

## **Women, migration and well-being: Building epistemological resilience through ontologies of wholeness and relationship**

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*Scientific discourse increasingly views humankind as embedded within a complex web of ecological relationship. Paradoxically, issues of human well-being and development are often dealt with in a fragmented and compartmentalized manner. This paper provides an outline of a social action research project with Indigenous, migrant and refugee women in Canada and Aotearoa New Zealand aimed at building epistemological resilience - the integration and application by diverse collectives of culturally-informed epistemological approaches to addressing pressing social and ecological challenges; particularly as this concerns aligning Western style science with Indigenous and other worldviews of interconnectedness. Following an overview of the project's approach, key contextual issues and contemporary social positionings of these groups as a result of globalization, it provides an epistemological critique of three key associated areas of practice - human ecology (human-environment relationships), mental health and migration. Through its application of an indigenous Life-World approach to these fields, this paper makes apparent the reductionist tendencies and attendant approaches to health and human development of each. It concludes with an exploration of the concept turangawaewae (places where we feel powerful and connected) as articulated by research participants as a preliminary example of how epistemological resilience might be built between and within these communities.*