kept informed about a potential research Centre.



4.5.1 Limitations of the study

A small number of people were confused with the wording of the survey questions in the Likert scale. Due to time constraints, we were unable to interview everyone who had agreed to participate in the study. Resource constraints also resulted in the limited scope of the study.

5 Recommendations

Overall, participants across the survey and interviews agreed that a Centre is a necessary public good that could be a space for collective wisdom, accessing pre-existing research and be a pathway between researchers, community, government, and those involved in the health and well-being of ethnic communities. The following sections are additional recommendations based on the findings.

5.1 Framing an ethnic community-led research and evaluation Centre by honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles.

To honour the commitments of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it is important that ethnic tauiwi understand our role in respecting the commitments laid out by Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Participants strongly recommended that any such Centre take time to discuss and work through carefully on how to do this.

5.2 Establishing an Ethnic research and evaluation Ethics Panel

Participants noted a gap of an Ethics Panel dedicated to ethnic community research. A recommendation put forward was that any such Centre establish an Ethics Panel to provide advice to improve as well as flag potential harmful research impacting ethnic communities in Aotearoa.

The researchers recommend that any such Ethics Panel be informed by the National Ethical Standards for Health and Disability Research and Quality Improvement (2019). In particular the Te Ara Tika – Guidelines for Māori research ethics could inform an ethnic community-led Ethics Panel.

5.3 Redesign the current Statistics NZ Ethnicity standards

The community told us that the current ethnicity standards missed/misrepresented/erased people. People could not identify as they wanted and the nuances in identity are not able to be captured. The ethnic data sets need to be changed to reflect Aotearoa's ethnic communities, and that communities feel seen, heard and represented. A recommendation put forward was that a Centre could aid the representation of ethnic communities as it has the potential to reach more communities and highlight more than one group.

Participants also mentioned the need for further discussion about the term ethnic and what it means in Aotearoa, New Zealand for those identified as ethnic communities. For instance, how do “ethnic” communities want to be identified? A recommendation was that this discussion happen before naming the potential Centre and as part of the process of setting up a Centre.

5.4 Developing a Strategic programme for ethnic research

As there is a lack of research focused on ethnic communities being commissioned by government, there is a lack of strategy when it comes to undertaking research. Developing a strategic research programme was a recommendation that was suggested to fill the gap in the current setting.

5.5 Using a Centre as a place to explore identity and other indigenous methodologies

As the survey found that 90% of people strongly agreed or agreed that a Centre would help foster a sense of identity, recommendations included using a Centre as a place to explore indigenous methodologies, support indigenous methodologies and decolonising approaches and processes. The exploration of indigenous methodologies can support people's identity journey, particularly for those that may feel disconnected from their cultures particularly as Aotearoa, New Zealand's cultural makeup continues to change.

5.6 There must be measures in place to ensure pay equity in an Ethnic Research Centre

The community highlighted the lack of pay equity and opportunities for ethnic researchers in Aotearoa. A Centre has the potential to employ community members and provide pathways to employment as the researchers know that this is difficult for ethnic communities. When budgeting and paying people, peoples lived experiences and expertise also needs to be adequately reimbursed. This means that a Centre needs robust policies in place that ensure people are paid well and communities are reimbursed generously.

5.7 Recommended Areas of Research and Evaluation by Participants

The researchers also noted that participants perceived current initiatives and research on ethnic communities to be heavily focused on trade, business, education, and employment. In addition to research needing to be intersectional and grass roots-led, research also needs to explore other areas. Some recommendations from participants are as follows:

- Education – going to culturally unsafe universities and navigating that environment, international students seen as business
- Employment pathways – people overqualified for jobs, good overseas qualifications recognised, breakdown of unemployment i.e., who has more than five jobs, connection to post degree qualifications
- Disability community
- Housing – mortgages, rough sleepers, homelessness by ethnicity
- Family violence – women on partner visas
- Mental health
- Discrimination/racism and addressing anti-blackness within ethnic communities
- Rainbow community
- Potential to do an annual report on racism in ethnic communities to gain traction for a Centre.
- Ethnic people in governance
- Innovative ways that migrant communities can foster a sense of belonging
- Climate change

6 Conclusion

This community study is a necessary first step in establishing requirements and engaging with the community in order to determine the need of an ethnic community-led research centre.

