

Participant Information Sheet: Individual Interviews (Support Workers)

Date Information Sheet Produced:

24/10/25

Project Title

Networks of power: Gender, race and class in workplace violence.

An Invitation

This research project will investigate how gender discrimination, racism or class discrimination impact care and support workers' experiences of workplace violence. The research team comprises researchers from AUT and the University of Auckland, led by Professor Katherine Ravenswood (AUT):

Tanya Ewertowska, Auckland University of Technology
Dr. Amber Nicholson, University of Auckland Business School
Brianna Heremaia, PhD Candidate, Auckland University of Technology

We look not only to investigate instances of workplace violence, but also to understand how these experiences are shaped by the larger picture, i.e. societal and systemic inequalities. The insights could inform effective policies, and practices that address the challenges of workplace violence against support workers, contributing to a safer and more equitable environment.

This study is focused in the context of community-based care and support services, which cover the areas of homecare, disability support, and mental health and addiction. The research will involve support workers and managers/team leaders in these sectors. There is a Māori-led stream of the research which will involve Māori support workers and managers. This research is funded by a Royal Society Marsden grant.

We would like you to share your experiences and knowledge with us in the form of an individual interview (in person or on-line). We would also like to use the visual method of the harakeke tool to make connections to the overarching networks of power that may have impacted your experience.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to contribute to our knowledge of workplace violence (WPV) and how it is connected to gender, race and class discrimination. Workplace violence (WPV) has been defined by policy makers and researchers as physical and emotional harm experienced by employees in the workplace that results from interactions between two parties (e.g. violence, bullying or sexual abuse). However, this perspective often overlooks the role social norms and systemic discrimination may have on how employees experience violence. Our research will result in information that highlights **what is occurring, how and why it occurs, and what resources are currently available to workers to either prevent workplace violence or to support them if it occurs.**

The research outcomes will identify inequities that exist and make recommendations for the future.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You are being invited to participate as someone who has been employed within the past five years as a community support worker in either home and community support, disability support or mental health and addiction support. You will have either witnessed or experienced some form of workplace violence. You may have seen this research advertised in newsletters or social media, or perhaps another colleague has forwarded the information to you.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Please respond via email (emma.hitchcock@aut.ac.nz) to indicate your interest in being a part of this research. We have attached a Consent Form that we also ask you to complete. This can be done online via [this link](#) or by emailing

or posting back the attached form. Please also let us know your preferred mode of contact (via phone call or email) and we will liaise with you to find a time suitable to discuss this project further.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once we have started analysing the data, removal of your individual data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

Your participation involves an interview at a public (but private) space, or online, that is convenient to you and the interviewer. We will send you some preliminary information on some of the questions we may ask you before the interview. We will offer a visual harakeke tool to aid in the telling of your experience, and to make connections to the overarching networks of power that may have impacted this event.

Your experiences will be analysed, alongside others who participate, and we will use this information to produce a report on the systemic nature of workplace violence within the context of community care and support, as well as recommendations for future policy.

What are the benefits?

This research will contribute to our knowledge of workplace violence and how it is connected to gender, race and class discrimination. There is little research of this kind in Aotearoa or elsewhere. Our focus on care and support services is also one in which there is little known about workplace violence and how it impacts workers.

Our research will, therefore, result in information that highlights what is occurring, how and why it occurs, and what resources are currently available to workers to either prevent workplace violence or to support them if it occurs. This could have positive impacts on current and future support workers and managers within these sectors, with improved policy and practice to prevent and mitigate workplace violence. It could also lead to policy that recognises the impact of discrimination in society on workplace violence. Individual participants may experience a positive effect from the process of sharing their story.

Our research will result in academic publications that will be made freely available and will be able to inform policy, worker or Union initiatives, employers in these sectors and public debate.

What are the discomforts and risks?

