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| **Title of Research Presentation** (Sentence case)Waka ama: a way of life, saving lives  |
| **Background/Objectives**The purpose of the Waka Ama census 2018 was to gather demographic data about the membership and to identify how best to serve the needs of the Waka Ama community. Unlike many sports, waka ama is steeped in the powerful history and traditions of waka sailing and voyaging. Waka ama is, therefore, not just a sport but also a vehicle for identity, pride and community. This is reflected in the values and tikanga that underpin it. Waka ama, or outrigger canoe paddling, thrives as a sport of Pacific origin throughout the world, and are a part of the culture of all Pacific people. Although known by several different names, the different terms all refer to the same activity and derive from the traditional Polynesian outrigger canoe. After Aotearoa was settled by the first Polynesian voyagers, waka design and use went through a number of evolutionary stages. The different trees available here and their huge size meant that waka in Aotearoa eventually became single-hulled and did not need an outrigger float or ama to keep their hulls upright. Here in Aotearoa New Zealand Māori culture is deeply embedded into waka ama from the language to the protocols that we follow. **Methods**Waka Ama New Zealand worked with Statistics New Zealand to create an online Census to capture information of our Waka Ama membership. **Results**To date a total of 970 people responded from 77 different clubs. This represents about 19% of our membership. As well as collecting basic demographic data we asked: What does waka ama mean to you? The answers convey how impactful waka ama is on the lives of those that participate and their whanau / families. This presentation will discuss the various themes in relation to the values of Manaakitanga, Whanaungatanga, Hauora and Tū tangata. **Discussion**“Waka ama saved my life!” “Waka Ama, to our family is a way of life!” “Whanau, kotahitanga, manaakitanga, being at one with the moana, the awa, refreshing, relaxing, calming, connectedness, happiness, place of serenity”These comments reflect the impact that waka ama has on those that participate in the sport either as a paddler, volunteer or whanau / family member. Waka ama has positive health benefits (physical, mental and emotional), builds relationships and cross cultural understanding among all people’s of Aotearoa / New Zealand. **Keywords:** Hauora, Manaakitanga, Whanaungatanga, Tū Tangata, Healthy whanau |