Community voices through this study demonstrate that we need strong future focused governance for a Centre. The researchers suggest an in-depth study on what good governance for multi-ethnic organisations in Aotearoa looks like. There should also be a national, more nuanced discussion about the name of a Centre and the term 'ethnic', should the Centre eventuate.

While funding is vital and needed, the Centre should not lose focus on the purpose of why it was founded in the process of seeking funds, especially if it goes against what the tikanga/principles of the Centre are.

Based on the findings and evidence from the community, the researchers recommend further consultation with community, including the involvement of those in the community that this study missed. This includes consulting with those that are often on the margins in our ethnic communities. Such as, but not limited to, our ethnic queer community, former refugee communities in order to ensure any Centre that is established is inclusive to those who we need to serve the most.

We had varied opinions on whether to have the Centre as a stand-alone centre or consider joining a university/institution. This is an area that also needs more discussion and consultation, to consider the pros and cons, associated with both options.

In conclusion, a Centre will add value and knowledge to the community, government, NGOs, policy makers and those interested in and working towards equitable futures for all. Research conducted through a Centre has the potential to help push for policy change and aid social transformation. Additionally, as a Centre has the potential to reach more communities it will also provide employment opportunities for the community.

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Appendix A

Data Analysis

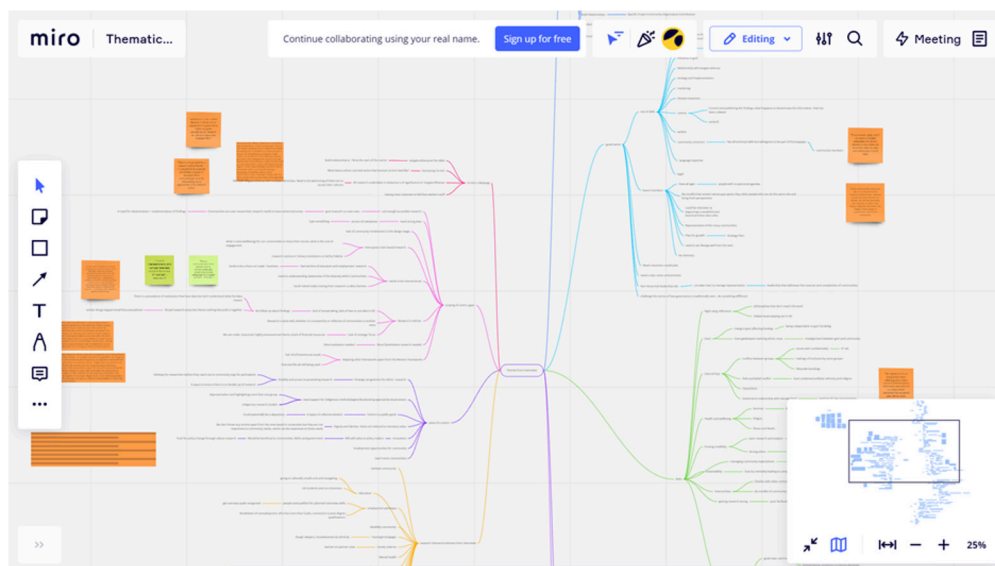
Thematic Analysis which is an accessible, flexible, and increasingly popular method of qualitative data analysis was used¹⁴. Six phases prescribed for thematic analysis was used for this analysis, using Miro as an analysis tool¹⁵.

Phase one of the analytic process involves familiarization with the data. The researchers intimately familiarized themselves with the data, by reading and rereading the data (listening to audio recorded interview sessions at least once). This process was accompanied by note-taking, recording initial analytic observations about the data and potential avenues for further exploration.