We recognise that participants may experience different levels of emotional discomfort when telling their experiences of workplace violence. However, you will have full discretion not to respond to questions you are not comfortable with. There will be no questions that will risk your employment status. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time, however, you may only be able to withdraw your data up until we have started data analysis.

For those who do experience any emotional discomfort, AUT Health Counselling and Wellbeing is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project in Auckland. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centres at WB219 or AS104 or phone 921 9992 City Campus or 921 9998 North Shore campus to make an appointment. Appointments for South Campus can be made by calling 921 9992
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of this research and the Principal Investigator's name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <http://www.aut.ac.nz/being-a-student/current-postgraduates/your-health-and-wellbeing/counselling>.

Other support services

For those outside Auckland, we direct you to NZ National helplines as listed below:

- Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor. <https://1737.org.nz/>
- Lifeline – 0800 543 354 (0800 LIFELINE) or free text 4357 (HELP). <https://www.lifeline.org.nz/>
- Youthline – 0800 376 633, free text 234 or email talk@youthline.co.nz or online chat. <https://youthline.co.nz/>

- Samaritans – 0800 726 666. <https://www.samaritans.org.nz/>
- You may also search for local services at this site <https://www.wellbeingsupport.health.nz/>

How will my privacy be protected?

Digital Recording (audio) is the preferred method of ensuring what you say is accurately understood and captured. However, you may choose to have the recorder turned off at any time.

The research team will take photos of visual methods produced (i.e. the harakeke tool). Excerpts from, or whole, images may also be used anonymously in future publications.

You will be sent a written transcript of the recording alongside the photograph of the visual artefact within six weeks of the interview and have the opportunity to review and edit the material with the named research team. We require any edits to be made within two weeks of receiving the transcript.

Digital recordings and transcriptions of your interview will remain confidential, that is only the named research team and transcribers will view and analyse the interview recordings. Please be assured that the named research team and transcribers sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure confidentiality of information is preserved. However, all transcribed data will have any potentially identifying content removed. For example, pseudonyms will be used in the data and placenames will be replaced with something such as [small town nearby].

The named research team will hold a copy of your interview for a period of six years, after which time all data will be destroyed. Paper documents will be destroyed by shredding, electronic files will be destroyed by deletion.

You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. However, you may only be able to withdraw your data up until we have started data analysis. Please be assured that your participation or nonparticipation will not affect your status with the organization whom you work for or are associated with.

Your identity will be concealed in reporting and published works that may arise from this research project, in other words, your name will not be revealed. Please note, however your “stakeholder” status may be revealed (for example, you might be described as “a community case worker” in the story).

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no financial costs to this research.

Your participation will involve a one to two-hour interview at a time, and in a venue, of your choice. You will be sent an interview transcript within six weeks of the interview for your review and comment – you may wish to suggest edits to this transcript. This may take another hour. In total, two to three hours of your time is anticipated.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have approximately two weeks to consider the invitation. A reminder email will be sent to you after one week.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Please tick on the consent form if you would like to have the opportunity to provide feedback on preliminary findings and/or to receive a summary of the research findings at the end of the project.

Participants will be invited to attend a webinar where the research team will present the preliminary findings. This webinar will be a closed session with invited attendees only. We will offer opportunity for participants to provide feedback on the themes live via the anonymous Q&A feature, or afterwards via email or an online survey. We will also allow participants access to a recording on a private youtube channel, with the opportunity to feedback by email or online survey. This provides participants an opportunity to shape the final findings and provide additional insight on the impact and meaning of the findings. However, we have chosen to ask for feedback through a private process in order to ensure participant safety and minimise harm.

We will send through the final report to all those who participated should they request it. Additionally, the final report will be publicly available through the AUT website.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Katherine Ravenswood, Katherine.ravenswood@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 5064.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Funder details:

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Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Primary Researcher Contact Details:

Associate Professor Katherine Ravenswood
Business School - Management
Auckland University of Technology

Phone: 09 921 9999 ext 5064

Email: katherine.ravenswood@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 30 October 2024, Reference number **24/289**.