Phase two requires a thorough and systematic coding of the data. Code which is a brief description of what is being said in the interview were generated by the researchers to capture features of the data that are potentially relevant to the research objectives. The codes evoked the relevant features of the data and the researcher's interpretative lens because we are performing an exploratory analysis and the themes depend on the data.

Phase three is the process of theme development. A set of potential or "candidate" themes were generated. The codes and coded data were examined to identify similarity and overlap – patterns of semantic meaning and/or underlying concepts. The codes were then clustered together to form themes. Reflections were done on the relationships between potential themes in order to tell a rich and complex story about the data in relation to the research objectives.

Figure 1: Coding of Transcript Data using Miro

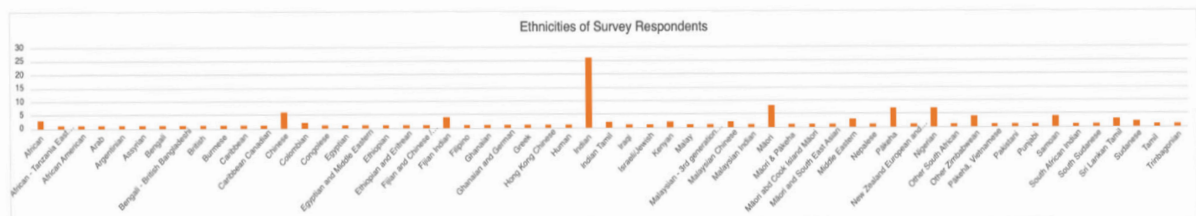


Phase four entails reviewing themes. Themes were reviewed against the coded data to check if there is a good "fit" between the themes and the coded data and if the themes are telling a convincing and coherent story about the coded data. Then the researchers progressed to review the themes against the full data set. Theme development was a recursive process, flip-flopping between theme development and reviews until all researchers were satisfied that the individual themes are coherent, and the themes together address the research objectives in a meaningful way and capture the most relevant features of the data. Once the researchers agreed upon some definitive set of themes, the analysis progressed to the final analytic phases of defining and naming themes and writing up.

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graph LR
    A[Familiarization of data] --> B[Initial coding]
    B --> C[Generating Themes]
    C --> D[Reviewing themes]
    D --> E[Defining and naming]
    E --> F[Interpretation and reporting]
  
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Chart showing ethnicities of Respondents



Appendix B

Interview Questions and Respondents

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS: Scoping of Ethnic Community Research and Evaluation Centre

1. Please tell me about your role and what research/projects you focus on? What is your interest in taking part in this interview to determine the feasibility of an ethnic community led research and evaluation Centre?
2. What does community-led mean to you?

PART ONE: Scoping of Ethnic Community Research and Evaluation Centre

3. How well is research and evaluation on issues affecting ethnic communities being undertaken in Aotearoa at present? What is being done well? What are the gaps?
4. What value would an ethnic community led research and evaluation Centre provide to Aotearoa? What should a Centre focus on/not focus on?

PART TWO: Governance, organisational and technical requirements for the Centre

5. What skills, capabilities and technical requirements are needed for a Centre to be successful?
6. What would good governance look like for a Centre?

PART THREE: Risk associated with the Centre and mitigating controls

7. What are the biggest internal and external risks a Centre could face?
8. How could these risks be avoided or mitigated?

PART FOUR: Cost associated with the Centre

9. What should be considered when costing a Centre to ensure it is viable and sustainable?
10. How could a Centre generate revenue? What organisations could be interested in funding a Centre?

OTHER QUESTIONS – dependent on organisation

11. What role or support could you/your organisation give to the Centre should this study prove a Centre viable?)
12. Demographics (ethnic group, role, sector, location, etc)

List of interviewees

Individuals from the following industries were interviewed:

- Community Development
- Education
- Faith-based
- Government
- Non-Governmental
- Research Consultancy